Canadian Municipalities Lean Programs

Consulting, training and technology solutions specifically designed for Canadian municipalities.
Helping Canada’s municipalities embrace continuous improvement

Leading Edge Group helps Canadian municipalities to achieve operational excellence and increased quality of services through tailored consulting and training programs delivered by Lean for Municipality experts, as well as a cloud-based continuous improvement management solution - CItric Cube.

Consulting and training programs can be delivered on site at your facility, with some training programs also available online. Our programs provide options to suit municipality staff at all levels, and across all functions of the organization.

With the appropriate skills and knowledge, municipalities in Canada have already realized significant benefits from the application of Lean:

- **Substantial cost savings**
  Helping municipalities do more with limited resources.

- **Improved ways of working**
  Streamlined operations to minimize inefficiencies in working processes.

- **Leadership status**
  Established position in the sector as an innovative organization.

- **Positive staff morale**
  Empowered employees are making positive changes to their working processes.

- **Better value services for citizens**
  Municipalities that spend taxes wisely provoke a positive community response.

- **Resolving problems**
  Bringing challenges to the surface and addressing them in a team environment.

“Working with the Leading Edge Group team we have been able to build awareness and understanding of continuous improvement (CI) within the organization, develop capacity internally for staff to be able to lead CI projects, and outline a strategy for continuous improvement to take us through to the next steps. While we are in the early phase of this CI journey and still have a lot of work to do, Leading Edge Group has provided practical advice and strategic guidance every step of the way.”

**ST. JOHN’S**

Derek Coffey, Deputy City Manager, Finance & Administration, Champion for CI, City of St. Johns
Consulting services

Strategy, processes and tools to implement sustainable change and deliver measurable results.

Lean Start
Experience the power of Lean

Our Lean Start program introduces Lean concepts and provides municipalities with an understanding of what the tools and techniques can achieve in a short, focused engagement. The program is designed for municipalities that are unfamiliar with continuous improvement methodologies, and want to learn about and implement immediate improvements.

Lean Service Reviews
Identify core service improvement opportunities

Improving the design and delivery of services to provide what citizens want in the most reliable, responsive, practical and cost-efficient way is a key objective for all municipalities. We help municipalities achieve this by applying Lean methodology to review processes and functions and to identify improvement opportunities.

Targeted Continuous Improvement
Rapidly resolve specific challenges

Regardless of continuous improvement progress, it can be challenging for organizations to streamline or improve existing internal and external facing processes. Backed by over 20 years’ experience in the public sector, our rapid improvement methodology delivers increased efficiencies for staff, management and end customers.

Lean Governance
Establish an effective oversight framework

To effectively develop and communicate CI strategy; to prioritize, track and manage improvement activities; municipalities need an effective oversight framework. Leading Edge Group provides expert guidance and coaching to help municipalities establish and define an appropriate Lean governance structure, including appropriate membership, roles and responsibilities and terms of reference.
**Continuous Improvement Maturity Model (CIMM)**

Assess organization-wide continuous improvement

Drawing on 20 years’ experience, Leading Edge Group’s continuous improvement maturity model (CIMM) provides structured tools to objectively assess and develop an organization’s continuous improvement capabilities. Municipalities can assess and benchmark their current baseline level of continuous improvement, innovation and culture change against a reference standard.

**Lean Strategic Planning and Deployment**

*Develop and deploy an aligned Lean strategy*

A defined strategy ensures that the entire workforce is aligned, engaged and focused on key continuous improvement (CI) objectives. Without this, CI efforts focus on disconnected ‘point improvements,’ simultaneously pursuing different goals. Through applying the Hoshin Kanri methodology, Leading Edge Group works with municipalities to develop and deploy an effective CI strategy that ensures organization-wide alignment on key priorities and initiatives towards sustainable culture change.

Our programs have driven improvements across all municipality functions including:

- Fleet services
- Permit applications
- Special event applications
- Payroll
- Long term care services
- Public health services
A tailored training approach

Every municipality is unique in some way. Therefore, our training programs are tailored to the needs of each municipality and the group of participants attending. Skills acquired through training will be immediately applicable to real life situations.

Instructor-led belt certification – White, Yellow, Green & Black

Suitable for staff from across the organization, these programs are specifically tailored for application within Canadian municipalities. Every participant will learn about Lean tools and techniques, enabling Lean improvements to be implemented across all functions of the municipality.

White Belt: 1-day, instructor-led training

This program provides a basic introduction to Lean thinking and how it can be applied within the municipality. Participants will identify specific processes in their organization where they see an opportunity to implement Lean improvements. This program is suitable for participants from across the organization.

Yellow Belt: 2-day, instructor-led training

This program is designed to develop basic proficiency in applying key Lean tools and practices. Participants will map the current states of specific processes within their municipality. They then analyze these processes and identify opportunities for improvement.

Green Belt: 5-day, instructor-led training

This program develops the ability to lead improvement projects. As part of the program assessment, participants will complete an improvement project for their municipality aimed at creating and sustaining improvements within a specific process. Examples of projects undertaken have included improvements of IT help desk functions and services and HR department hiring process.

Black Belt: 8-day, instructor-led training

Participants on this program learn advanced Lean techniques, as well as developing the leadership, change and project management skills required to drive and manage a Lean transformation. The program is ideal for staff who are leading large-scale improvement projects, or those who will ultimately manage continuous improvement within the municipality. Participants must complete a workplace improvement project that addresses a key strategic priority or achieves $100,000+ in cost savings or avoidance.

Online belt programs – Green, Black & Master Black

Our online general Lean training programs are also suitable for municipality employees. Green, Black, and Master Black Belt Lean training can all be completed online. Our Master Black Belt program provides the training necessary to enable participants to transform their organization and lead it on its Lean journey.

Participants who undertake their training online will be paired with an experienced municipalities mentor. This ensures that their skills are immediately applicable in a municipality environment.
Lean for Leaders & Unions

Training workshops for those who have a key role to play in continuous improvement across the municipality.

**Lean for Senior Municipal Leaders: 1-day, on-site instructor-led workshop**

This workshop identifies where a municipality is on its Lean journey, and enables senior leaders to develop a framework for continuous improvement with a high level strategy for sustainable success. Upon completion of the workshop, participants will be able to effectively sponsor, manage and sustain Lean deployment across short, medium and long-term planning cycles.

**Lean for Municipal Managers: 1-day, on-site instructor-led workshop**

This workshop helps managers be effective operational leaders in a continuous improvement environment. Training enables participants to initiate, manage, spread and sustain continuous improvement techniques within their specific area of responsibility, using their own municipality as a practical case study to develop an action plan. Participants will be department or business unit managers/directors.

**Lean for Union Executives: 1-day, on-site, instructor led workshop**

Unions have an important role to play in the successful and sustainable deployment and spread of continuous improvement. This workshop highlights and clarifies that role, exploring the need for employee engagement and emphasizing the benefits that employees can realize through embracing continuous improvement.

**Speed Leadership On-site, instructor led workshop**

Based on management processes rather than behaviours, Speed Leadership training encourages leaders to focus on time, information and information flow as the most critical parameters for leadership success. This program identifies simple pathways for improvement that are specific, actionable and effective.

**Performance Measurement On-site, instructor led workshop**

This training supports the development and effective use of performance measures across the organization, enabling municipalities to better assess, manage and evaluate the performance and value of each of the services that they provide as well as those supporting operations and systems.
Technology solutions

Making continuous improvement easier, faster and simpler.

A cloud-based management platform, purpose-built to provide real-time visibility of continuous improvement.

Management have a clear picture of all improvement programs, with real-time reports on project costs and savings, for informed decision making.

Staff manage multiple projects on a single platform, equipped with a bank of tools and templates to successfully embed a continuous improvement culture.

Purpose built

Designed to improve speed, accuracy and transparency when managing and reporting on continuous improvement activities.

- End-to-end management
- Instant access
- Real-time reporting
- Central repository
- Knowledge sharing
Measurable results

A wide range of Canadian municipalities have realized significant improvements through our tailored services.

**Process: Building permit review**

**Requirement:** Reduce the lead time for building permit application processing by at least 30%.

**Solution:** The building permitting system involves various departments and impacts multiple external stakeholders, including builders, developers, homeowners and suppliers. The total lead time to issue a permit was 21 days and the lead time to process an application permit was 6 days, causing major delays and frustration for stakeholders.

The core processes were value stream mapped, and root cause analysis confirmed that application defects (errors/missing information) caused major problems. Quick improvements were identified for implementation.

**Outcome:** By identifying and eliminating the root causes of these non-value-added activities, application processing lead time was reduced by 93% which amounted to a 24% improvement in the total lead time.

**Process: Waste management**

**Requirement:** Reduce the wait time at a residential drop-off facility, during periods of high demand.

**Solution:** During peak demand periods the facility was unable to meet the demand for service and effectively keep traffic flowing without incurring considerable wait times for customers.

A rapid improvement was conducted and the Plan-Do-Check-Act methods were applied to identify and decrease non-value-added activity.

**Outcome:** The improvement project resulted in a 35% reduction in lead time waiting for a bin. Stability and control structures were identified and implemented to prevent excessive waiting times from re-occurring.
**Process: Winter operations**

**Requirement:** Streamline weekend winter operations to meet customer service levels 90% of the time and reduce overtime costs during snow by 25%.

**Solution:** Winter operations are maintained by parks operations staff. When a snow event occurs on the weekend, parks staff run snow/ice maintenance on a volunteer basis. Overtime costs during these periods can use up to 30% of the overall winter budget.

5W2H problem solving was applied to help uncover and prioritize root causes and a rapid improvement event was undertaken to implement solutions that included a 7-day staffing model.

**Outcome:** Once implemented, the new staffing model will reduce overtime costs by 25%. This equates to $18,000 annual savings from the operations budget.

**Process: Works operations and maintenance**

**Requirement:** Improve the works and technical services demand maintenance process.

**Solution:** This municipality’s works department was receiving more than 4,500 annual demand service requests, resulting in over 1,900 construction work orders performed by contractors on an annual basis. Non-value-added activities were causing multiple challenges within the demand maintenance process.

Several key tools were applied, including value stream mapping to document the process and highlight improvement opportunities. SIPOC and 5W2H were utilized to properly scope key problems and ensure that all team members were aligned on root causes and solutions. Rapid improvement events were undertaken to implement key solutions.

**Outcome:** Supervisor field inspection lead time was reduced by 20% and cycle time was reduced by 16%. Maintenance contract inspections and work orders processing time will be reduced by 30% along with a 20% reduction in overall lead time. This results in cost savings and avoidance of over $500K annually.
Request a proposal

Leading Edge Group can discuss the unique needs of your municipality and provide you with a tailored proposal for consultancy or training. Please call or email our Program Director, John Whelton, for further information.

John Whelton | Program Director
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“As an organization that is lean from a staff resource perspective, the introduction of continuous improvement and Lean management strategies has been a natural fit with our corporate culture. This focus fits with our mission to be a best practices leader in municipal government and has equipped us with tools to advance our strategic plan with innovation and excellence. Callie is a master of her trade and her training style fits very well with our culture.”

Lisa Ainsworth, CHRL, Director Corporate Services, Northumberland County

Our clients

[Logos of various municipalities and regions]