

CASE STUDY: City of Spokane

IT Project Management - Municipal Utility System Modernization

The City of Spokane (the City) initiated an IT project in 2018 to implement a new utility information system (UIS). Its Project Management Office (PMO) did not have the capacity within its team to manage a project of this size and complexity. The PMO needed a senior IT Project Manager (PM) to manage the process of selecting a new system and implementation partner. The City turned to Nuvodia for help.

About City of Spokane

Spokane is located in the heart of the Inland Northwest (INW) and is the second most populous city (209,000+) in the State of Washington. Encompassing around 60 square miles, it has been the largest city between Seattle and Minneapolis and between Calgary and Salt Lake City since its founding in 1810.

The City provides water, wastewater, storm water, and solid waste collection services to more than 70,000 residential and business customers. Each year, the City bills about \$150M in service charges. Collection rates consistently are above 99 percent of billings, representing 20-25% of annual revenue.

Its PMO develops and promotes the application of leading project management processes. Its staff is comprised of project management, business analyst, and continuous improvement specialists. As a shared service, they manage the delivery of projects in support of sponsors and stakeholders across over 50 unique departments.

City of Spokane's Challenges

The City's utility billing system was over 20 years old and well past its end-of-life. It lacked the features of a modern enterprise application and suffered from an antiquated user interface, disparate workflows, information silos, no mobile access, insufficient reporting and data analytics.

The utility billing system was used widely across the City by many departments. Selecting a modern UIS that met the needs of this diverse mix of end users, business processes, and stakeholders was going to require a blend of soft skills, technical acumen, and professional experience. This would require the focus and attention of an experienced IT project manager, capable of navigating the organizational and technical complexities involved in implementing a generational technology investment such as the UIS.

"The Nuvodia PM's leadership and application of Project Management principles were instrumental to the City's ability to successfully develop and issue a very complex RFP that involved the coordination of stakeholders across multiple Department across the City." - *Dusty Fredrickson (City of Spokane, Senior Project Manager)*

Provides water, wastewater, storm water, and solid waste collection services to over



70,000

residential and business customers



\$150M

Amount billed in service charges; representing 20-25% of annual revenue

NUVODIA

nuvodia.com

CASE STUDY: City of Spokane

Nuvodia and City of Spokane's Solution

Nuvodia provided the City an experienced Project Management Professional (PMP) well versed in commercial-off-the-shelf (COTS) application selection and implementation, contract and vendor management.

During project kick-off, the Nuvodia PM placed emphasis on building relationships with core project team members and understanding the business needs of each department affected by the new system. They focused on learning and assimilating to the processes, tools, and organizational dynamics of the PMO, while blending their own methods and ideas to the areas of stakeholder management, project governance, and communication.

The Nuvodia PM was able to bring together stakeholders from 8 different City departments including Public Works and Information Technology (IT), and managed the scoping process to align on a common set of goals, business and technical requirements. They facilitated the vendor selection process in partnership with the project sponsor from Public Works and core team members from IT and the PMO. This included successful completion of the project initiation phase and related milestones:

- Develop Project Charter and Request for Proposal (RFP)
- Issue RFP to Vendors
- Evaluate RFP Responses and Select Vendor
- Execute Contract with Vendor
- Kickoff Implementation Phase

The selected UIS platform will integrate with other critical applications including the customer relationship management (CRM), fleet, financial and asset management systems. This will result in better data quality and integration, tighter and more standardized business processes, and increased visibility to daily operations. Customers will benefit by having better access to view and make updates to their account, understand their usage patterns, and pay their bill through a new web experience, mobile application, or enhanced paper bill.

The Result - Strengthened Relationship & IT Project Ready for Success

The project management discipline, communication, and collaboration applied by the Nuvodia PM during the scoping and vendor selection process helped strengthen the relationship between Public Works and IT. This highlighted the value of good project management to a broad cross-section of departments, stakeholders, and leaders. As a result, the City is poised to modernize one of the most critical and aged systems within its technology portfolio with the full support of its organization.

By *[Josh Andrade \(Nuvodia, Marketing Specialist\)](#)* & *[Bryan De Donato \(Nuvodia, Director, IT Delivery\)](#)*

Citations

- Nuvodia -[Project Management](#) | Nuvodia -[IT Staffing Services](#) | City of Spokane -[About Spokane](#) | City of Spokane - [Public Works](#)

