Tax title properties are those parcels of real estate that the county forecloses on due to non-payment of property taxes, and for which there is no bidder at auction.

- The county has over 1,200 tax title parcels.
- Holding these properties has liability consequences and O&M costs.

- The surplus process included affordable housing review.
- The property sale process is labor intensive and costly (about $3,400 per parcel).
- Any sales above $10,000 need council approval, doubling staff time and cost.
- Most tax title properties are small and of little value. Staff time had been devoted to only those parcels that would cover the cost of sale.

Revised county code in November 2017 to streamline the process and open up new opportunities:

- Eliminated several steps, resulting in savings.
- Raised threshold for council review to $500,000.
- Entered into a contract for third party online marketing of tax title properties.

**PROJECT TEAM:**

- Kate Donley
- Tami Elmer
- Jim Loveless
- Carolyn Mock
- Steve Rizika

King County sold 2.5 times more tax title properties and grossed 10 times more revenue ($2M) in auction sales in 2018 than in the previous seven years.
Fleet field service mechanics saved 124 hours just in travel time ($12,300) in the first six months by adding diagnostic software to field service computers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Fleet Diagnostics (DOT/Fleet)</th>
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</table>
| Rationale | - Field service mechanics are assigned to various areas of the county including Black Diamond, Fall City, and Redmond to support field crews.  
- Bringing vehicles and equipment into the Renton Shop is costly considering travel time, effort, and customer downtime. |
| Problem | - In most cases, heavy-duty vehicles with a “check engine” light had to be diagnosed before they could be driven.  
- Non-drivable vehicles were towed to the Renton Shop or the field mechanic had to go to the Renton Shop to get the diagnostic computer.  
- The Renton Shop was the only location with diagnostic software.  
- Every time the diagnostic computer was taken to the field, it hampered the shop’s ability to diagnose vehicles and equipment.  
- Travel time back and forth took approximately four hours per instance. |
| Approach | - Analyzed alternatives from leasing additional computers to adding diagnostic programs to existing computers.  
- Fleet added software licenses to the four field mechanics computers. |

**PROJECT TEAM:**

Erik Ferkingstad  
Chris Gavigan  
Cindy Kittleston  
Isaac Wisdom
KCIT saved more than $200K in 2018 and reduced delays for customers by improving the provisioning process

**IT Provisioning (KCIT)**

**Rationale**

- The Device Lifecycle Program is a multi-million dollar program and is responsible for managing the lifecycle replacement for more than 12,000 devices across the county.
- Every department relies on KCIT for the timely delivery, setup, and decommissioning of technology equipment.
- When there are delays in deploying new devices, hidden re-work costs escalate, our customers’ productivity decreases, and the program’s deployment schedule gets behind.

**Problem**

- During a time of significant transition for the CSS Provisioning team, the County’s first four-year work station release contracts were due to be returned to the vendor with no standard approach to do so.
- Forecasting was nonexistent.
- The provisioning work rooms had become disorganized, staff spent too much time searching for equipment, resulting in customer delays.

**Approach**

- Comprehensive Lean principles were applied throughout.
  - 5S – decomm room and inventory rooms
  - Visual performance management established (daily, weekly, monthly)
  - Visual markers created throughout for increased ease and accuracy
  - Lean work teams established to continuously improve (A3 and DMAIC)
- Created strong visual systems to support work, show when to order more inventory, and easily and accurately identify the right equipment.
Human Resources reduced the time to create or change a position in PeopleSoft from 3.25 days to less than one day, improving service to departments.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project</th>
<th>New Position Workflow (Human Resources)</th>
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</table>
| Rationale | • Creating or changing a position in PeopleSoft is long and complicated, delaying the hiring and onboarding process for new employees.  
• Impacts are felt across the County. |
| Problem | • The average time to create or change a position in PeopleSoft was 3.25 days.  
• The seven step process required multiple, unnecessary approvals.  
• Delays negatively impacted the new employee experience when they didn’t get that they needed by their start date.  
• Customized modules increased the time and resources needed to maintain, support, and enhance the module. |
| Approach | • A team of HR and BRC staff eliminated non valued-added steps from the process, including unnecessary approvals.  
• Moved up department approval so it happens prior to entry in PeopleSoft.  
• End users with the most knowledge about the position have direct access to the position data.  
• Built a detailed change history tab to show and track all changes.  
• Eliminated custom workflows, reducing pages of design documentation from 250 to 30 and custom objects from 750 to 70. |
Wastewater Treatment Division reduced the time to approve a dewatering permit from over three months to less than one day.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Dewatering Permit Process (DNRP/Wastewater Treatment)</th>
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</table>
| **Rationale** | • Construction projects require a permit for pumping groundwater away from the site. These would take 3-6 months to approve.  
• Customers were very unhappy with the amount of time permits were taking, because it delayed construction projects. |
| **Problem** | • All projects, big and small, went through the same long, complicated process for approval  
• 40% of permits are for small, low-risk projects.  
• The website was confusing and did not provide clear information for customers. |
| **Approach** | • Expedited small projects – those covering less than one acre and discharging less than 25,000 gallons per day.  
• Created a new application for small projects  
• Revamped the website to include FAQs and best practices, including graphics, to provide clearer information for customers.  
• Created a standard authorization letter, making communication faster and easier.  
• Worked with top customers to get feedback before implementing. |

**PROJECT TEAM:**  
Ed Abbasi  
Dana Heinz  
Peggy Rice
Metro Transit decreased missed trips due to “no operator” by nearly 70% compared with the previous year.

**Project:** Missed Trip Reduction (Metro Transit)

**Rationale**
- Around 400,000 people depend on Metro to get where they need to go every weekday.
- When a trip is missed, it directly impacts the transit riders who count on our service - potentially making them late for work, school, or appointments.

**Problem**
- In February 2017, Metro missed 332 trips because no operator was available.
- The direct cause was a lack of part-time operators to fill these trips.
- Union contract rules required full-time operators be hired from the part-time pool, therefore reducing the number of part-time operators.
- Space and hiring constraints made it difficult to get drivers hired and trained to replenish the pool of part-time operators.

**Approach**
- Worked with HR to increase hiring rate of part-time operators.
- Increased space for operator training to bring them on-board sooner without compromising safety.
- Increased communication and collaboration between the seven bases so that operators could be shared among them.
- Working on a pilot with the union to allow direct hiring of full-time operators, rather than pulling from the part-time pool.
- In 2018, missed trips declined from a high of 332 in February to 77 in July.

**PROJECT TEAM:**
Carri Brezonick  
Dennis Lock  
Terry White
Employee engagement in the Regulatory Compliance and Land Acquisition Services unit increased 20 percentage points to 95% in 2018

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Employee Engagement (DNRP/Wastewater Treatment)</th>
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</table>
| **Rationale** | • High engagement is critical to providing great service.  
• High engagement means our employees are thriving. |
| **Problem** | The team agreed their morale was mediocre. Root causes included:  
• Workload imbalance.  
• Unclear guiding compass for their work.  
• Rare face time with supervisor.  
• Ineffective communication. |
| **Approach** | Based on team feedback:  
• They created a tracker to balance workloads better.  
• They clarified a guiding vision that focused on work/life balance and customer service.  
• They started regular huddles to communicate project status and see what’s coming.  
• They made 1:1 meetings more meaningful and purposeful, with a focus on coaching to personal goals as well as team objectives. |

**PROJECT TEAM:**  
Steven Botts  
Trevor Carr  
Claire Christian  
Chris Drew  
Hien Dung  
Alton Gaskill  
Darlene Gaziano  
Robert Gilmore  
Amet Kassa  
Bill Wilbert  
Doug Williams
By truly engaging Metro employees in a collaborative and inclusive process of shaping our new organization, we gained enthusiasm and confidence in our future from our workforce, county leaders, and regional partners.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Division to Department Transition (Metro Transit)</th>
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</table>
| Rationale | • Reorganization would not be successful if employees were not involved.  
• Strategic goals must be shaped by the employees who have to attain them.  
• A successful transition is facilitated, not directed. |
| Problem | • How to engage 5,000 employees in multiple work sites, working different shifts, many without email?  
• How to have meaningful engagement on a tight timeline to inform our proposed budget? |
| Approach | • Developed collaborative and transparent decision-making processes.  
• Developed tools to communicate with all: monthly updates, website, 12 town hall meetings at various locations and times, 11 employee workgroups.  
• Modeled the behavior we expect in the new organization. |

**PROJECT TEAM:**
- Michelle Allison
- Kathy Crego
- Jill Kreklow
- DeAnna Martin
- Huoi Trieu
- Lisa Voight
Public Health’s part-time employment pilot program increased attendance in 83% of employees, with an overall 60% reduction in use of sick leave or unpaid leave.

Other benefits include improved morale, work-life balance, and desirability of working for Public Health.

**Part-Time Employment Program (Public Health)**

**Rationale**

- Demonstrate the value of the Balanced You approach by improving employee morale and work-life balance.
- Attract and retain skilled employees, as a supportive employer.

**Problem**

How to create a part-time employment program that would be financially feasible:

- Hypothesis #1: part-time employment would improve morale.
- Hypothesis #2: part-time employment would reduce absences.
- Hypothesis #3: part-time employment could be managed with minimal cost.

**Approach**

- Started with a test program, ending in June 2017, with employees in multiple job classifications. Most worked .8 FTE.
- Labor Union partners were a catalyst and close partners throughout the pilot and full implementation.
- Allow participating employees to have the option of reverting to their official budgeted FTE level in future biennia.
- Evaluate the program by surveying participants and their supervisors, as well as measuring attendance data and costs.
- Hire TLTs to backfill employees when needed, but many employees did not need backfill, which helps the agency’s financial picture by adjusting staffing in programs experiencing less demand.
- Doubled the program to 75 employees in 2018.

**PROJECT TEAM:**

Andre Chevalier  
Jerry DeGriech  
Melody Latshaw  
Juan Padilla  
Keith Seinfeld  
Jamie Siev
Best Starts for Kids – a collaboration between DCHS and Public Health – reduced barriers to funding for community-based service providers, enhancing equity in service delivery

The technical assistance program attracted 134 distinct organizations applying for BSK grants – more than 40 percent were first-time applicants for county funding.
Solid Waste Division engaged all staff in a pro-equity vision, and increased participation in ESJ training from just 2% in 2017 to over 85% in 2018, enabling employees to advance ESJ in their daily work.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Developing a Pro-Equity Vision (DNRP/Solid Waste)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Rationale | • Develop a pro-equity vision for the division to achieve King County Equity and Social Justice goals in the workplace.  
• Engage and include all Solid Waste Division employees, especially Operations employees who are dispersed throughout the County at 10 different locations and who have limited access to email and their colleagues. |
| Problem | • The Solid Waste Division lacked a vision for how it would advance Equity and Social Justice goals for both its employees and its external customers and stakeholders.  
• The 280 Operations employees are distributed across the geography of the county, across multiple shifts, and all days of the week.  
• Limited access to email and the ability to engage with leadership and colleagues.  
• With work that is physical and affected by conditions such as weather, traffic, and customer flow, Operations employees are on tight deadlines to accomplish their work and sometimes unable to fully engage in strategic goal planning. |
| Approach | • Held 12 visioning discussions at the places where Operations employees work during all the various shifts when they work.  
• Brought in Operations relief crews to cover the work so employees could focus on the discussions and truly engage.  
• Leveraged existing mandatory training events and expanded their purpose to include core ESJ training – enabling all staff to gain knowledge and acquire tools to help bring their vision into reality.  
  o Training occurred on multiple dates, days, times.  
  o The training was tailored to the perspective of Operations employees.  
  o Operations employees volunteered to be trained as trainers.  
• Developed an ESJ vision with input from the entire Solid Waste Division workforce (more than 400 employees) that states: “The Solid Waste Division respects and provides equitable services and opportunities for all.” |

PROJECT TEAM:  
Teresa Atkinson  
Bill Berni  
Alejandra Calderon  
Jenny Devlin  
Henry Dotson
The ORCA LIFT Program increased distribution to low-income transit riders by 50% to an average of 2100 cards per month

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project</th>
<th>ORCA Lift Card Distribution (Metro Transit &amp; Public Health)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rationale</td>
<td>Provide a reduced fare for low-income transit riders.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problem</td>
<td>• 300,000 county residents may be eligible for the program.</td>
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<td>• Only distributed an average of 1400 cards a month in the first two years.</td>
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<td>• Needed additional enrollment options to reach residents in rural King County and communities who face transportation barriers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approach</td>
<td>• Since 2015, Metro has been partnering with Public Health and partner agencies to provide a reduced fare for low-income transit riders.</td>
</tr>
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<td>• To better reach the target market, Metro and Public Health began working with CSOs with the Department of Social and Human Services.</td>
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<td>• Together, they streamlined the registration process to make it easier for CSOs to do the work.</td>
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<td>• After testing the registration process at two CSOs in King County in August 2017, the program later expanded to 16 CSOs in three counties in 2018.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Finally, the program has expanded its bandwidth by adding 23 Community Based Organizations who are enrolling LIFT clients without financial reimbursement.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**PROJECT TEAM:**
Brandon Banks
Jennifer Covert
Collette Fidecaro
Callista Kennedy
Mark Konecny
Daphne Pie
By the end of 2018, the North Utilities Maintenance Shop is on track to become the first county project to meet net-zero energy status

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project</th>
<th>North Utilities Net-Zero Energy Project (DNRP/Parks)</th>
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</table>
| Rationale | • King County’s Strategic Climate Action Plan calls for at least 10 County construction or retrofit projects to achieve Net-Zero Energy or Living Building Challenge certification by 2020.  
• Net-zero energy means that a facility generates on-site as much energy as it uses each year. |
| Problem | • In the existing North Utilities Shop complex, the opportunities had to be carefully evaluated to reduce energy use enough to be offset by the solar power generated on the available roof space, cost effectively.  
• As a further challenge, the facility’s energy use recently rose 15% when the shop began to fabricate metal park bollards (posts). |
| Approach | • This project integrated cost-effective solar panels and cutting-edge energy efficient lighting and mechanical equipment.  
• The 200 installed solar panels are on track to generate over 44,600 kilowatt-hours this year.  
• The building’s lights were retrofitted to high efficiency LEDs.  
• A premium-efficiency heat pump system replaced the heaters and air conditioners in the office and shop spaces.  
• In the 12 month period from October 2017 through September 2018, the facility generated 98% of its 12 month energy use (42,030 of 42,750 kilowatt-hours). |

**PROJECT TEAM:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>David Broustis</td>
<td>Jennifer Kim</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tim Darling</td>
<td>Frank Overton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clayton Kolb</td>
<td>Parks Grounds Crew</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Mabry</td>
<td>Parks Crafts Crew</td>
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**King County Executive’s Performance Excellence Award**

**FINALIST**
Solid Waste reduced nitrogen infiltration from 10.1% in March to 6.3% in July – improving gas quality & increasing revenue

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Landfill Gas Nitrogen Reduction (DNRP/Solid Waste)</th>
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</table>
| **Rationale** | - Landfill gas generated by decomposing waste at the Cedar Hills Regional Landfill is collected and delivered to Bio Energy Washington (BEW) where the gas is purified to meet pipeline-quality natural gas standards.  
- This operation combats the effects of climate change by offsetting fossil fuel consumption, generates revenue for King County, and produces enough gas to heat 21,000 homes.  
- Diverting this important renewable energy to BEW instead of flaring it has reduced greenhouse gas emissions by 11,000 metric tons CO₂ equivalents annually. |
| **Problem** | - Excessive nitrogen in landfill gas lowers its quality, causing BEW to operate approximately 40 percent less efficiently as it expends more energy to purify the gas.  
- The landfill gas pipeline system operates on a vacuum to capture as much gas as possible, but if the vacuum pulls too hard it can result in excessive nitrogen and other atmospheric gases getting sucked into the system.  
- Root cause analysis identified where nitrogen was infiltrating the pipeline system. |
| **Approach** | - Altered construction practices to seal the current active disposal area.  
- Excavated 1.8 million cubic yards of soil in the future disposal area and stockpiled it on top of closed disposal areas to create an additional seal as garbage in those areas continue to decompose and generate landfill gas.  
- Accelerated the connection of gas wells to existing pipeline wellheads in Area 7 that had recently received waste. Installed collection pipes to remove rain and other wastewater to keep landfill gas pipelines clear of any obstruction.  
- Aggressively optimized the system by adjusting valves at more than 750 pipeline wellheads to target the vacuum to areas of the highest landfill gas quality. |

**PROJECT TEAM:**

Laura Belt  
Jeff Dye  
Toraj Ghofrani  
Wally Grant  
Shirley Jurgensen  
Dan Swope
As of July 2018, Metro’s new trolleys are saving 3.4 million kilowatt hours of energy per year, reducing energy demand from City Light and contributing to a 1% reduction in energy use for Metro’s fleet.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Trolley Energy Efficiency (Metro Transit)</th>
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| **Rationale** | • In 2013, Metro was evaluating options for replacing its aging trolley fleet. Energy efficiency features added additional fleet cost.  
• Metro (with help from DNRP and the DOT Director’s Office) was able arrange for an energy conservation rebate with Seattle City Light to cover up to $1.2 million of the cost for the energy efficient trolley features.  
• Reinvesting in a new trolley fleet contributes to King County’s SCAP goals of increasing the usage of alternative fuels by 10% by 2025, and reducing fleet energy contributed to the goal to reduce fleet energy use by 10% per boarding by 2020. |
| **Problem** | • The new-technology trolleys on an old system caused unanticipated problems. As the new trolleys began service, the power substation that our fleet shared with the Seattle Center Monorail began experiencing voltage spikes.  
• To eliminate this issue in the short run, regenerative braking was turned off on the new trolley fleet.  
• With the regenerative braking turned off, Metro was no longer eligible for the $1.2 million rebate from Seattle City Light to pay for the trolley fleet and the energy efficiency benefits were not being achieved. The power usage in the trolley fleets was 20 percent higher than the old trolley fleets. |
| **Approach** | • Metro and Seattle Monorail separated the power feeds to each system. This allowed the Trolley regenerative power to go back into Seattle City Light's power grid.  
• In late July, Metro received its rebate check from Seattle City Light for $929,135 to offset the additional cost of purchasing its zero-emission all-electric Trolley fleet. |