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Project XL Process Improvements

A Faster, Simpler, More Effective Proposal Process

Why a New Process for Project XL?

In order to reduce project development costs for all parties involved, a group of dedicated representatives from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), industry, non-profit organizations, States, and other concerned stakeholder groups, have worked with EPA to “reengineer” the XL process. This effort has led to substantial improvements in how projects are designed, developed and implemented. [For more details on the Project XL program itself, please refer to the brochure: *Project XL—Good for the Environment, Good for Business, Good for Communities* or to the Project XL web site at (<http://www.epa.gov/ProjectXL>).

When Project XL was launched in 1995, there were no models to draw upon. EPA, project sponsors, states, and stakeholders all had to learn by doing. After gaining experience with actual projects, EPA and other stakeholders are now able to be more specific about what a quality proposal should contain, how decisions should be made, and what a reasonable process should entail. The “re-engineering” effort maintained XL’s initial design, but built on XL’s practical experience.

Benefits of the Revised Process

After a step-by-step evaluation of the old process, the stakeholder group created a new process that is faster, more predictable and more effective for project sponsors and other stakeholders.



The old process needed. . . .

Greater clarity in determining:

- z what makes a good proposal.
- z how to involve and assist stakeholders effectively.

Better management:

- z within the EPA decision-making process.
- z of proposal development activities within the agency, with states, and with other regulators outside of EPA.

Clearer commitment:

- z to an expeditious process by all parties at

The new process is now. . . .

Clearer and More Predictable as a result



- of:
 - a *Best Practices Guide for Proposal Development* (written especially for project sponsors)
 - a *Stakeholder Involvement Guide*
 - Technical Assistance for Stakeholders, and
 - Assistance with convening stakeholder groups.

Faster as a result of:

- a *Guide for EPA Teams* (and training for new teams.)
- Project Management Schedules, including milestones

Stronger as a result of:

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all levels.

early EPA senior management involvement, and clearer roles and responsibilities for all participants.

Sample Results of the New Process

Evidence of these improvements have already been seen in several XL projects currently under development (e.g., Atlantic Steel, New England Labs Consortium, and International Paper). In the Atlantic Steel XL Project in Atlanta, GA, for example, the project sponsor used the Best Practices for Proposal Development guide, resulting in a quality proposal which was selected by EPA for Final Project Agreement development within three months of submission. In addition, a cohesive EPA review team was formed with support from upper management, and an accelerated project management schedule has been used. As a result, the Atlantic Steel project is on track to have a final project agreement signed less than six months after initial discussions with the project sponsor began.

Description of the New Process Phases

The revised XL process is divided into shorter, more focused project phases, with an estimated time frame of 6 months to a year, as opposed to 18 months or more for the old process.

The XL Proposal Process		
Phase	Estimated Time*	Description
<i>Pre-Proposal</i>	20 - 30 days	Informal discussions between EPA, State and potential sponsors
<i>Proposal Development</i>	50 - 75 days	EPA helps sponsor develop proposal concepts into complete proposal package
<i>EPA & State Proposal Review</i>	40 - 60 days	EPA makes decision whether to proceed with developing an FPA
<i>Final Project Agreement Development, and a Federal Register Notice, with a site specific rule (if appropriate)</i>	90 - 180 days	EPA, Sponsor, State and stakeholders work to develop FPA

* provided the project sponsor, EPA and the State agree with the proposed schedules.

For More Information

More information about Project XL is available on the Internet at <http://www.epa.gov/ProjectXL>, or via Project XL's Information Line at 202-260-5754.