



This issue focuses on RRHA activities and accomplishments under Strategic Plan Goal #3 - Efficiency and Fiscal Responsibility.

## HCVP Pilots New Process Improvement Approach



*Shawn Williams, John Hill and Sharon Valentine with Project Team: Leah Fremouw (P&R), Enjonee Payne (TSO), Donna Williams (HCVP), Tammy Grubb (HCVP), Sherri William (IT)*

On March 13-17, 2009, the Housing Choice Voucher Program (HCVP) conducted its first Kaizen Event.

**What is a Kaizen Event?** Kaizen is a Japanese word meaning incremental continuous improvement.

- "Kai" Means "Change"
- "Zen" Means "Good"

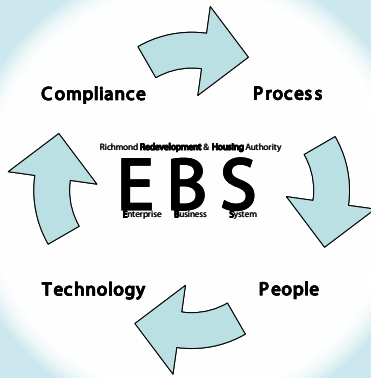
Lean\* is a well-known process improvement methodology that is based on concepts that originated in Japan (Toyota Production System) and has been adopted by manufacturing and service companies throughout the United States. Lean Kaizen is a proven approach to continuously implement change and get rid of waste.

**A Kaizen Event is a focused, short-term project to improve a process.** It involves cross-functional teams working together. The teams use analytical techniques to identify improvement opportunities, and then they work to implement the chosen improvements.

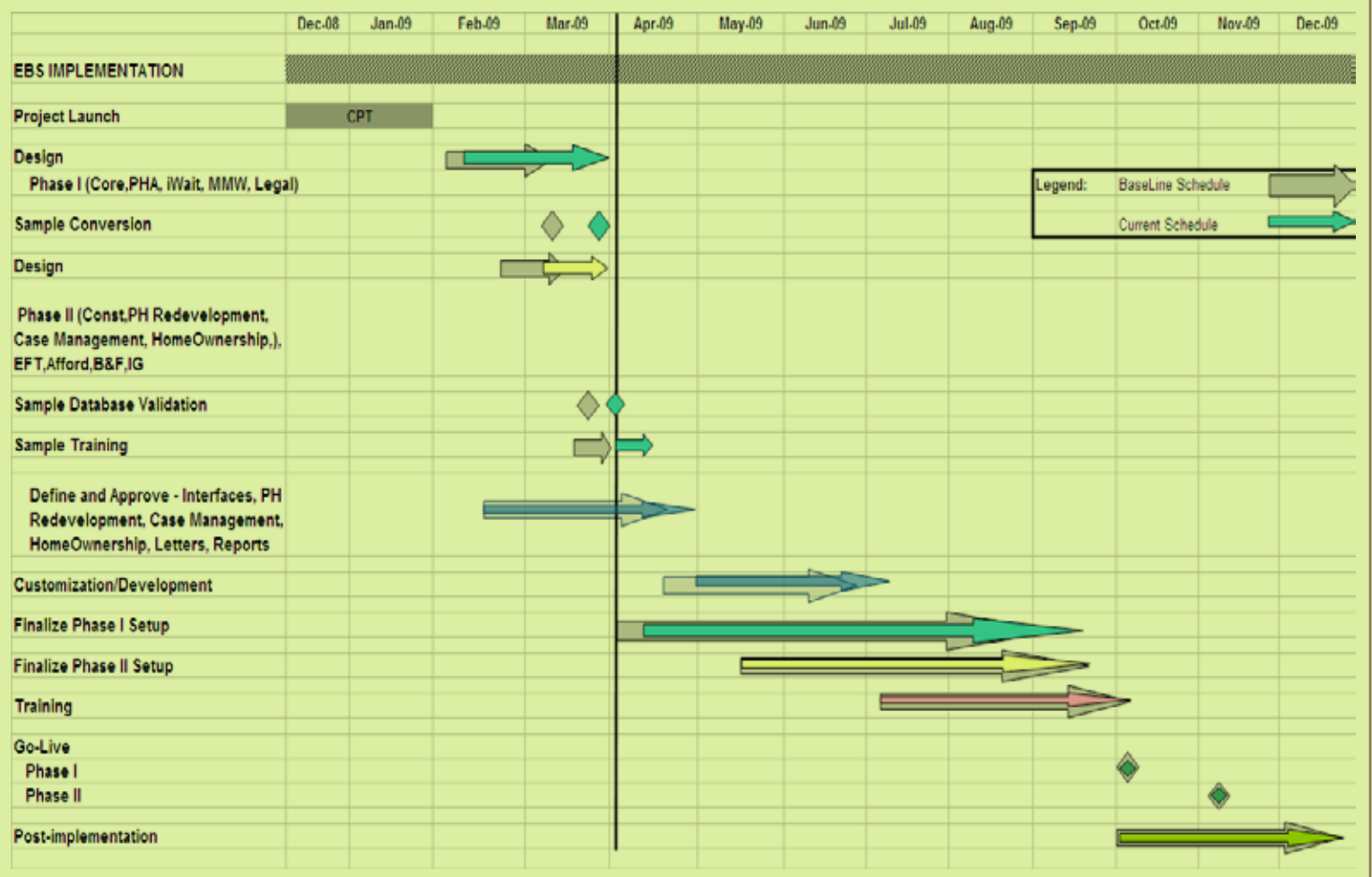
Five employees representing the Tenant Selection Office (TSO), HCVP, Planning & Research (P&R) and IT focused on improving the Request for Tenancy Approval (RFTA)/lease-up process. The team developed and began implementation on several ideas that will reduce unnecessary paperwork, potentially reduce incomplete paperwork and improve process efficiency. Thanks Team for a great effort!

\* See the "Thinking Like a Business" section for additional information on Lean. For more information on conducting a Kaizen Event, contact Ann Lis at 780-4193.

## New Enterprise Business System (EBS)



Yardi Voyager design and training sessions are underway, and a major milestone – Sample Conversion-- was completed as of March 27th. As a result of the sample conversion, test wait list, tenant and vendor data was loaded on Voyager and project team members are reviewing the data for accuracy and completeness. **See the Gantt chart below for project milestones and timeframes.**



# Infrastructure Architecture and Data Center Improvements



In conjunction with the EBS implementation, RRHA IT has been reviewing the current IT Infrastructure. The IT team identified a number of improvements that are needed to supply the robust and stable computing

and networking environment required to access the Yardi Voyager software via the Internet. The following has been completed to date:

- **A study recommending** the relocation of all our computer rooms to Brook Road and an upgrading of our telecommunication equipment and circuits. Target is to complete construction and relocation to the new data center before the October 1 Yardi Go-Live.
- **Approval to proceed** with replacement of aging networking equipment and acquisition of a faster internet service provider. These upgrades are underway and should be completed by May of this year.

## Resident Services to be Restructured for Enhanced Service and Efficiency

RRHA's Resident Services department will be restructured to serve as the Authority's focal point for all resident related services and initiatives. This new department will integrate selected services of the former Resident Services and the former Capacity Building Office groups. Its objective will be to maximize a wide variety of opportunities for public housing and housing choice voucher families that will increase self-esteem, confidence, independence and self-sufficiency through comprehensive services and programs.

After a thorough recruiting process, Grace Lewis, who formally managed the Capacity

Building Office, was promoted to the position of Director of Resident Services. She will be responsible for the design, coordination and delivery of services to families including, but not limited to, relocation, recreation and social activities, workforce training, computer training, sports and arts activities, as well as various economic self-sufficiency programs.

Says John Hill, DED of Affordable Housing, "A strategic view of this global operation will provide us with better focus on our operations and better accountability for our business. Residents will receive a high level of professional care that will have very positive outcomes."



# Thinking like a Business — Eliminating the 8 Wastes in Business Processes

Whether RRHA is facing budget challenges or business is good, everyone should seek to improve how they perform their work. **Lean**, a process improvement methodology, is based on a set of principles, concepts and techniques designed for the relentless pursuit of the **elimination of waste** in business processes.

The goal of **Lean** is to produce an efficient just-in-time system that will deliver to our customers:

- **Exactly** what they need
- **When** they need it
- In the **quantity** they need
- In the right **sequence**
- **Without defects**
- And **at the lowest possible cost.**

Below are 8 wastes that may be found in any type of process. (Remember the acronym, D-O-W-N-T-I-M-E.) Look to identify and eliminate waste in your everyday activities.

**Defects:** Work containing errors or lacking something; it does not meet expectations (Examples: Data entry errors in MLS or Visual Homes, incomplete forms from clients, installing a cracked window or defective appliance)

**Overproduction:** Producing more than needed or more quickly than needed by the customer; excess process output (Examples: Producing extra reports or copies; making ready a 4-bedroom unit with no 4-BR family waiting)

**Waiting:** Idle time when information, materials, people or machines are not ready; things don't happen when they should (Examples: Batch methods, choppy workflow; waiting on passed inspection before voucher lease-up)

**Not Maximizing Intellect:** Not soliciting input from the employees doing the work; lack of cross-training or sharing of information (Example: Multiple staff members independently working with same client and not coordinating activities/communications)

**Transportation:** Movement of materials or product that does not add value (Examples: Moving materials or paperwork from one workstation or site to another)

**Inventory:** Keeping more on hand than the customer needs (Examples: work in progress, in-and out-baskets, excess materials on hand)

**Motion:** Movement of and by people that does not add value (poor ergonomics) (Examples: Extra steps, extra data entry, information or materials not at point of use; searching, reaching, lifting)

**Excess Processing:** Efforts that add no value from the customer viewpoint; doing more than you need to within a process (Examples: Preparing extra copies, reports not acted upon, excessive sign-offs and approvals)

If you have ideas for other "Thinking Like a Business" articles, let us know! Contact Ann Lis at 780-4193 or [aelis@rrha.state.va.us](mailto:aelis@rrha.state.va.us).

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UpDate

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