Selecting and Prioritizing the Right Projects in the Public Sector

50 YEARS of SERVICE 1974–2024

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Biography

Gary has 18 years of experience in the private sector and 20 in the public sector with a deep background in projects, having been a Professional Engineer, Project Manager, Portfolio Manager and PMO Manager. In these sectors, he led diverse project teams in the fields of engineering and construction, power generation, energy management, corporate strategic projects, innovation and IT.

Gary has extensive experience working on international projects, having spent many years living and working across North America, South America, Asia, Africa and the Middle East. Gary is also an Excellence in Teaching award-winning instructor with the University of Toronto School of Continuing Studies, teaching part-time since 2015. He is currently Director of IT Solutions at the Regional Municipality of Peel in Ontario.

Some Basic Definitions

Project

A temporary endeavour undertaken to create a unique project service or result

PMBOK® Guide (4th ed.), PMI

Program

A program is a group of related projects managed in a coordinated manner to obtain benefits not available from managing them individually
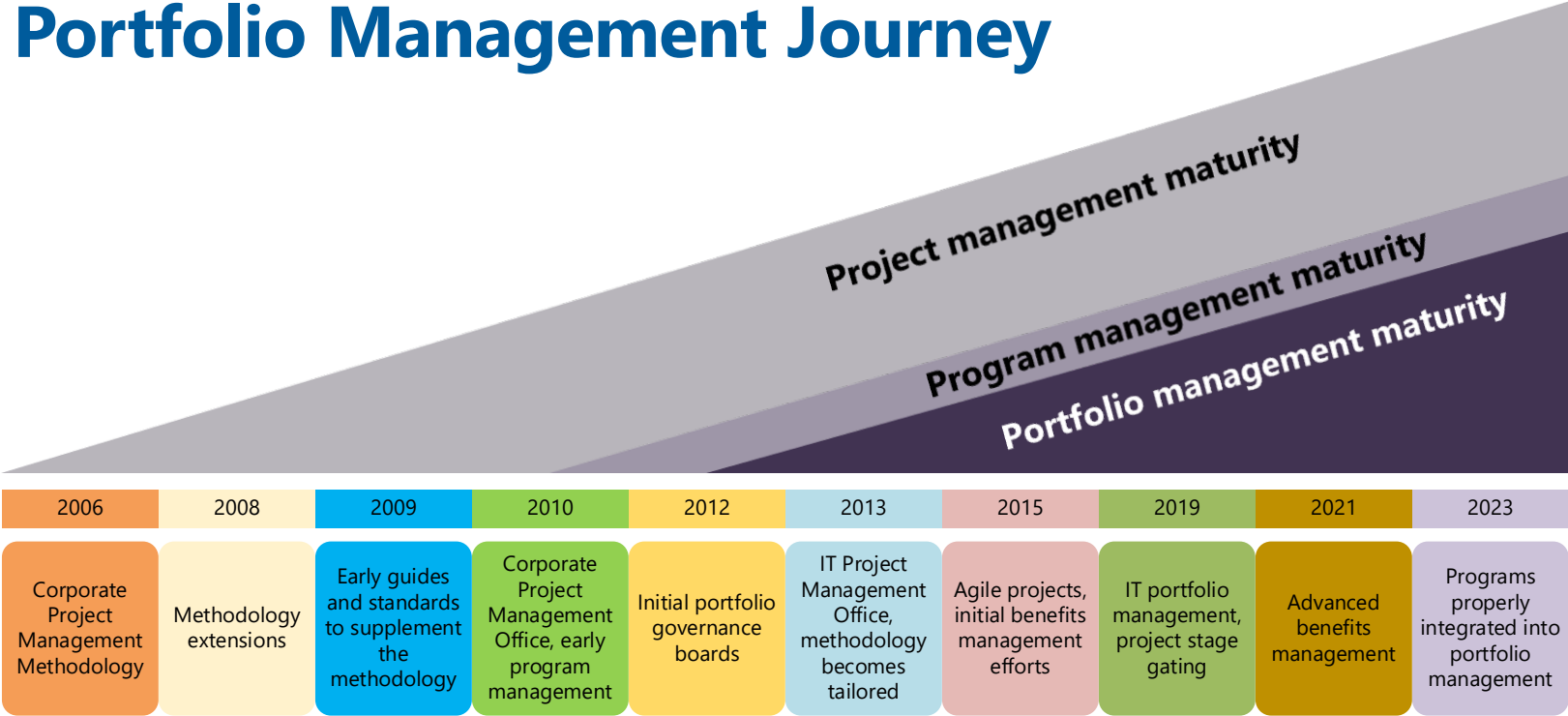
The Standard for Program Management (2nd ed.), PMI

Portfolio

A collection of projects, programs and other activities that are grouped together to meet strategic business objectives

The Standard for Portfolio Management (4th ed.), PMI

The Region of Peel's Project, Program and Portfolio Management Journey

Project management maturity

Program management maturity

Portfolio management maturity

| 2006	2008	2009	2010	2012	2013	2015	2019	2021	2023
Corporate Project Management Methodology	Methodology extensions	Early guides and standards to supplement the methodology	Corporate Project Management Office, early program management	Initial portfolio governance boards	IT Project Management Office, methodology becomes tailored	Agile projects, initial benefits management efforts	IT portfolio management, project stage gating	Advanced benefits management	Programs properly integrated into portfolio management

Key Lesson Learned

The foundations must be in place:

Your ability to select and prioritize the right projects to do will remain at a low level until your organization's project management maturity level is sufficiently high.

IT Project Portfolio Management at the Region of Peel
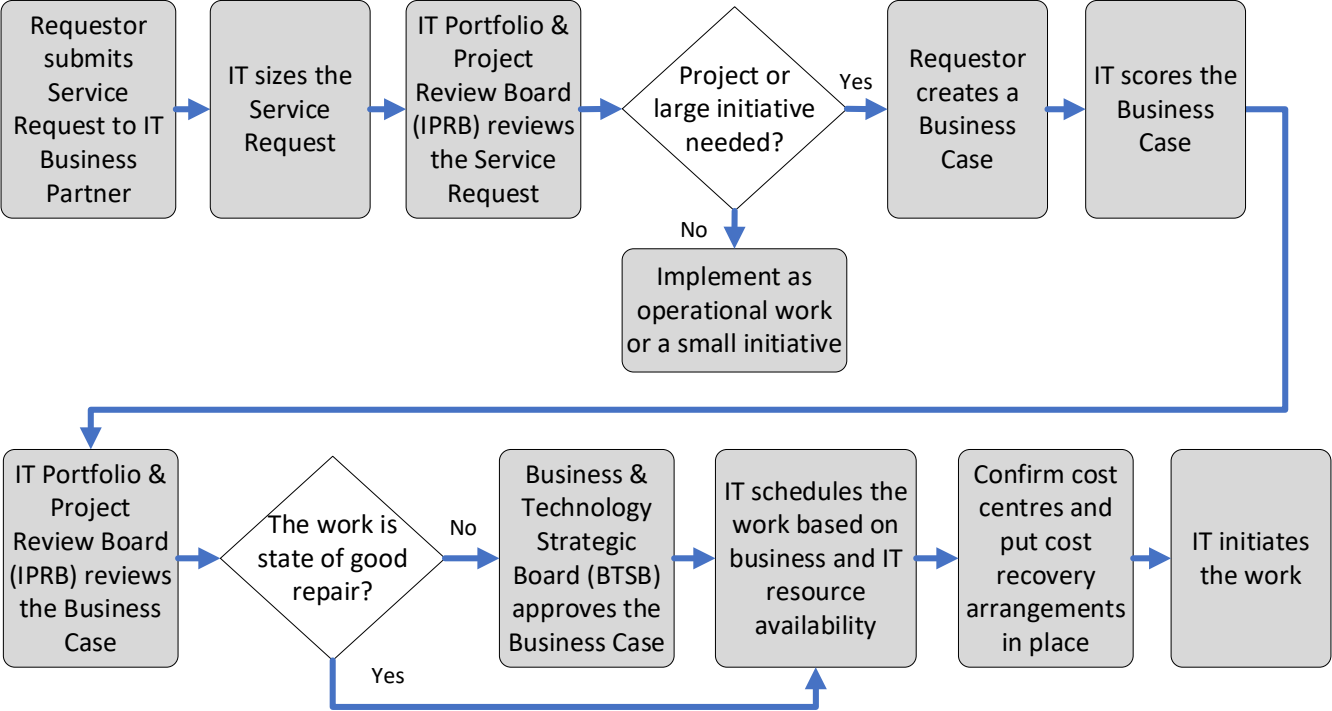
Business Problems Solved by Launching the IT Intake & Prioritization Process Relating to Projects and Initiatives

Multiple intake channels for client requests, leading to side of the desk work and unprioritized work being done	Too many project requests coming forward that were not demonstrating clear business value to the organization
Arbitrary decision-making on prioritizing client requests	Poorly written business cases, or no business case written at all
Lack of clarity on whether a client request is a project, or not, and therefore how to handle it	Poor cost and resource estimates in business cases, because some teams in IT were missed out
Lack of clarity on which IT teams should be involved in implementation and which team should lead it	Lack of understanding of the scale and degree of complexity of a client request
Both clients and IT sometimes not knowing the status of a client request	Incomplete knowledge and transparency of who is working on what in IT
Not all IT teams that should have been included in the decision-making on the needed technology solution were actually included	The uncontrolled growth of technical debt at the Region and the number of software application that IT is expected to support