# The Government Buyer's Guide to Capital Program Management Software

## A Practical Procurement Guide for State Agencies, Local Governments, Utilities, and Transportation Organizations

Modernizing capital programs is more than new technology. It starts with understanding your requirements, getting stakeholders on board, and selecting a platform that can support and evolve with your organization.

State agencies, counties, utilities, and departments of transportation are managing increasingly complex capital programs. Funding sources are expanding. Reporting requirements continue to grow. Public scrutiny is constant. At the same time, many organizations are still relying on disconnected systems, spreadsheets, email, and manual processes to manage critical capital investments.

You need a platform that can support how your organization works today and adapt as funding, priorities, leadership, regulations, and capital programs evolve.
This guide outlines the key considerations public-sector owners should evaluate before procuring a project management information system (PMIS) or capital program management platform.

# Public agencies are rethinking project management technology

Across state and local government, the pressure to deliver capital programs has never been greater. Organizations are managing:

- Bigger capital improvement programs
- More complex funding structures
- Greater demands for transparency
- Increased audit and reporting requirements
- Growing cybersecurity threats
- Expanding project portfolios without additional staff

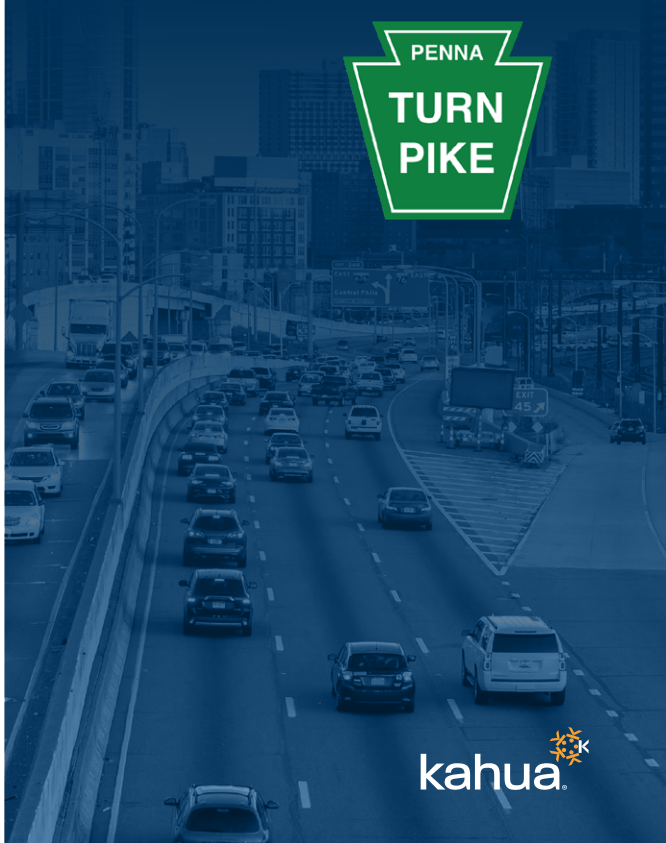
Many agencies find themselves operating with project information spread across spreadsheets, shared drives, email, finance systems, scheduling tools, and department-specific applications. Capital decisions are portfolio decisions. With a connected system of record, it's easier to understand where programs stand and what actions should be taken next.

## Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission

The Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission (PTC) had a legacy project management system that was increasingly hard to update. They determined that a modern, consolidated platform was needed to manage a growing capital program.

The system's architecture created data ownership problems between subcontractors, architects, and engineers. To streamline project delivery, the commission evaluated its systems, gathered stakeholder input, and selected Kahua to support its capital program management needs.

By using Kahua, PTC saved more than $6.4 million per year, integrated legacy and third-party applications, improved collaboration, and automated a lot of processes that had previously been manual.




# Before you start procurement

The most successful software procurements begin with organizational alignment. Before evaluating vendors, establish a shared understanding of the outcomes your agency is trying to achieve.

## Define success

Ask:

- What problems are we trying to solve?
- What information do executives need to make decisions?
- What reporting obligations do we have to boards, regulators, funding agencies, and the public?
- What manual processes create the most risk today?
- How will we measure success one year after implementation?

# The 10 areas every public owner should evaluate

## 1 Portfolio visibility

Many systems manage projects. Far fewer help organizations manage portfolios. Public-sector owners consistently identify portfolio visibility as one of their most important technology requirements.

- [ ] Can leadership see all active projects in one place?
- [ ] Can programs be grouped by department, region, district, or funding source?
- [ ] Can risks be identified before they impact budgets or schedules?
- [ ] Can information roll up from projects into portfolio dashboards?

## 2 Funding management

Government funding usually comes from multiple sources. Projects often include a combination of:

- Federal funds
- State funds
- Grants
- Bonds
- Utility revenue
- Capital appropriations
- Local funding

- [ ] Can funding sources be tracked throughout the project lifecycle?
- [ ] Can funding rules be applied consistently?
- [ ] Can reporting be generated for reimbursement and audit purposes?
- [ ] Can stakeholders understand the status and availability of every funding source?

**Your platform should help you manage funding complexity, not create more of it.**

## 3 Cost management and forecasting

Cost management should provide more than historical reporting. Leaders need insight into future outcomes.

- [ ] Can the platform track commitments, changes, invoices, and forecasts?
- [ ] Can project teams identify potential issues before overruns occur?
- [ ] Can forecast data be rolled up across multiple projects and programs?
- [ ] Can finance teams trust the data used for decision-making?

## 4 Transparency and accountability

Public-sector projects operate under a unique level of scrutiny, where boards, auditors, regulators, elected officials, and community stakeholders require access to project information.

- [ ] Can reports be generated quickly?
- [ ] Is real-time project information easy to access and verify?
- [ ] Can documentation be retained and accessed when needed?
- [ ] Can the platform support audit readiness and public accountability?

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## 5 Security and compliance

Security reviews are a standard part of software procurement. Government agencies increasingly prioritize security reviews when evaluating cloud software solutions.

- [ ] Does the vendor support government security requirements?
- [ ] Can user access and permissions be managed appropriately?
- [ ] Is data ownership clearly defined?
- [ ] Can the platform support future security requirements?

## 6 Configurability

Your processes will change. Your software should also have the ability to evolve to meet changing processes and new requirements. Government owners consistently rank configurability among the most valuable PMIS capabilities.

- [ ] Can workflows be modified without custom development?
- [ ] Can different departments manage projects in their own way while preserving portfolio-level visibility?
- [ ] Can governance evolve over time?
- [ ] Will every future change require professional services?

## 7 Integrations

Capital program management doesn't happen in isolation. Most agencies rely on:

- ERP systems
- Financial systems
- GIS platforms
- Scheduling solutions
- Asset management systems
- Procurement tools

- [ ] Can data move efficiently between systems?
- [ ] Does the platform reduce duplicate entry?
- [ ] Does the agency maintain ownership of its data?
- [ ] Can integrations support future modernization efforts?

## 8 Implementation approach

Implementation and adoption matter as much as technology.

- [ ] Does the vendor understand public-sector capital programs?
- [ ] Can they provide relevant references?
- [ ] What implementation methodology do they recommend?
- [ ] How is training handled?

## 9 Long-term adaptability

Most agencies replace PMIS platforms every 10 to 20 years. Your choice of system should support long-term growth.

- [ ] Can the platform support future programs?
- [ ] Can it adapt to leadership and regulatory changes?
- [ ] Can it scale across departments?
- [ ] Can it support new funding requirements?

## 10 Asset lifecycle continuity

Construction is only one phase of the asset lifecycle. Project data needs to be available when construction ends.

- [ ] Can project information support operations?
- [ ] Can asset data be captured throughout delivery?
- [ ] Can handover processes be streamlined?
- [ ] Does the platform help preserve institutional knowledge?

# Special considerations by agency type

## State Agencies

State agencies need a PMIS that proves control over public dollars with clear cost, funding, risk, and progress visibility across every capital project.

Focus on:

- Enterprise governance
- Cross-department visibility
- Legislative reporting
- Long-term capital planning

## Cities and Counties

Cities and counties need a system that can track, report, and defend decisions with clear visibility into funding, costs, risks and progress.

Focus on:

- Transparency
- Public accountability
- Capital improvement program management
- Executive reporting

## Utilities

Utilities need to connect capital work, funding, compliance and asset data, helping teams manage reliability programs, regulatory reporting, and risk across every project.

Focus on:

- Regulatory reporting
- Funding traceability
- Asset lifecycle management
- Infrastructure resilience

## Departments of Transportation

Transportation organizations often require strong portfolio management, funding management, and reporting capabilities to manage complex capital programs.

Focus on:

- Program-level visibility
- Funding management
- Interagency coordination
- Multi-year transportation planning

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# Why public-sector owners choose Kahua

Kahua was built for owners accountable for complex capital programs. Unlike project-centric tools that focus primarily on individual projects, Kahua helps organizations manage programs and portfolios while maintaining visibility into every project, funding source, cost, document, and decision.

Public-sector organizations use Kahua to:

- Improve portfolio visibility
- Manage complex funding structures
- Support governance and accountability
- Standardize processes while maintaining flexibility
- Connect planning, delivery, and handover
- Adapt as programs, regulations, and priorities evolve

Kahua supports state agencies, local governments, utilities, transportation organizations, and public authorities deliver critical infrastructure and community investments.

## Passaic Valley Water Commission

Facing new regulations, the Passaic Valley Water Commission (PVWC) launched a large-scale initiative to replace 6,500 lead and galvanized steel service lines across its service area.

To support this complex program, which included thousands of door-to-door inspections and extensive field coordination, PVWC partnered with CDM Smith and leveraged Kahua's project management platform. Kahua provided the visibility and control needed to track inventory, streamline construction activities, and support successful program delivery.

**"Kahua's app helps us maintain our high-quality standards"**

**Brian Kearney, PWVC**
**Project Manager**

# Procurement readiness checklist

## Before issuing an RFP, can you answer yes to the following?

- [ ] We have documented our business requirements.
- [ ] We have executive sponsorship.
- [ ] We understand our reporting requirements.
- [ ] We have identified integration needs.
- [ ] We have defined security review expectations.
- [ ] We understand our funding management requirements.
- [ ] We have established evaluation criteria.
- [ ] We have identified long-term program goals.
- [ ] We have considered lifecycle and asset management needs.
- [ ] We are evaluating solutions based on future adaptability, not just current requirements.

**Get started**

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