

# Lean Yellow Belt Practical Application



# Lean Yellow Belt Project – Building Permit Model Review

## Project Team

|                      |  |
|----------------------|--|
| <b>Project Lead:</b> | Leslie Collins – Municipal Building Official   |
| <b>Team Members:</b> | Jordan MacLaughlin, Nicole Jutzi, Tim Benedict |
| <b>Organization:</b> | City of Kitchener                              |



Completing my Yellow Belt training gave me a fresh perspective on how processes work. It encouraged me to think critically about how we can make things smoother and more efficient; especially from the applicant's point of view. I now feel more confident bringing forward ideas and suggestions to improve our projects, knowing I have the tools that Lean has taught me to question where the bottleneck may be with our processes.

- **Leslie Collins**  
Municipal Building Official



## Challenges

- Builders often submit the same house model multiple times; each application requires a full review of all documents
- Large batches of permit applications (40+ in a single day) create review bottlenecks
- Different plan examiners reviewing the same model cause inconsistent results
- Missing the 10-day MMHA review timeline delays projects and increases costs for builders
- High workload increases stress on examiners and may require overtime



## Objectives

- Complete model reviews before permit applications are submitted
- Limit model review to houses only
- Provide builders with a standardized procedure based on the model review process
- Ensure every plan examiner reviews the model once
- Reduce duplicate work and increase daily permit processing capacity



## Solution



Held pre-submission meetings with builders to clearly communicate expectations and support smooth implementation



Added a certified plans folder in the AMANDA system (municipal permitting and licensing software), and maintained an Excel tracking log to monitor review status and assignments



Continued use of Sharefile for document submissions to ensure consistent and centralized access



Preparing a formal, standardized procedure for all builders based on the pilot program, targeted for broader rollout



## Results



The pilot was successful, and two active builders are now using the program



Examiners can now process at least double the number of permits in a day



The certified plans folder in AMANDA streamlines tracking and reduces time spent managing reviews



Builders are happy the model review option is back and have adapted well after initial adjustments



Builders begin projects with a clear understanding of expectations for participation, established through pre-start meetings



## Impact

This Lean Yellow Belt project streamlined the model review process, increasing daily capacity, ensuring consistent outcomes, and creating a smoother experience for builders.

# Lean Yellow Belt Project – Improving Job Postings at the City of Kitchener

## Project Team

**Project Lead:** Erin Wilton – Talent Management Business Partner, Human Resources

**Team Members:** Alexandra D, Anne W, Kerri H, Cindy B, Victoria T, Kerry S, Brooke J, Renee R, David G

**Organization:** City of Kitchener








The recent Lean training provided me with practical tools and a structured approach to process improvement. I was able to apply what I learned to enhance our job postings, making them more appealing, user-friendly, and accessible, while also reducing the time spent on formatting. This training has helped me approach everyday tasks with a more analytical and efficiency-focused mindset.

– Erin Wilton  
Talent Management Business Partner, Human Resources








## Challenges

-  Outdated table-based templates caused accessibility issues on mobile and for visually impaired users
-  Inconsistent formatting and green fonts weakened the City's employment brand
-  Job seekers spend an average of only 14.6 seconds reviewing a posting, indicating weak engagement
-  Redundant tasks and error corrections created inefficiencies in recruitment
-  Job postings were shared via a legacy group email, originally intended for printing, no longer aligned with modern communication or applicant tracking tools



## Objectives

-  Ensure postings are readable on mobile and accessible to those with visual impairments
-  Minimize manual, repetitive work for Recruitment Leads
-  Create consistent formatting that reflects the City's values and visual identity
-  Design concise, visually appealing postings that attract and retain job seekers' attention
-  Develop inclusive language standards and remove barriers to encourage applications from all communities



## Solution



### New Job Posting Template

Designed with input from Recruitment Leads and aligned with accessibility standards (e.g., no tables, readable fonts, clear structure)



### Inclusive and Accessible Posting Guideline

Introduced best practices for language, formatting, and outreach based on equity, diversity, and inclusion principles



### Technology Integration

Incorporated MS Pilot to assist with simplifying language while maintaining evaluation integrity



### Posting Process Redesign

- Phased in a new ATS-compatible format starting January 28, 2025
- Continued dual distribution (ATS + email) during transition
- Future plan to move fully to ATS notifications aligned with the SuccessFactors rollout in Fall 2025



### Communications and Training

Scheduled KHUB (the City's internal knowledge-sharing and communication hub) and email campaigns to support the change and educate users on the new process



## Results



A new job posting template, supported by inclusive and accessible guidelines, established a consistent, branded format that is mobile-friendly and clear for all users



MS Pilot was integrated to simplify language without compromising job evaluation integrity



The redesigned process reduced duplicate work, targeting 25% faster turnaround for existing postings and 50% for new ones



Dual ATS and email distribution ensured a smooth transition, with engagement to be measured before full rollout in Fall 2025



## Impact

This Lean Yellow Belt project successfully transformed job postings into a consistent, accessible, and engaging format. The new approach improves efficiency, strengthens the City's employment brand, and supports inclusive hiring practices



# Lean Yellow Belt Project – 5S Transformation of the PPE Room

## Project Team

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|----------------------|---|
| <b>Project Lead:</b> | <b>Jeff Irvine – Supervisor, Materials Management</b> |
| <b>Team Members:</b> | <b>Wayne Anderson, James Degen, Nic Pozzobon</b>      |
| <b>Organization:</b> | <b>City of Kitchener</b>                              |







A low traffic room in the overall stores area had started out during COVID as an ideal place to store high value and/or difficult to source items, however since COVID, it had turned into a long term storage or dumping ground for items that were expired, obsolete or were simply left in that room out of sight to most. This lean project allowed me to share yellow belt lean concepts with the stores team to take this room from an unorganized assortment of items to an organized storage system of inventory and non-inventory pieces while creating a great deal of surplus storage space that is available for future needs. This exercise was completed in less than a day and proved to the entire team that with a little organization and effort long term improvement results are possible that continue to impact stores to this day.

- **Jeff Irvine**  
Supervisor, Materials Management







## Challenges

-  PPE room turned into storage for obsolete and excess items
-  With no plan established for long-term use, the space evolved into an unsupervised “junk room” over time
-  Being out of the main workflow and line of sight, it was easy to ignore, resulting in clutter and disuse
-  The room housed items with no current value, inconsistent storage methods, and poor labelling, affecting operational efficiency



## Objectives

-  Ensure the space is well defined, well labelled, and well maintained
-  Create a designated area for obsolete/TBD items, with a regular schedule to review, disposition, and action them
-  Complete Phase 2 modifications to racking to ensure it provides the best benefit for the team, and encourage future adjustments as required
-  Enable any team member, including new employees, to quickly and easily locate required items and understand why they are in the space



## Solution

The 5S methodology was executed through a structured, hands-on event on December 6, 2024, transforming the PPE Room into an organized and clearly defined storage space. Activities and outcomes were aligned with the five pillars of 5S.



### Sort

- All items in the room were sorted into “keep,” “remove,” or “TBD” piles.
- “TBD” items were revisited and removed from the room; most were redistributed to teams across INS.
- Temporary areas were created for each category during the process.



### Set in Order

- All shelves in the room were standardized: 2 rows for inventory, 1 row for non-inventory, and 4 rows marked “not to be used”.
- “Keep” items were placed back on shelves in a well-organized, well-labeled, and standardized manner.



### Shine

- All shelving units and the room itself were cleaned thoroughly to remove years’ worth of dirt and dust.



### Standardize

- Before-and-after photos were taken to document the transformation.
- Standardized labeling and layout plans were agreed upon to maintain consistency.



### Sustain

- The sustain plan was undertaken in January 2025, where all stores staff participated in re-imagining the room’s usage and layout.
- The original 5S team will meet monthly to review the room layout, ensure the original goals are maintained, and review/implement improvement ideas.
- Accountability check-ins are scheduled for 1, 3, 6, and 12-month intervals, all led by Jeff Irvine.

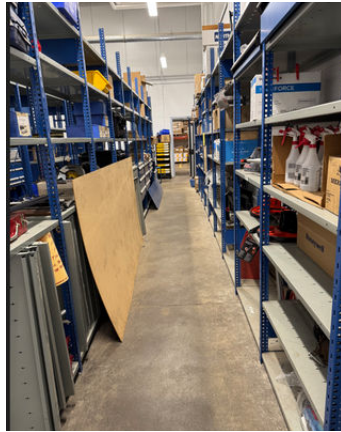
### About 5S:

5S is a Lean tool that provides a number of techniques and activities aimed at removing waste from the workplace by means of improved workplace organization, visual communication and overall cleanliness.

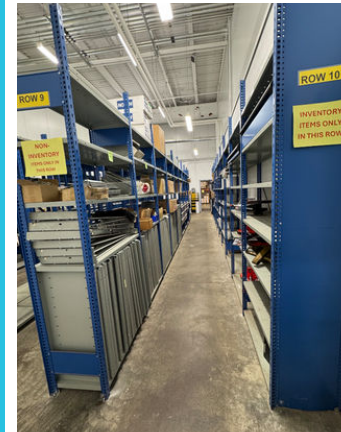
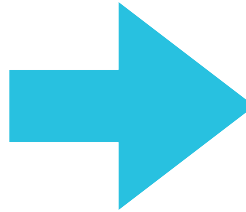


## Results

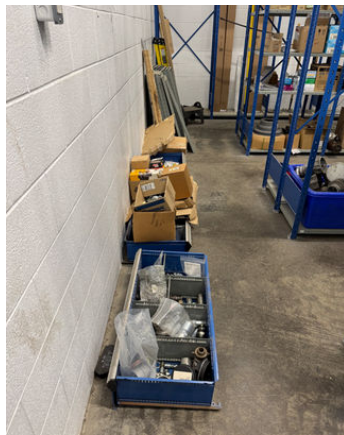
Before-and-after images demonstrate significant improvement in space utilization, tidiness, and visibility of stored items.



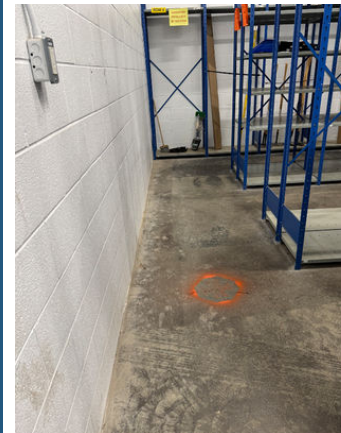
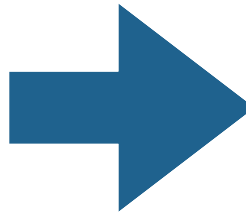
*Before*



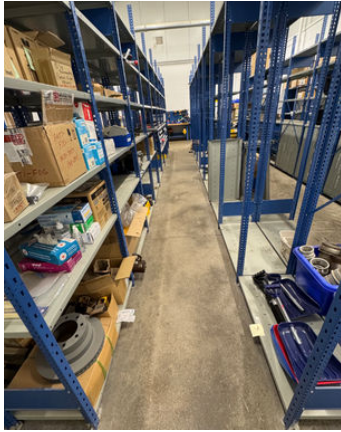
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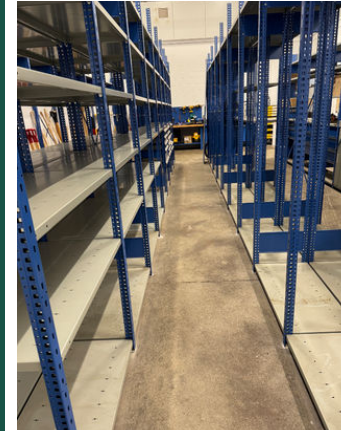
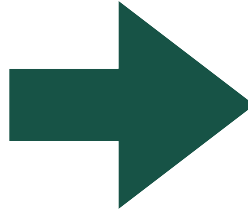
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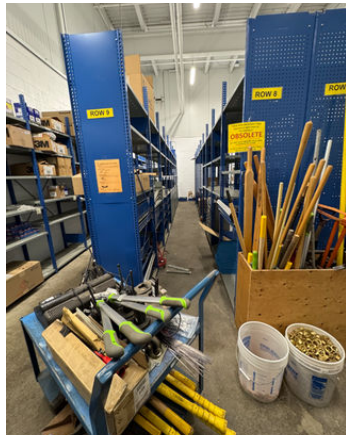
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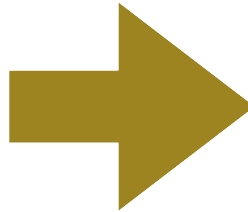
*Before*



*After*



*Before*



*After*



## Impact

This Lean Yellow Belt project successfully turned a neglected space into an organized, functional, and review-ready environment. The new layout improves efficiency, inventory control, and usability for all staff, while preparing the room for continued improvements and future flexibility.