

2008 Innovations Awards Program APPLICATION

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ID # (assigned by CSG): 08-W-17WA

Please provide the following information, adding space as necessary:

State: Washington

Assign Program Category (applicant): Government Operations – Public Information (Use list at end of application)

1. Program Name – Full Transparency in Government – TIB Dashboard Management System
2. Administering Agency – Washington State - Transportation Improvement Board (TIB)
3. Contact Person (Name and Title) – Stevan Gorcester, Executive Director
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- 9. Please provide a two-sentence description of the program.**

To effectively manage its 400+ projects throughout the state, the Washington State Transportation Improvement Board (TIB) created an innovative computer program transforming large amounts of data collected daily into a dynamic management tool that also serves as an outstanding communication tool to its 320 customers as well as the general public. The program, Dashboard Management System, is difficult to describe in words since much of its innovation is in how the data is displayed and organized to allow any user to find what they want—from the agency's revenue to expenses ratio by quarter for the last seven years to a picture of the repaving work being done that week on Main Street in the City of Chewelah.

10. How long has this program been operational (month and year)? Note: the program must be between 9 months and 5 years old on March 1, 2008 to be considered.

In 2004 our Dashboard Management System was created in-house with one computer professional and the management staff. Implementing the latest technology, our current version has been operational since August 2007.

11. Why was the program created? What problem[s] or issue[s] was it designed to address?

The Transportation Improvement Board (TIB) was created in 1988 by the Washington State Legislature to help fund and administer local transportation projects with cities and counties throughout the state. It is separate from the state's Department of Transportation and is overseen by a board representing city, county and state transportation interests. Today, the TIB receives approximately \$100 million a year in revenue generated from a three-cent statewide gas tax, manages more than 400 projects each year, has 320 customers within a service area of 71,000 square miles and a staff of 12.

In 2001, the TIB was in dire straights and close to being shut down or absorbed into the Department of Transportation due to poor management of budget and project administration. There were 976 projects approved and only enough funding for about 550. Earlier decisions did not factor in the "life-cycle" of a project from both the funding and the construction perspectives placing the agency into a position where it had approved \$655 million to projects with only \$15 million in the bank. When a new Executive Director was hired in 2001, he had to act quickly to ensure past obligations were met and develop a system to sustain projects in the future. The key element in achieving these goals was accessing and organizing all the information from the individual projects into a usable product to reduce delays, maintain accountability, and manage revenue and expenses effectively.

Using the data already input from project team members each day, the Dashboard Management System was created by the staff computer technician to "mine" the data for use in specific matrixes, charts, and other formats the TIB management needed to determine what was working, what was not working, what changes had to be made, and to be alerted to any project not meeting goals. This system was critical in addressing the fact that in 2001 the TIB was over-programmed by 95%. Today, the agency is not over-programmed, has shown a 65% reduction in delayed projects and has established a reputation with state legislators as an efficient and accountable agency.

The Dashboard Management System goes beyond an internal management tool, managers use it for all presentations with elected leaders, customers and, within a few weeks, the system will be accessible to the public. It provides citizens with more than just access to piles of stagnant spreadsheets. It provides real information that most users can understand allowing them to actively participate in the public process at the same level our staff does when working with elected officials. So, although the system was initially created to address the critical management issues of this agency, it has been just as critical in accurately communicating TIB's work.

12. Describe the specific activities and operations of the program in chronological order.

In November of each year, projects are chosen for funding by our management team. Once selected, a project is given a timeline with benchmarks and a budget linked with the timeline. Most projects take on average 4 years from the time they are selected to when construction is completed, however, the range can be from 3-7 years. This information is loaded into a database and the clock begins ticking for the project in the Dashboard Management System. Now the project is it's own entity on the

tracking system and whenever any information is put into the system by the project team it is reflected immediately by the system. And, if there is no activity and benchmarks are missed red alerts are given in the system's overall performance displays.

Anytime the project data is altered, the Dashboard Management System automatically changes any other display that is impacted. For example, when a project is under construction and payments to the city are made by our agency, each payment the accountant sends out is automatically picked up by the system and reflected in the agency's overall charts reflecting revenue, cash on hand, project funding totals, funding source totals, etc. Project engineers provide the updated information on their assigned projects. The system has made internal communications easier and faster as well as provide built in accountability. So when the TIB tells people the information they are viewing through the Dashboard Management System is in "real time" it means the chart, graph or list you are looking at is exactly what is known this minute.

13. Why is the program a new and creative approach or method?

The Dashboard Management System takes a constant flow of raw data and places it in numerous different formats to create meaningful information necessary for the TIB to meet its obligations and for elected leaders to trust us with a significant role in statewide transportation and financial responsibility. The system is innovative and creative because it goes beyond providing inert data. This system provides vigorous, clear analysis tools from organic data already in the system.

Before people actually see the system, they often believe it will be like the many "Stats" versions around the country (e.g. CitiStat, CompStat) but this system is not static with Excel charts, it is comprehensive and dynamic. People notice the ease with which you can maneuver through the site, are impressed with the real time aspect, and enjoy the mapping ability of the city street system.

14. What were the program's start-up costs? (Provide details about specific purchases for this program, staffing needs and other financial expenditures, as well as existing materials, technology and staff already in place.)

Initially, staff computer technician created the framework for the system using SQL database, ColdFusion, and Xcelsius. The Executive Director personally led a staff team to identify and develop useful performance metrics. Once the framework was established and operational (10 months) the entire staff participated in the final details. The Dashboard Management System was operational for full use five months later, costing \$40,000 in new equipment and approximately 400 staff hours including training.

15. What are the program's annual operational costs?

Less than \$50,000 depending on upgrades and amount of time spent on new projects.

16. How is the program funded?

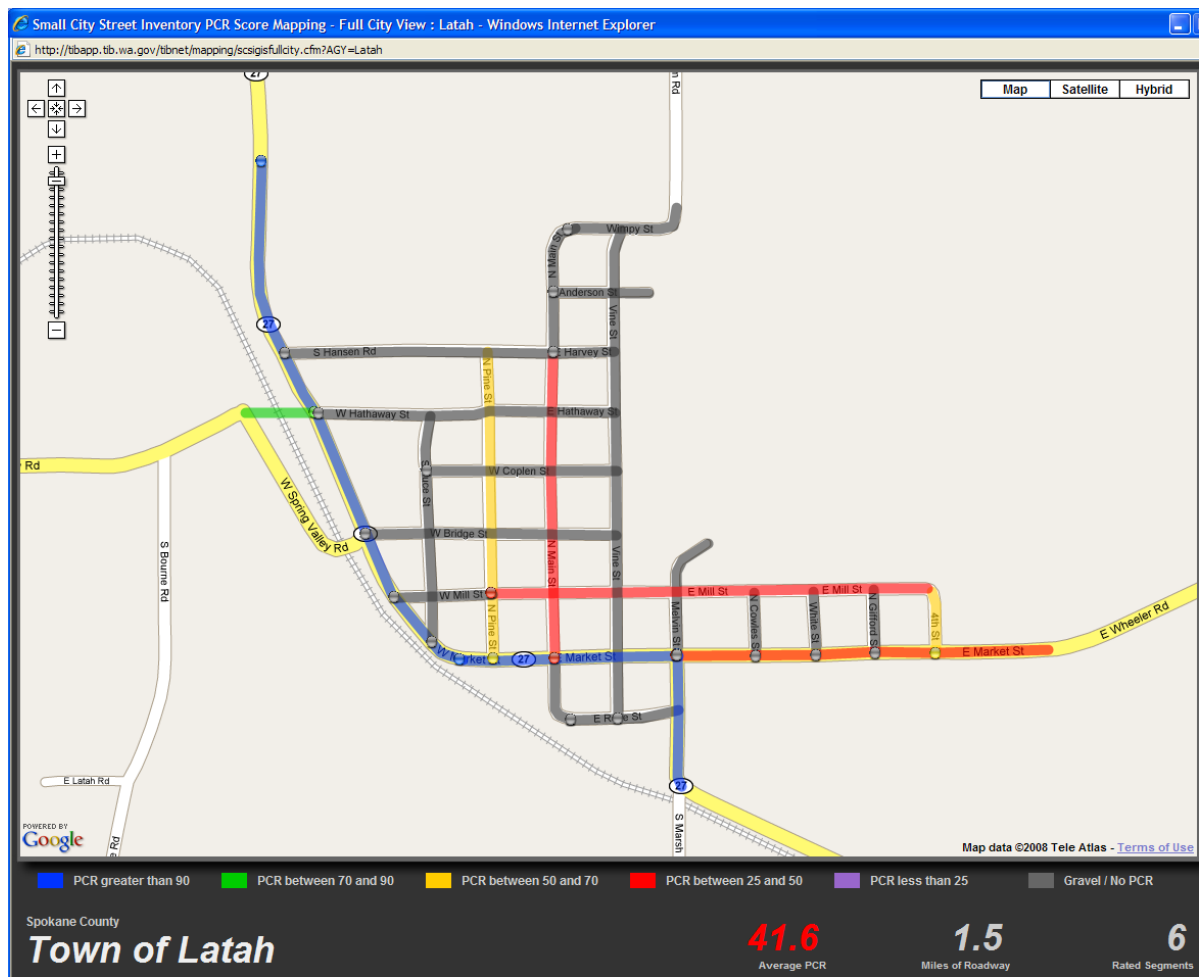
The TIB receives the revenue generated by three-cents per gallon of the Washington State gas tax. This revenue source fluctuates somewhat depending on consumption. In 2007 our revenue totaled \$185 million. The Dashboard Management System is an operational expense from our agency budget.

17. Did this program require the passage of legislation, executive order or regulations? If YES, please indicate the citation number.

No. However, Governor Gregoire issued GMAP Directive 05-02 in 2005, requiring performance management programs of all executive agencies. Although the GMAP Directive came after creation of the Dashboard Management System, TIB met all of the Governor’s objectives with no additional work.

18. What equipment, technology and software are used to operate and administer this program?

In addition to using Microsoft Office products, TIB has a license with Google for the mapping feature of the Small City Preservation Program inventory to graphically display the city with the pavement condition rating of each segment of road (see map below) as part of the Dashboard Management System.



19. To the best of your knowledge, did this program originate in your state? If YES, please indicate the innovator's name, present address, telephone number and e-mail address.

The concept of a data dashboard system was taken from private enterprises and re-tooled for the specific needs of a government agency. We are the only agency in our state with this system and the only system with a streaming data feed.

20. Are you aware of similar programs in other states? If YES, which ones and how does this program differ?

To date, we do not know of any interactive, real-time dashboards like ours. Other states, including Arizona, Missouri, and Virginia have contacted TIB to work on a dashboard system. What is apparent when speaking to other agencies is the TIB's needs aren't unique; this system can translate into an effective management tool for other areas of government such as social services, education, economic development, natural resource management, and utilities.

Steve Gorcester, TIB Executive Director, has presented this system to the Government Finance Officers Association, Governing Magazine, Government Technology Magazine, Association of Government Accountants, Performance Institute, Rutgers University and private consulting firms.

21. Has the program been fully implemented? If NO, what actions remain to be taken?

Yes, but is being improved as new applications of the technology are developed. By March 31, 2008 the TIB Dashboard Management System will go from being only intranet accessible to Internet accessible making it available to the public.

22. Briefly evaluate (pro and con) the program's effectiveness in addressing the defined problem[s] or issue[s]. Provide tangible examples.

Desperation is the mother of invention and we would say innovation too. The TIB was near bankruptcy with a limited amount of time given its leaders to turn it around. The Dashboard Management System was created to help solve the existing financial and project management issues and ensure it didn't happen again. It was and is enormously successful. Not only did TIB become solvent, its path to achieve that goal reinstated its credibility among key legislators to keep the agency going and increase its responsibilities and budget. Additionally, it has allowed the agency to dig deeper into its ability to identify and solve transportation issues affecting cities. For example, in 2007 the agency addressed the problem of under funded maintenance on city streets with the Small City Maintenance database. This includes information from over 1,600 miles of pavement in the 174 small cities throughout the state of Washington.

The pros far outweigh the cons of this system. TIB's Dashboard Management System uses current technology in a way the creators of personal computers, software and the Internet believed could be the possible in the future workplace. Other positive aspects include:

- Using the data already input into our system by project team members maximizes the efficiency of the system.
- Creates real time data analysis so information is ready when needed and no staff time is used to pull data together for special requests, annual reports and presentations.

- Accountability and transparency is inherent since all the agency information is available on this system in various formats and comparisons with accessibility to all employees, soon the public.

The cons of the system are minimal. As with any management system, it's only as good as the data input. Any team must find ways to keep the importance of accurate and timely data for every project a priority. Some may see the extra costs as a con, however, when measured against the work product produced it is a sound investment.

23. How has the program grown and/or changed since its inception?

Once the basic format of the system was created, project teams asked for other information comparisons, workload tracking, and mapping, which continues to improve the value of the Dashboard Management System to our agency. The Dashboard is becoming more of a complete business management system rather than just a performance reporting tool. Recently we licensed with Google to use its satellite mapping ability within our system allowing a team member to be working on a project in Bellingham and bring up the a project across the state in Pullman to address a homeowner's complaint about the construction work. What would have taken days to address, was dealt with while the homeowner was on the phone. Field team members are now the ones pushing the system's capability as they create new ideas to make their job easier and more productive.

24. What limitations or obstacles might other states expect to encounter if they attempt to adopt this program?

It may sound overly dramatic but the biggest obstacle is fear—fear of having this much information easily accessible, even within an organization. Information is power and it can be difficult to get all the team members and divisions to loosen their hold on “their” information. But, once shown the potential of putting this information to work for them they become empowered and embrace the system.