

I. Section 4 – Understanding and Approach to M&E Services

4.3 M&E Understanding and Approach to System Change Requests (4B)

RFP # 5.3.3.3 (RFP Table # 42)

4.3.2 Approach To Improving the Existing SCR Process

Item# ME-UA10

Describe your approach to improving the existing CalSAWS SCR process. Include solutions to deliver changes more quickly to end users, including improving processes, tools, RWR and test methodology improvements. Explain how your staffing levels defined within Attachment B13 – M&E Staffing Worksheet align with your approach. Justification for staffing levels below the current efforts described in Section 3 must be strongly supported.

Refer to the SCR scenario described in Section 6.3.10.7, M&E CalFresh ABAWD SCR Price (Schedule 7). As part of demonstrating your approach to improving the SCR process, explain your methodology for developing and implementing the CalFresh ABAWD SCR.

4.3.2.1 Our Approach to Improving the Existing SCR Process

In this section, we describe our approach to improving the existing CalSAWS system change request (SCR) process. This includes our proposed solutions that deliver changes to end users more quickly, as well as improving associated processes, tools, the Release When Ready (RWR) process, and test methodology. We also explain how our staffing levels as defined in Attachment B13 – M&E Staffing Worksheet align with our approach to improve the existing SCR process, with justifications as appropriate.

Key Success Factors

- Change enacted across the organization, not just within processes
- Enthusiasm and commitment via an internal branding strategy
- Acceptance of iterative design and development methods
- Parties educated on iterative development process and its demonstrated value

Current SCR Process

To demonstrate our approach to improving the SCR process, let's begin by reviewing a high-level summary of the current SCR process. In Figure 4-1 we detail each of the current SCR phases, along with the typical duration, description of activities, and the challenges associated with each. These phases and durations are directly from Figure 29 - SCR Policy Timeline in section 3.14.1 of the CalSAWS M&O RFP.

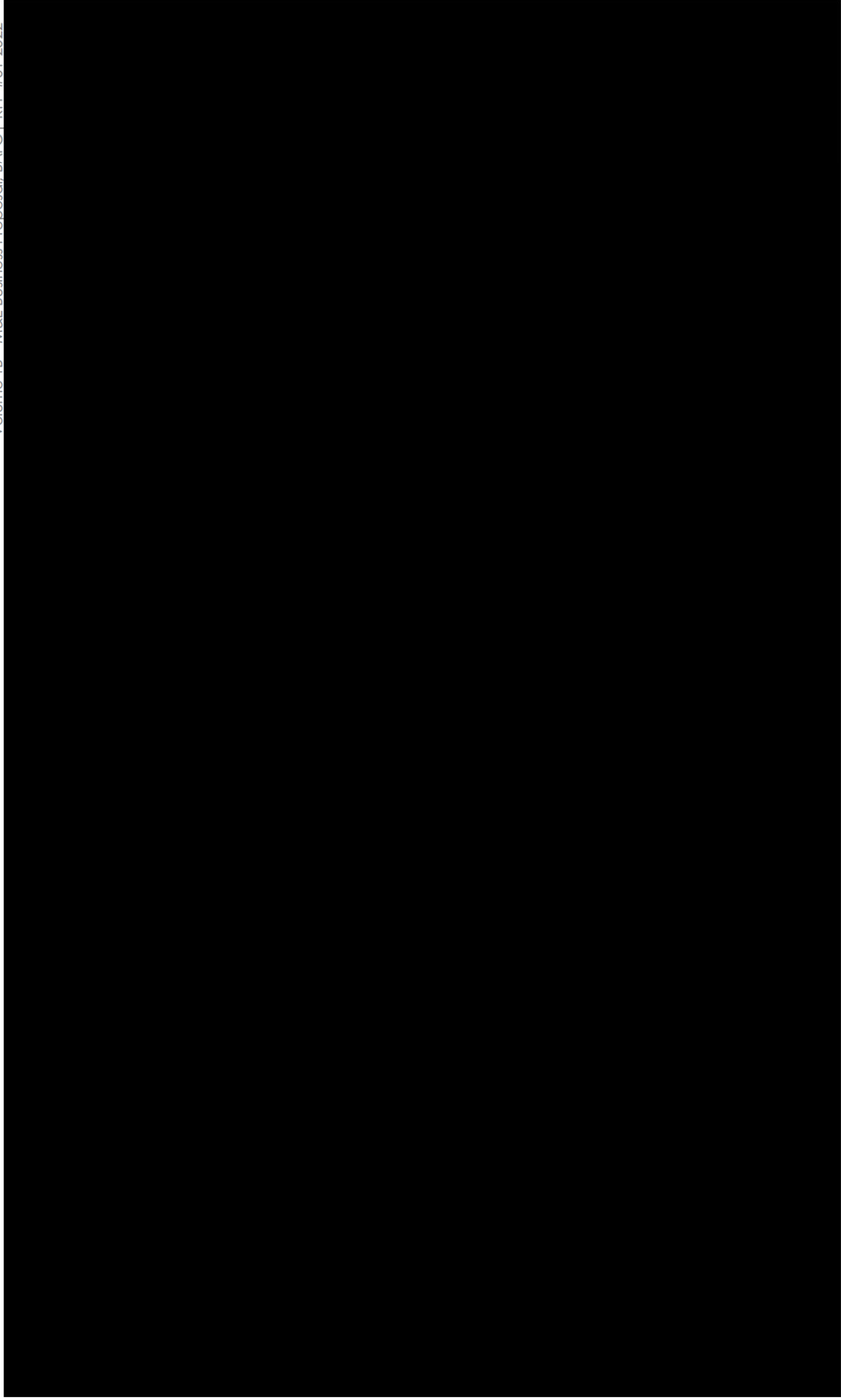


Figure 4-1. The current SCR process contains many dependent activities which extend the duration.

Proposed SCR Process Improvements

As these challenges became evident, we also realized that today most SCR require some [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Figure 4-2 shows [REDACTED] we have identified where we have either [REDACTED] These are further expanded throughout this section.

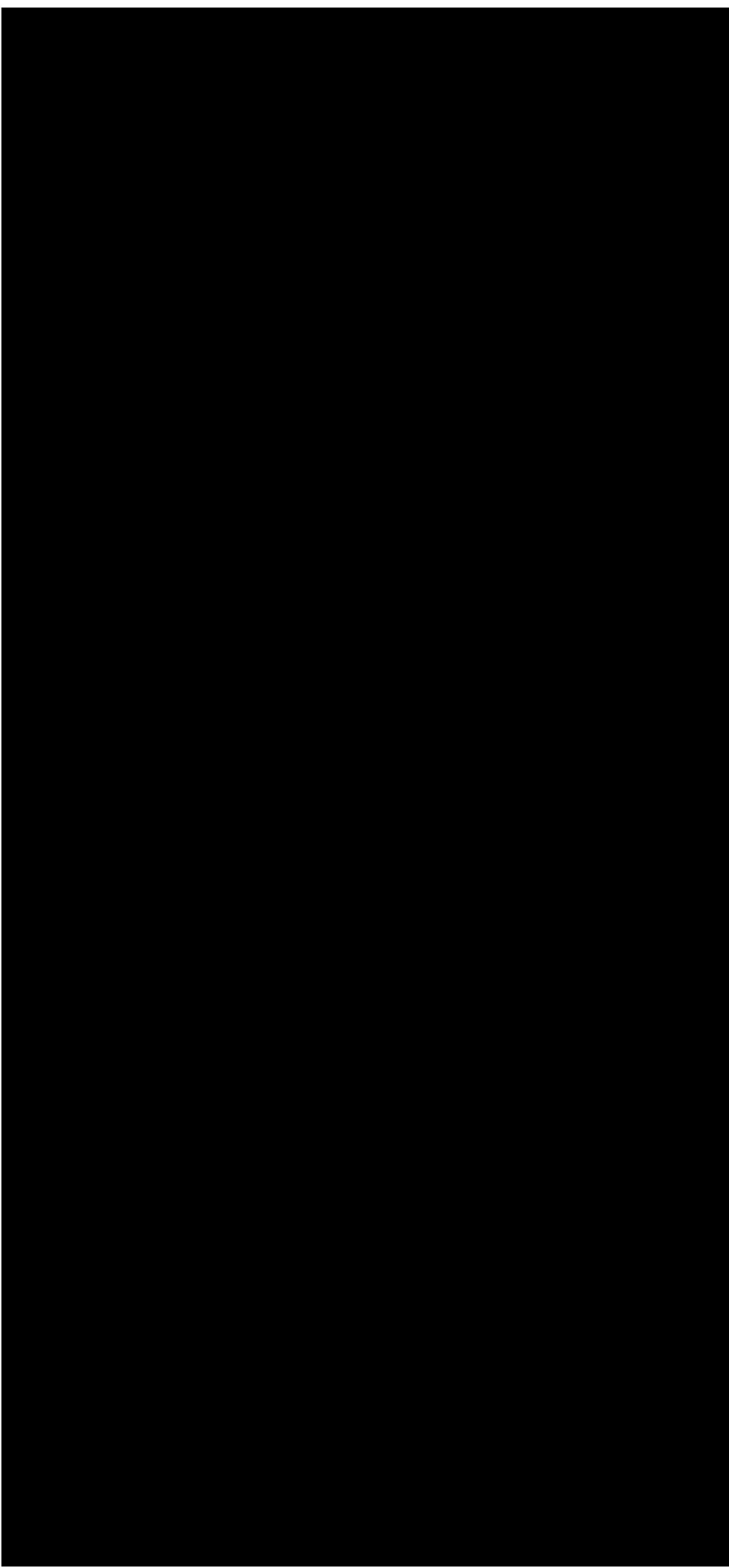


Figure 4-2. Our approach to SCR improvements delivers SCR faster and with less effort.

Our expectation is that when these changes are fully implemented, we will see:

- [REDACTED] to implement SCRs, enabling us to deliver changes to users faster than ever before, and
- [REDACTED] to implement SCRs, enabling more changes to be delivered with the available budget.

We recently applied this approach to a set of task management SCRs and saw [REDACTED]

As we evaluated the SCR process, we strive to do more than just automate an inefficient process. You will see a consistent theme of effective change leading to faster delivery with less effort. We know that vulnerable Californians need their aid as soon as possible, and the county staff addressing customer needs deserve a high-quality system to support their daily work. SCR improvement will deliver effective solutions to end users and better outcomes to customers. We built our improved SCR process on areas that complement the SDLC transformation previously detailed:

- [REDACTED] to drive mutual ownership and better outputs
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED] to maximize outputs for counties
- [REDACTED] to increase [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]
- **Improved testing methodology** to accelerate testing and improve quality
- **Evidence-based estimating** for consistent, reliable estimates that change as processes evolve
- **Streamlined SCR process** to deliver early and often and to eliminate waiting

Iterative Stakeholder Engagement Speeds Up the Lifecycle of a Change



Effective stakeholder engagement confirms that the [REDACTED]

Expanding collaboration enables quicker decisions and better outcomes, like faster delivery. By considering [REDACTED]

can focus their time and effort on the things that matter most to them. Our approach enhances the relationship between system changes [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]—meaning [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] During the [REDACTED] we will identify all the [REDACTED] as [REDACTED] of feedback that will be refined throughout the lifecycle of a change. [REDACTED] while others will participate only in the incremental demonstrations providing feedback. This phase can also include identifying [REDACTED] that may have input into the solution.

Our proposed iterative process naturally creates safeguards and opportunities for feedback to correct course or adjust when needed. This provides confidence to make decisions, as they are not concrete or final. We illustrate this approach across all phases in Figure 4-3.

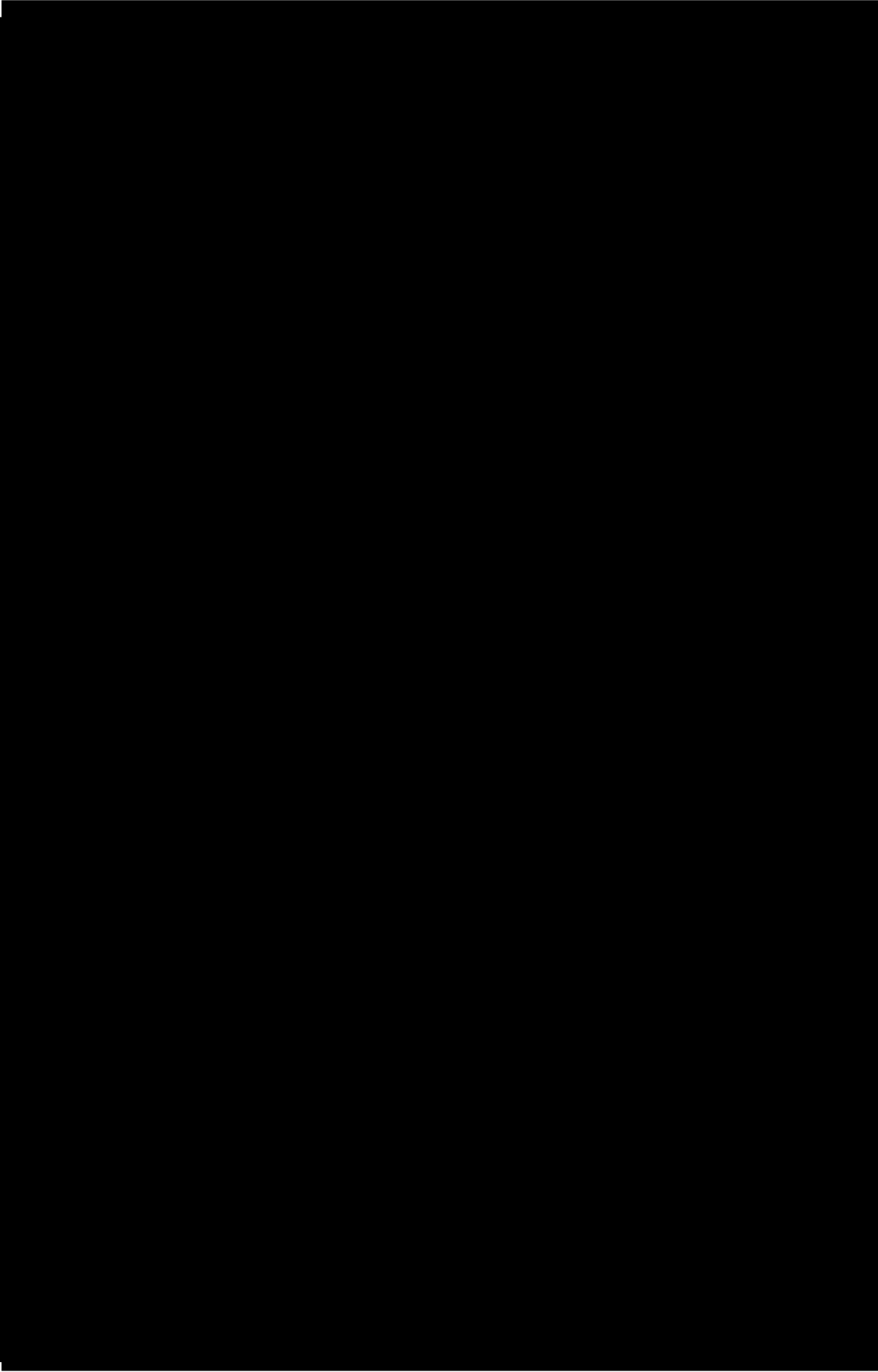


Figure 4-3. Stakeholder touchpoints in every phase will drive faster decisions and better outcomes.

4-5



Some changes have a [REDACTED] to business process and an [REDACTED] to complete their important work. Some changes are [REDACTED] to implement [REDACTED]. And some changes are [REDACTED] implement than others. We see this today, where the [REDACTED] has become the [REDACTED] with most SCR [REDACTED]. We often must plan [REDACTED] instead of planning for it. The [REDACTED] of each SCR is an important consideration when we seek to improve how SCR are delivered so that the Consortium, the counties, and all contractors can allocate their [REDACTED] to those items that matter the most. As an example, the upcoming California Food Assistance Program (CFAP) expansion [REDACTED].

Alternatively, [REDACTED] for a county requires minimal engagement typically early in the analysis to define the appropriate requirements for the county. Given [REDACTED] of the change instead of [REDACTED]. This optimized county and committee interaction provides counties the [REDACTED] resources to their priorities.

Expanding on the current RWR process, [REDACTED]. Expansion of the RWR process is best way to [REDACTED]. we will define what aspects of our possible pre-production processes are necessary for the given change. This includes stakeholder engagement, testing approach, utilizing RWR or specific release dates, and any other [REDACTED] of each particular change. While each SCR can be [REDACTED] the majority of CalSAWS changes will shift from [REDACTED] release cycles confined to schedules published a year in advance to an ongoing, frequent RWR releases allowing for changes to be implemented when they are ready.

Table 4-1 details the sample change types we considered and how they could be approached to eliminate bottlenecks and accelerate outputs. A key criterion we use in determining our recommended delivery approach is the change impact.



What Our Clients Say...

Accenture is very flexible and has shown throughout their engagement a willingness to adjust priorities, processes, and resources to fit the needs of the work and the overall team. They are highly engaged with issues and show a quick response as well as a high level of solutioning ability.

— Elizabeth Wolff,
Kansas Department of Health and
Environment, Enterprise Systems Director

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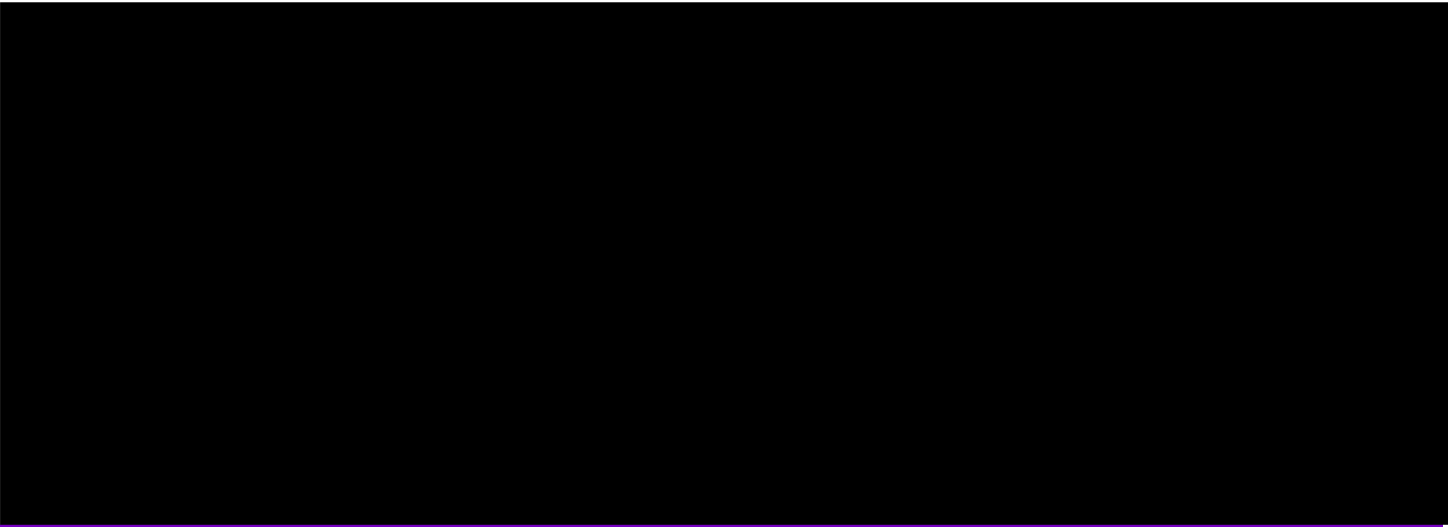
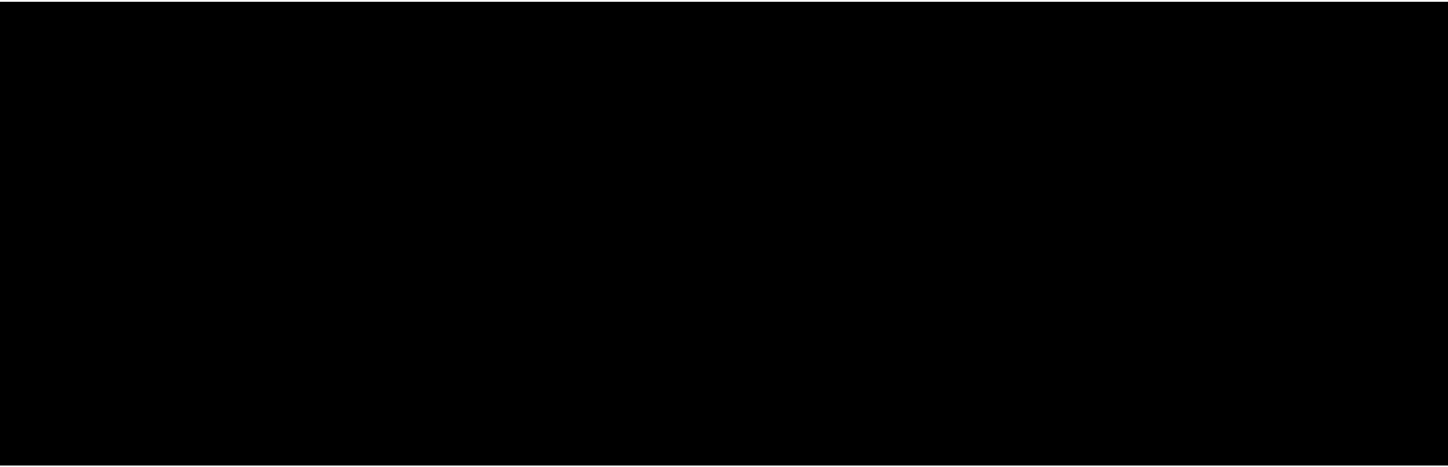


Table 4-1. Our flexible approach to SCRs treats each uniquely, based on impact.

[Redacted]
[Redacted]
[Redacted]
[Redacted]
[Redacted]
[Redacted]
[Redacted]
[Redacted]



[Redacted] challenge that comes their way, as shown in Figure 4-4.

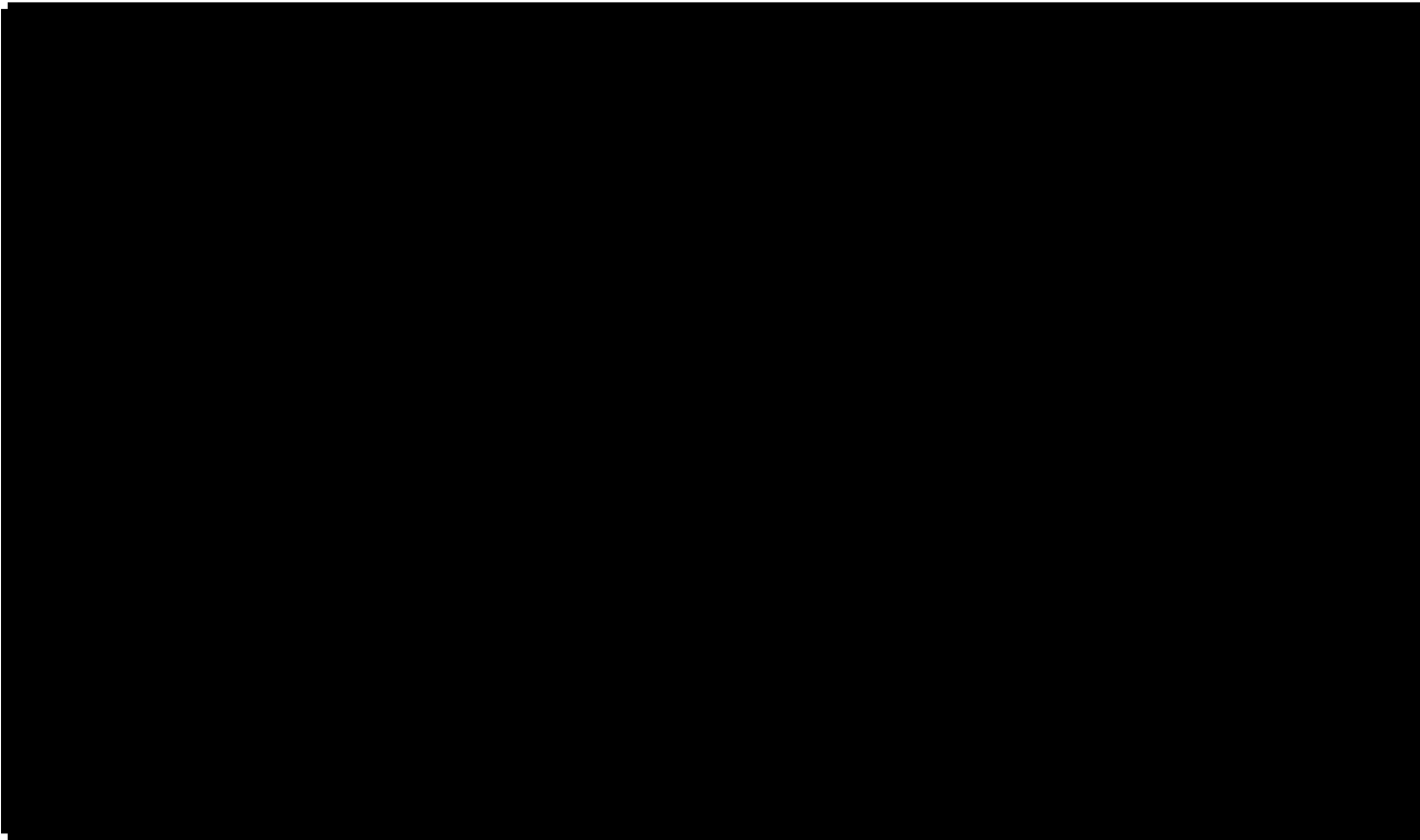


Figure 4-4. A [REDACTED] eliminates dependencies.

In addition to SCRs, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] When a defect is identified, we will associate it to the team responsible and place it in the backlog with the appropriate severity and priority. The team will resolve the defect when it is prioritized for development. This approach benefits the counties, because [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] who implemented the associated SCR and therefore will be the ideal resources to resolve the defect quickly.



Challenges in today's approach

[REDACTED] of improving our SCR process. Today, regionalized committees are structured to align with either specific programs (such as Medi-Cal, CalWORKs/CalFresh, and Welfare to Work) or specific business functions (like Fiscal, Collections, or Correspondence). These committees have Regional Committee Members (RCMs) appointed by the counties in each of the six regions. The RCMs work directly with the Consortium and vendor staff prioritizing SCRs, providing design feedback, documenting meeting minutes, and approving system changes. These RCMs work in collaboration with subject matter experts (SMEs) from each of the counties within their region. Each RCM is responsible for providing feedback from the individual county SMEs and gathering votes or approvals from the counties in their region per the regional voting structure.

Once an SCR is approved by the SCR Planning Group (SPG), the RCM's role in design is constrained to the infrequently used County Design Input (CDI) process prior to design starting. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] This is often the first time the project receives feedback for the solution. Since this is their first chance at influencing the change,

committee meetings routinely exceed 150 participants for the core policy committees, making communication exceptionally difficult.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] During the [REDACTED] phase, the Consortium and vendors will develop a shared vision of all facets of the change request including who will be part of [REDACTED] and their level of engagement. Working in tandem with the [REDACTED], this vision is further refined to reflect input from all stakeholders. Following the development of the shared vision, [REDACTED] are identified to participate in the Hybrid-Agile SDLC. These [REDACTED] will be empowered to represent the [REDACTED]

Constant dialogue between the [REDACTED], Consortium, and vendors will replace the [REDACTED] [REDACTED] after design has started, or a [REDACTED] has been sent for committee review, or between approval and County Test. [REDACTED] [REDACTED], instead filled with at least [REDACTED] and frequent committee feedback. This will result in faster turnaround of not only system changes but also work products defined in the [REDACTED]. The [REDACTED] will see the solution as it is constructed while being able to influence the outcome.

This re-envisioned relationship will be paired with [REDACTED] of the required changes. The project will no longer have to coordinate a single SCR across [REDACTED]. If a change requires [REDACTED], it will no longer require [REDACTED] on the release schedule and competing priorities from every other [REDACTED] who have work for these teams. [REDACTED] [REDACTED] to take a change request from [REDACTED] will be aligned to this effort and all other [REDACTED]. The size and quantity of [REDACTED] [REDACTED] will vary based on the volume of work requested. These teams will flex across [REDACTED] as priorities dictate.

[REDACTED]

Improved Testing Methodology to Increase Quality and Reduce Time

SCR improvement for agility and quality is also dependent on the testing methodology. Therefore, we must look at opportunities to improve how testing is conducted. We propose the following test methodology improvements.

Change-based testing approach: Within the [REDACTED], we will focus on all aspects of the lifecycle, including test, to define the best approach for the changes being made. In some cases, a simple modification may only need a low level of validation; conversely, perhaps a full interface exchange with the partner must be coordinated. Additionally, counties may want to validate themselves. We will identify the need for a County Test from the start, involving those stakeholders throughout the lifecycle rather than introducing a new person at the end of the process.

Testing agility: We will identify system issues earlier and expand the testing focus to include business process verification. To test SCRs with more agility and identify issues early, we will begin functional testing and defect management during development sprints. Additionally, we will conduct post sprint testing to verify end-to-end business processes for the change, regression testing to confirm the change did not create an impact to other business processes, accessibility testing when required, performance testing, and security testing. These improvements will expedite SCR delivery and drive higher quality. Based on our experience with other state clients, we expect an ongoing reduction in testing effort over several years.

Next-generation test automation: We have identified improvements to the test automation framework currently used in the CalSAWS Project to increase automated regression test coverage. More specifically, [REDACTED]. We additionally plan to [REDACTED]. We will base automated testing scenarios on production insights around patterns and sequence of transactions to replicate end-user behavior. Lastly, we will expand the automated testing framework to **automate new functional areas** targeting batch interfaces, correspondence forms, and accessibility support. The evolution of our automated regression test suite for coverage will accelerate testing, increase automated test coverage, and identify system issues earlier.

New approach to test data management: Our current approach to test data is fully dependent on de-identified production data refreshed at every release. There are several disadvantages with this approach: operational overhead; increased storage cost and long test processing times due to the volume of data; and effort required to manually identify the appropriate data to use in testing. We thought hard about how to improve test data management, and we designed a process to automatically generate production-like test data through our automated testing framework. We will periodically execute test data creation scripts to generate bulk data and enable the test data to "age" naturally. The framework will execute test data scripts before each functional verification test case is executed to pair the appropriate data with the test.

As a result of the new test data management approach, we will **enhance security measures** by lessening the need for and frequency of production data use. We will **save AWS storage costs** by reducing the volume of data tailored to testing purposes. Lastly, we will **accelerate test execution** and test management via an automated approach to test data management.

[REDACTED]

With decades of experience implementing thousands of SCRs in CalSAWS, we have developed a highly accurate [REDACTED] that has been refined numerous times as processes, technologies, and scope of work changes. This process starts with the impact analysis. Our experts use GitLab, extensive experience, and custom solutions like our Functional Analysis Tool (FAT) to determine what needs to be changed to implement the user stories defined in the Initiation phase and further refined in the sprints.

With the list of impacts determined, we review each modification type separately, as shown in Figure 4-6. These modification types could be a batch job, rules change, or page modification (and many more). We assess each separately to determine whether the required change is modifying an existing component or creating a new one. With the change type identified, the complexity of the change is assessed by the developer. In combination with the processes being used, the tool will provide a number of hours required.

These estimates are then added to the workplan so team members can track their actual hours against the estimate. Over time, the workplans are reviewed to refine [REDACTED]. This information is fed back to [REDACTED] to reflect the actual hours required. This is a process Accenture has followed for many years which has allowed for highly accurate estimates.

Effort Estimation Approach

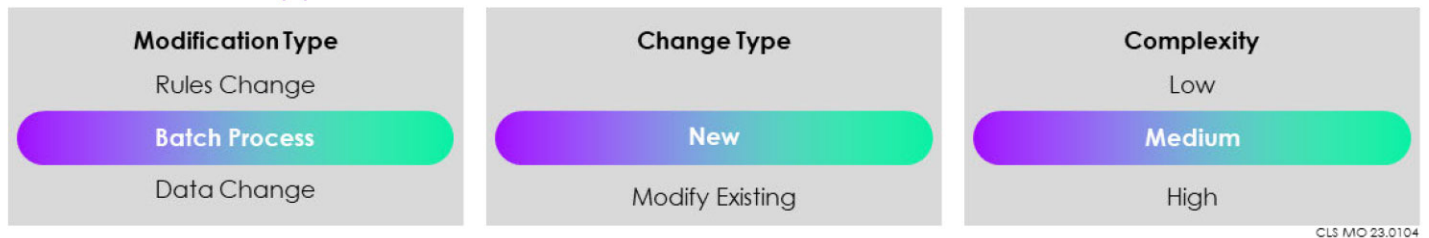


Figure 4-6. We assess each modification type separately to determine the complexity of the change.

Staffing Levels Shift to the Priorities

Our proposed staffing model for our SCR approach is flexible. We recognize that project demand will change to meet the evolving State and county priorities. By using [REDACTED], we can shift resources when and where they are needed most. For example, if [REDACTED] has urgent priorities greater than their current velocity, we can move Scrum team members [REDACTED] to meet these demands. We detail our approach to staffing using shared and dedicated, [REDACTED] of full-time equivalent (FTE) resources for respective programs, such as CalWORKs/CalFresh, Medi-Cal, and CalHEERS in Figure 3-11 in Section 3.1.1.3 Organization and Relationships.

We based our initial staffing plan on the current backlog of pending SCRs and the functional demand dictated by historical SCR hours detailed in Table 4-20—Summary SCR Hours by Month in the RFP. In the future, we will modify staff loading and resource alignment based on the demands of upcoming changes. Ultimately, our proposed approach enables us to have the right balance of people aligned to the right places. With continuous improvement over time, we expect our teams will increase delivery velocity and throughput with the same staffing levels.

Our staffing levels defined within Attachment B13 – M&E Staffing Worksheet align with and support our proposed SCR approach that we have detailed in this section. We have determined and recommended the staffing levels as represented in Attachment B13 – M&E Staffing Worksheet based on our current experience and staffing levels used for delivering SCRs. **We do not propose staffing levels below the current efforts** described in Section 3.

CalFresh ABAWD Example

With the following example, we walk through the application of this new process using the CalFresh ABAWD policy change as described in Section 6.3.10.7. We will also describe the current process. In both instances, we assume SPG has prioritized the SCR for implementation. Following the current SCR process and using the CalFresh ABAWD SCR scenario, we provide an overview of the estimated

timeline and activities in Figure 4-7. The purple color represents periods where there is activity by the project staff, while the grey color represents periods of inactivity (waiting time).



Figure 4-7. Using the current process, the ABAWD SCR would take 20 weeks to complete.

We estimate the ABAWD SCR timeline at [REDACTED] using the existing SCR process. This timeline deviates from the information provided in section 3.14.1 of the RFP that states a typical policy change takes 9–12 months because we know that exceptions to the process are normal. Assuming the normal exceptions take place, we see [REDACTED] as [REDACTED] possible timeline using the existing SDLC. This timeline includes numerous dependent activities that slow down the process.

- The ABAWD design would be done with only Consortium and Accenture staff over [REDACTED] period.
- Following completion of the design, a large document is sent to the committee enumerating every single change necessary. This document requires a minimum of a [REDACTED] with CalWORKs/CalFresh Committee. After the [REDACTED], a review meeting will be held where a facilitated design review of the entire solution will be conducted by the vendor. This will be the first time the counties can influence the design. Frequently this results in rework of the design which elongates the design and review process.
- After the committee approves the design, the SCR must be approved by the System Change Request Board (SCRB) and the Change Request Board (CCB). As mentioned earlier, this SCR would follow an exception process. In this case, SCR and CCB approvals would come concurrent to the build activities starting. While speeding up the process, it further diminishes the counties' ability to influence the design.
- Build will take at least [REDACTED] under the current process. This is because the current process requires the design to be transitioned to development staff. In addition to this, there are fixed delivery dates to system test to align with project releases. Even if the development is complete, test cannot begin until a predetermined date.
- Test will take a minimum of [REDACTED]. The extended test time considers transition from the build team to the test team.
- Since the SCR is tied to a predetermined release, it will wait until the release date even if it is tested early in the cycle.

The estimate was developed using the existing, proven estimation tool that we use today.

Proposed Hybrid-Agile SCR Process

On the other hand, our proposed Hybrid-Agile SCR process expedites the SCR timeline by eradicating inefficiencies, optimizing processes, and automating tasks. We have together experienced the benefits of our alternative approach via the success of our RWR approach, which we have used routinely since the pandemic started. In Figure 4-8, we show that the ABAWD SCR example timeline is significantly shortened—[REDACTED]—when following our proposed Hybrid-Agile approach and the improvements to the SCR process previously [REDACTED]

described. We also project [REDACTED] Again, this estimate was utilizing our refined estimator configured for the proposed process.

- During [REDACTED] (Sprint Zero), the team will spend [REDACTED] determining the appropriate individuals to include in design, engage [REDACTED], and plan future sprints.
- During each sprint, the design will be completed in collaboration with the [REDACTED] project staff, and [REDACTED]. Each sprint will include a full cycle of design, development, test, and review.
- By leveraging user-centric design, involving [REDACTED], and [REDACTED] inefficiencies are minimized in transitioning and reviewing work between teams.
- Since there is a higher degree of involvement from [REDACTED] from the onset, there is less chance of rework.
- The Hybrid-Agile process concludes with final hardening sprint where user acceptance testing and defect resolution occurs.
- Following testing, the feature is delivered to production at the next RWR release.

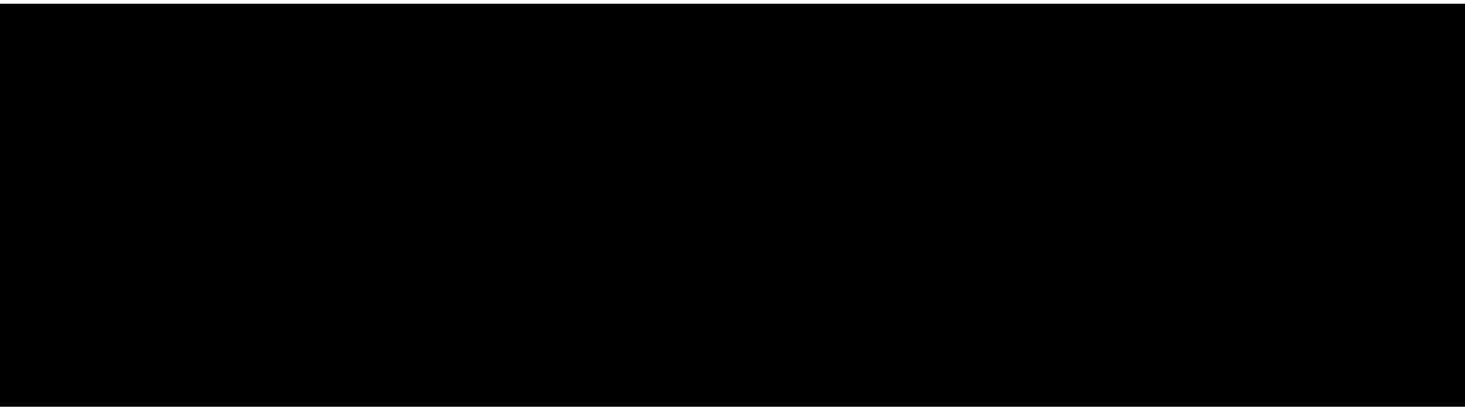


Figure 4-8. Using our proposed process, we can shorten the timeline by 13 weeks.

How We Saved Time

For this specific change, we reduced the timeline via numerous time-saving activities, including the following highlights:

- **Eliminate downtime:** The current process has many dependencies and rigid dates built in. This results in a great deal of downtime in waiting for these dates. Work may be done, but delivery is dependent on the next date.
- **Include an empowered committee:** By including [REDACTED] in the full planning, design, review, and approval process, we can eliminate the need for separate committee reviews as a prerequisite to begin development.
- **Work in Iterative fashion:** Individual components are designed and built. You do not have to wait for all features to be designed before build begins.
- **Testing part of [REDACTED]:** Under the Hybrid-Agile model, [REDACTED] They test features with each sprint and develop automated scripts. This eliminates the need to transition the functionality to a separate team and the time-based milestones that create dependencies in the current process.
- **Features are deployed when ready:** Instead of waiting for specific release dates, the Hybrid-Agile approach allows features to be released into production when they are ready.

Implementation Timeline for SCR Process Improvements

Our implementation timeline for SCR changes aligns with the SDLC implementation timeline because the changes are complimentary to a new SDLC introduction. We will approach SCR improvement implementation in [REDACTED]. Within this implementation, we will deliver the M&E Interface Control Document (ICD), the M&E Interface Agreement, Performance Test Materials (Online/Batch), and Certification of Successful Production Release, as required.

During [REDACTED], we will review detailed opportunities for improvement and define the go-forward plans. Specifically for iterative committee engagement and [REDACTED], we will plan out the new teams and a [REDACTED].

[REDACTED] For the SCR delivery approach process, we will define the [REDACTED] [REDACTED] that change should follow based on change impact. For improvements to testing methodology, we will update the test automation framework for improvements and inclusion of test data management. We will bring [REDACTED] to socialize and refine with input from the planning workgroup. As an outcome of [REDACTED], we will create [REDACTED] [REDACTED], detailing relevant KPIs or ways we will measure success. We will present the plan [REDACTED] before moving into [REDACTED].

During [REDACTED] we will pilot the SCR improvements [REDACTED]. We will measure success as defined in [REDACTED], establish feedback loops, and present the pilot results to [REDACTED]. We will incorporate key lessons learned into revised SCR improvements before expanding across all project teams.

In [REDACTED], we will launch the SCR improvement process to all teams and [REDACTED]. From here, we will consider [REDACTED] and initiate continuous improvement for years ahead. This timeline, phases, and key activities within each are illustrated in Figure 4-9.

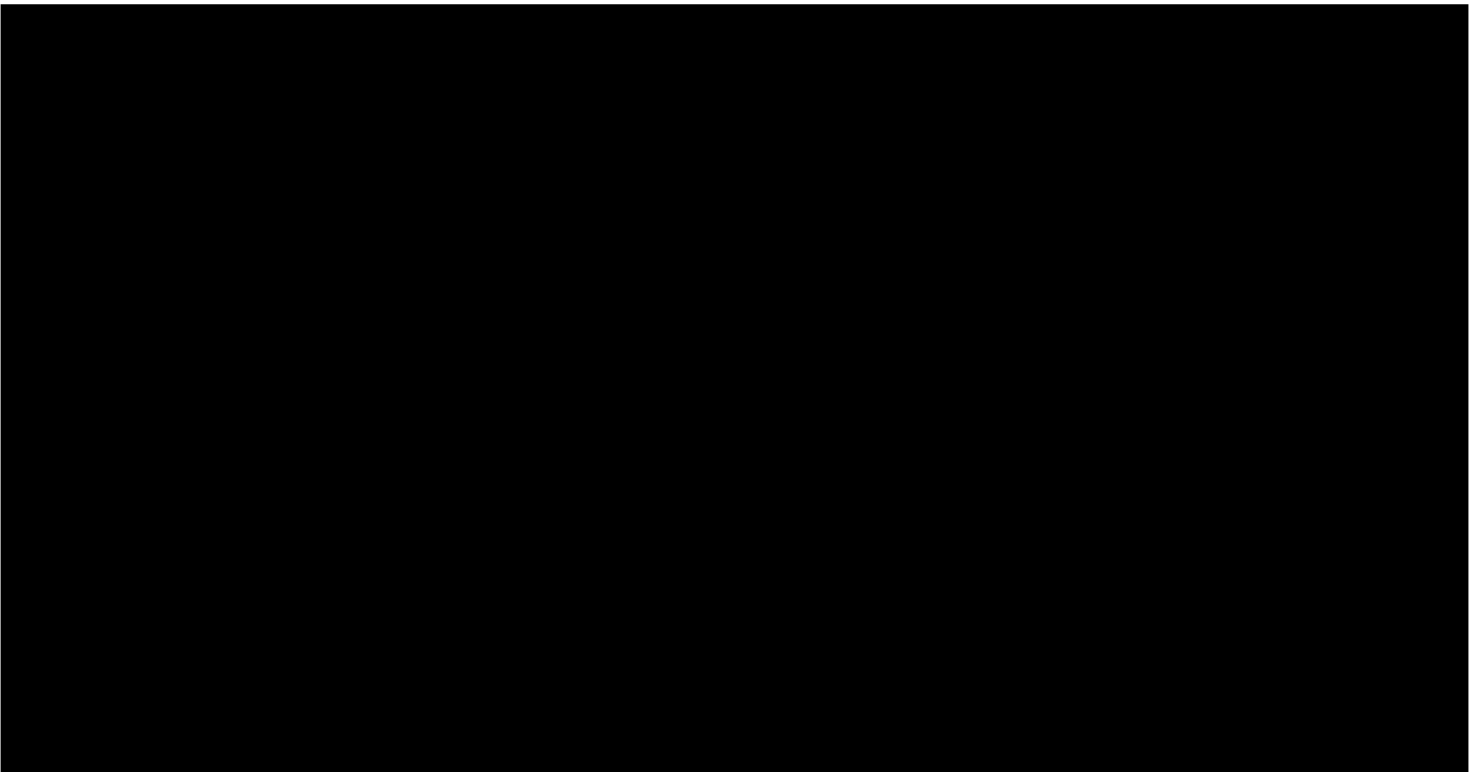


Figure 4-9. Our implementation timelines for SCR and SDLC changes align and are complimentary.

Managing Change and Communication

As we implement these improvements to the SCR approach, we anticipate a high degree of change and an initial learning curve for the Consortium, committees, and advocates. To address this, we will jointly establish a planning workgroup at the start of the transition, and we will bring appropriate training and onboarding. During [REDACTED], we will develop a Communications and Change Management Plan specific to the improvement areas that are stakeholder-facing, such as iterative stakeholder engagement, SCR delivery approach, [REDACTED] aligned to functional areas and respective committees. Highlights of our approach are shown in Figure 4-10.

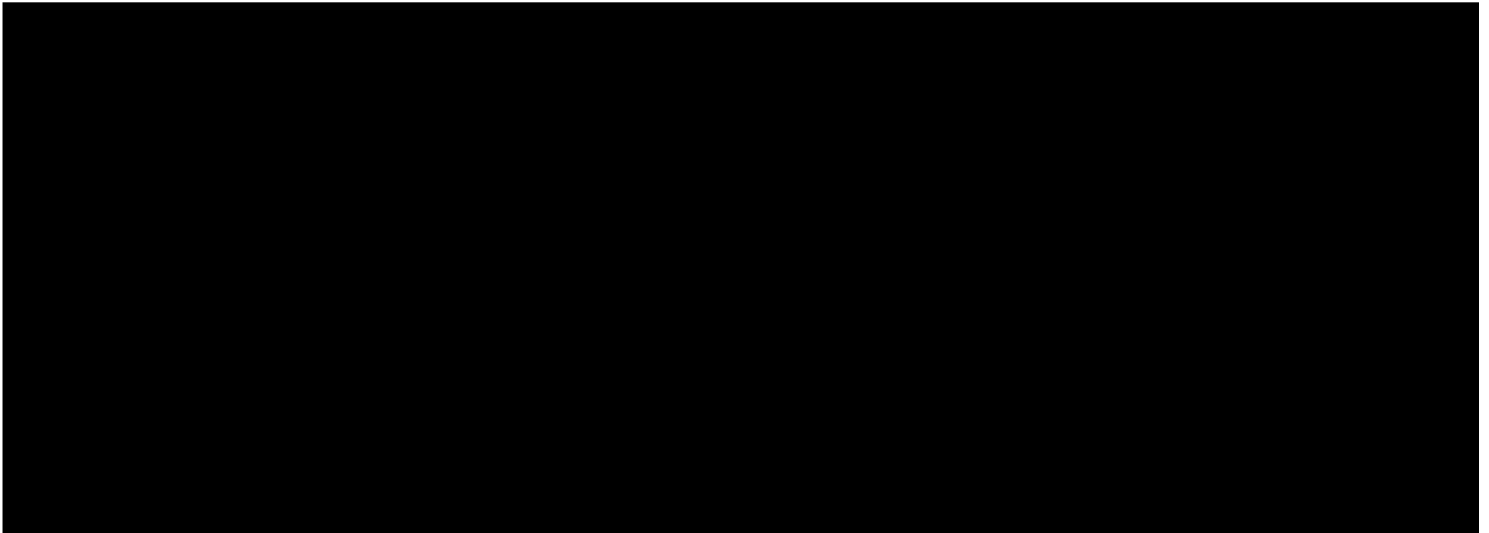


Figure 4-10. We will promote [REDACTED]

Rationale for Proposed Changes to the SCR Process

The current SCR process has been useful and appropriate for the project's stage of the migration, with heavy involvement needed from committees and design team in all aspects of the SDLC. Moving forward—with all counties on one system—some of the more cumbersome governance activities that historically have slowed the process can now be evolved. Our proposed approach to improving the existing SCR process is centered on a few key outcomes:

- **Expedite releasing features to production:** In contrast to the current process's time-consuming multi-county review, we propose several changes to speed up the SCR lifecycle. We will iteratively engage stakeholders, expand the RWR process, [REDACTED] for faster outputs, and improve the testing methodology.
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
- **Engage stakeholders early and often:** The Hybrid-Agile methodology increases collaboration to improve outcomes. Through regular stakeholder demonstrations, we will solicit feedback early in the delivery cycle, drive mutual ownership for changes, and inform UAT scenarios early.
- **Increase communication and transparency:** As the CalSAWS Project continues to move into a multi-contractor, 58-county environment, we must evolve our methods of communication and alignment to increase visibility between committees and project teams. For example, we will track and share progress using sprint metrics.

- **Low risk transition:** Much of what we proposed is already being done today in either isolated changes or as appropriate. Expanding RWR, working on efforts with smaller groups, and creating [REDACTED] of the SDLC are things already in place today. Our first example in the Results Delivered section already highlights how these changes are successful today.

Continuous Improvement

As part of our project-wide continuous improvement program (CIP), we will evaluate and implement ongoing improvements to our SCR process. Improvement areas may include speed, quality, cost, security, user experience, and communication effectiveness. Each quarterly cycle, our Transformation and Continuous Improvement Manager, Sean Swift, will work with our M&E Application Manager, Vivek Narayanaswamy, to:

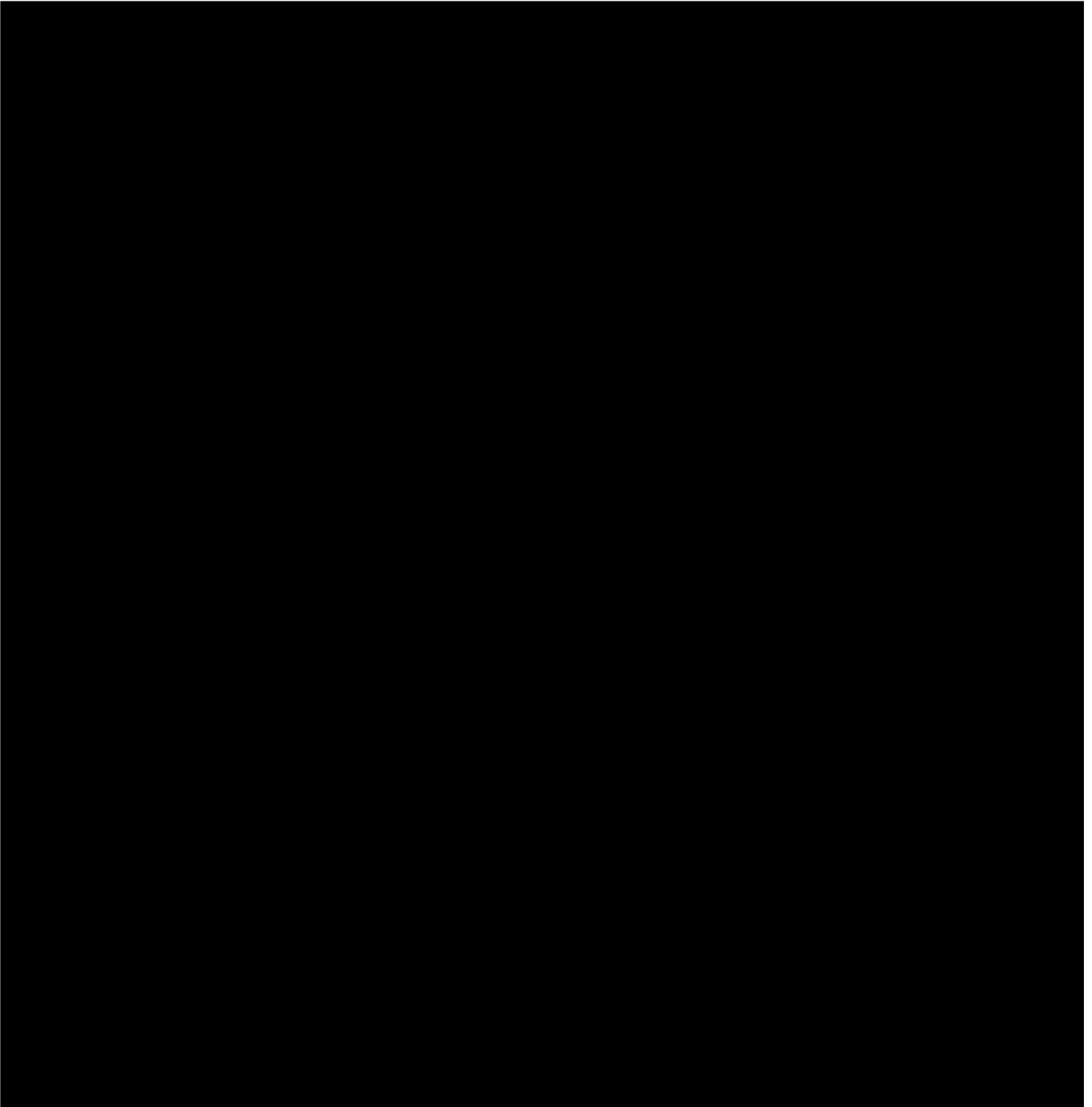
- Define the KPIs, such as velocity and quality of releases, to measure the effectiveness of the new SCR process
- Develop a dashboard that will continually measure and illustrate these metrics (for example, sprint velocity, story burndowns, backlog health, defect counts, defect severity, and test pass rates)
- Establish a baseline of performance based on KPIs
- Review metrics quarterly against baselines
- Review results with teams, identify improvement opportunities, and present to Consortium

As part of the CIP, we will examine emerging technologies and how they may be used to benefit CalSAWS and our counties. This includes generative artificial intelligence, or GenAI, which is currently being built into the next generation of [REDACTED]. As this becomes available, we will incorporate the new capabilities where appropriate.

4.3.2.2 Tools and Technology

Our improved approach for SCRs will leverage the GitLab Enterprise platform, as detailed in Section 4.3.1.2 Tools and Technology, within our SDLC approach. To incorporate UCD and the more frequent committee interactions, we will use Microsoft Teams, Mural, Forumbee, Mentimeter, and Deque axe DevTools, as detailed in Section 4.3.3.2 Tools and Technology, within our UCD approach. To strengthen security, we will bring our [REDACTED] application security testing tools Fortify, Black Duck, and WebInspect, as detailed in Section 4.3.4.2, within our security approach.

4.3.2.3 Results Delivered



Expediting System Changes for CalSAWS During COVID-19

Our Approach in Action:

During the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the State quickly decided to halt all cancellations of CalFresh benefits issuances to Californians and maximize assistance payments. This emergency need was unique and unanticipated, requiring a creative, collaborative, and fast response. Together, we rapidly implemented an expedited change process, removing traditional and lengthy governance hurdles. A smaller stakeholder group requested and approved changes quickly so we could begin build and then solicit feedback.

Within a week, our team halted benefits cancellations, working closely with the Consortium in a quickly amended process. By streamlining the SCR process, we expedited emergency assistance payments for CalFresh. These changes were implemented quickly because we streamlined the process to build, approve, and release SCRs.

This scenario illustrates the improved approach we now propose—one that will expedite the SCR process by building iteratively, releasing when ready, and obtaining approvals and feedback more efficiently.



Results Delivered:

- Distributing \$250 million in monthly supplements to households every month since May 2020.

Expediting Delivery of System Changes for Ohio During COVID-19

Our Approach in Action:

Pandemic-Electronic Benefit Transfer (P-EBT) is a temporary program that provides eligible children with Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits. When developing the P-EBT solution for the State of Ohio, Department of Administrative Services (DAS), the Accenture teams used industry leading practices and standards and established application development and testing tools (such as Jira, RPT, SonarQube, and Jenkins, among many others) to provide predictability and high-quality delivery.

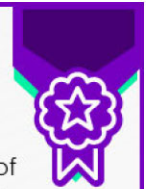
The isolated, configurable, and automated solution enabled changes to be added with policy amendments without impacting other system essential activities. To date, Ohio has added three additional amendments to include Child Care population, Summer Lump Sum Payments, and Staggering of Benefits on multiple days successfully based on federal guidance and the State's need to enhance the P-EBT solution.

Similar to our proposed SCR approach for CalSAWS, our Ohio P-EBT solution featured:

- Iterative joint application development sessions with stakeholder parties, considering federal policy guidelines, data collection, consolidation, and overall design to identify potential problems early on
- Changes divided into areas based on their unique needs and urgency, with different rules for each
- Simulated files and iterative file processing, with data-driven analysis after testing

Results Delivered:

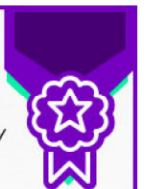
- We achieved a 0% defect rate for user acceptance testing.
- The automated P-EBT enhancement went live in production in two months (from analysis to deployment).
- To date, Ohio has issued over \$900 million to more than 1.1 million children, on time and error free.



Centers for Medicaid and Medicare Services (CMS), healthcare.gov

Our Approach in Action:

For CMS, Accenture managed the United States' Federally Facilitated Marketplace (FFM) and healthcare.gov website to support open enrollment for tax-subsidized health insurance. We stabilized the system during the peak of the initial open enrollment period.



Results Delivered:

- Delivered 256 releases, 99 percent on time, and the remainder within seven days of plan
- Improved load time for healthcare plans by 98 percent (from 200 plans per day to 420 plans per hour)
- Implemented Salesforce within weeks, supporting 1,200 issues with marketplace policy compliance

4.3.2.4 How We Exceed the Requirement

Beyond delivering changes more quickly to end users, our proposed approach to improving the SCR process will exceed the Consortium's requirements via the additional goals detailed in Table 4-2.

Going Over and Above	Benefit
[REDACTED]	• [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	
[REDACTED]	• [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	• [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	• [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	• [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] in the full development lifecycle for high impact SCRs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish mutual ownership of the change requirements and design • Deliver higher quality and better outcomes • Accelerate implementation • Increase creativity and collaboration • Create a solution that everyone is excited about • Free up committee time from reviews/approvals
A thoughtful approach to manage change for all impacted stakeholders	• Reduce implementation risk
Continuous improvement as a foundation	• Increase maturity over time
Increase speed of delivery	• [REDACTED]
Reduce total effort	• [REDACTED]

Table 4-2. Our proposed improvements to the SCR process exceed CalSAWS' requirements.

4.3.3 Improving Existing Approach to UCD

Item# ME-UA11

Describe how you will improve the existing CalSAWS approach to UCD and the overall User experience as part of the SDLC.

4.3.3.1 Our Approach to the UCD Process

Incorporating user-centered design (UCD) and considering the overall user experience are essential to advancing the SCR approach and SDLC methodology for the CalSAWS system. Our vision for the next iteration of the program is aligned with yours—an approach in which we solicit and incorporate stakeholder and user perspective early on and throughout the process. In this section, we describe how we will improve the existing CalSAWS approach to UCD and the overall user experience as part of the SDLC described in Section 4.3.1 SDLC Methodology.

Key Success Factors

- Empowered and committed decision makers
- Enthusiasm and commitment via an internal branding strategy
- Stakeholders representing the voice of County users
- Planned resource capacity for UCD



User centered
design

To achieve this, we will put the CalSAWS users in the center of each phase of the SDLC process for that specific SCR. Our approach is focused

on an effortless-elevated-enriched user experience. We do this because end users expect a system that is easy to use, intuitive, and seamlessly helps them complete their tasks with less clicks and with little-to-no training. The user experience has always been at the forefront of the CalSAWS application. This is evident in the ease of transition and usability experienced by the CalWIN county users during their migration to CalSAWS. They have indicated the system is intuitive, consistent, and easy to train on. With all 58 counties using CalSAWS, we continue to evolve the UCD process. UCD is a process where end users and key stakeholders are involved throughout the system development lifecycle (SDLC) to help inform and validate system designs for better end-user outcomes. The Hybrid-Agile SDLC we propose aligns well with UCD principles as it features an iterative approach with users involved in the design and feedback loop.

of the application and the team's understanding of user needs. Highlights of our UCD approach across the phases of our proposed Hybrid-Agile SDLC are shown in Figure 4-11.

Figure 4-11. Our improved approach for UCD gathers user input throughout the SDLC.

In the of the SDLC, our team of UCD designers, led by our UCD Lead, will work closely with the Consortium to define the . During this phase, we will

determine the user identity and [REDACTED]. For example, the users could be defined as county staff, key stakeholders, or customers represented by advocates, depending on the scope of the design. We are keenly aware of the need to prioritize the [REDACTED], so some SCR's will require [REDACTED] user input than others. In addition, based on the level of impact for each SCR, we will prioritize which features would benefit most from the user inputs. As stated previously, [REDACTED]. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

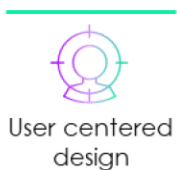
Conduct Contextual Inquiry with Users

Next, in the Initiation phase of the SDLC, we will conduct **research activities**, including contextual inquiry and user interviews, to understand the tendencies, behaviors, existing friction points, and needs of county workers who are using the system every day. This research will aid in the development of a discrete set of **user personas**. Personas are archetypes of real users and represent a particular group of similar behavior, tasks/responsibilities, needs, goals, skills, attitudes, and digital literacy. These personas will bring our system users to life and help the project team understand who they are designing for—leading to improved user experience (UX). Contextual inquiry and **user interviews** help designers to deeply understand opportunities for design improvement without making biased or assumptive decisions. We will leverage committee sponsors to facilitate contextual inquiry discussions. How we conduct this aspect will depend on the complexity or impact of the SCR. If input from a larger user base is needed, we will use more quantitative research tools like user surveys, crowdsourcing, and application usage data to better understand the users, business processes, and how the system is being used.

Analyzing the Existing Workflow

In today's approach, users are not engaged until later in the development process. By engaging users sooner, their input can have greater influence and can even help to expedite implementation. To this end, we will conduct task analysis and **user journey mapping** in the [REDACTED] of the SDLC. This will help us better understand how county workers are using the system relative to the SCR being implemented. We want to identify experiences that are working well and opportunities for improvement. We also want to understand what business processes must be user-driven versus system-driven. These inputs will help us enhance the user experience and improve user efficiency. This could happen through simplifying existing flows, clarifying or defining complex content or vocabulary, adding more pre-population and automation, or redesigning the page flow or content hierarchy in favor of fewer mouse clicks. In addition, we are aware we must maintain a system that meets all web compliance standards and regulations, such as Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG), Section 508 of Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Prototype and Deliver the User Experience (UX)



Next, during the Enable phase of the SDLC, we will begin compiling our analysis findings and brainstorming solutions to resolve the pain points of our user through user stories and prototypes. We will apply UCD principles to improve the system experience for both customers and county staff. During this phase, we will also **engage users to review our design prototypes**—such as page mock-ups, process flows, or wireframes—using A/B testing and other methods. The system requirements will be written as user stories to describe the expectations of the system from a user standpoint.

Validate Solutions with Usability Testing

Next, through the Testing and UAT phase of the SDLC, we will continue to engage users for **validation and continuous feedback**. We want users to provide feedback early and often to confirm we are building a system that enables them to perform at their very best. UAT is intended to confirm that new features meet all business requirements and adhere to business rules documented during business analysis activities associated with any given SCR. Additionally, during **usability testing** processes, we will continue to encourage users to work with the newly built features, practice through mock end-to-end scenarios, and provide continuous system feedback. We will observe how the users use the new system features to determine if any additional system improvements should be made. As users request additional system changes for a more seamless user experience, we will continue to draft those user stories for the team's backlog and prioritization.

Evolving CalSAWS Task Management

- Since 2021, we have delivered over 50 task management enhancements.
- Our team has 35 additional enhancements prioritized for future releases.
- Since 2022, Accenture experts have visited all 18 CalWIN counties to better understand their business processes.
- We engage users early in the design process—embracing a UCD approach.

CLS MO 23.0069f

As county business processes and CalSAWS continually evolve, it is important to look at the user experience beyond the context of [REDACTED]. We will employ several vehicles to facilitate an ongoing feedback loop. After implementing a system enhancement, we will [REDACTED]

County site visits

Application development staff will conduct regular site visits with Counties to observe how the system is used and collect feedback.

- Counties identified by Consortium
- Small, rotating teams of staff and management
- Conduct visits to solicit direct user feedback
- Get to know the system users
- Shadow tasks performed in the system
- Retrospective and outcomes from each visit

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[REDACTED] with a subset of users to observe the usability and effectiveness of the system from a holistic view. For example, we may conduct time studies to observe the amount of time it takes a user to perform a task or survey end users for feedback on targeted functionality or CalSAWS as a whole. Surveys could also be used to solicit feedback from customers or advocates for public facing technologies. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
Enhancements raised from these activities will be recorded in the backlog and prioritized for [REDACTED]

Accenture Song

Within our own organization, we are on a constant quest to evolve. Our internal customer experience agency, Accenture Song, brings more than 16 years of service and design experience and access to over 1,200 user researchers, designers, and strategists. With an emotional, human-centered approach to design, Song creates services and experiences people love. Our team will bring best practices from Accenture Song design to CalSAWS.

UCD in Action: Improving the Task Management User Experience

As counties have moved from working in a traditional caseload-based structure to a banked caseload model, task management has become a key component of the user experience. In a banked caseload model, task management drives the equitable distribution of work, facilitating the timely distribution of benefits. Viewed through the narrowest lens, task management is literally the distribution of "tasks" to inform workers to take an action. From practice, we know that task

management is much more than this. Task management is the engine that drives business in each county. It defines how caseload moves from clerical staff to eligibility staff. Task management has a close relationship with customer appointments and worker availability. It accounts for hybrid models where portions of the county continue to work in traditional models and others work in banked caseload models. As counties continue to adjust their processes to better serve their clients, the task management solution in CalSAWS needs to be approached with a mindset of continuous improvement and innovation. Each county has unique needs when it comes to their business processes, necessitating a user-centric design approach to task management to improve the user experience.

Recognizing that changes in the current landscape necessitate a review of how CalSAWS task management aligns to contemporary county business processes, we will engage in a high-touch user-centric design activity. The goal of this is to identify opportunities to improve the task management user experience accounting for unique county business processes. This activity will have resources dedicated over a six-month period, as illustrated in Figure 4-12. We will meet with each of the 58 counties either individually or regionally during a research phase. We will perform contextual inquiries and user interviews to develop personas that will aid in the identification of counties. User journey mapping will be performed to synthesize the research into new enhancement requirements. We will then conduct validation meetings with the counties and regions to solicit feedback and confirm the new requirements. The requirements will be aligned to SCRs and provided back to CalSAWS with the corresponding price proposal for prioritization.

The UCD effort for Task Management will be led by Jason Osterwald. Jason has over 16 years' experience in development and incorporating user feedback into the user experience. He has a deep understanding of county business processes and task management solutions. He architected task management in CalSAWS. For the last two years he has worked on-site in counties understanding their business process and providing guidance on how they can utilize task management in CalSAWS.

UCD Task Management

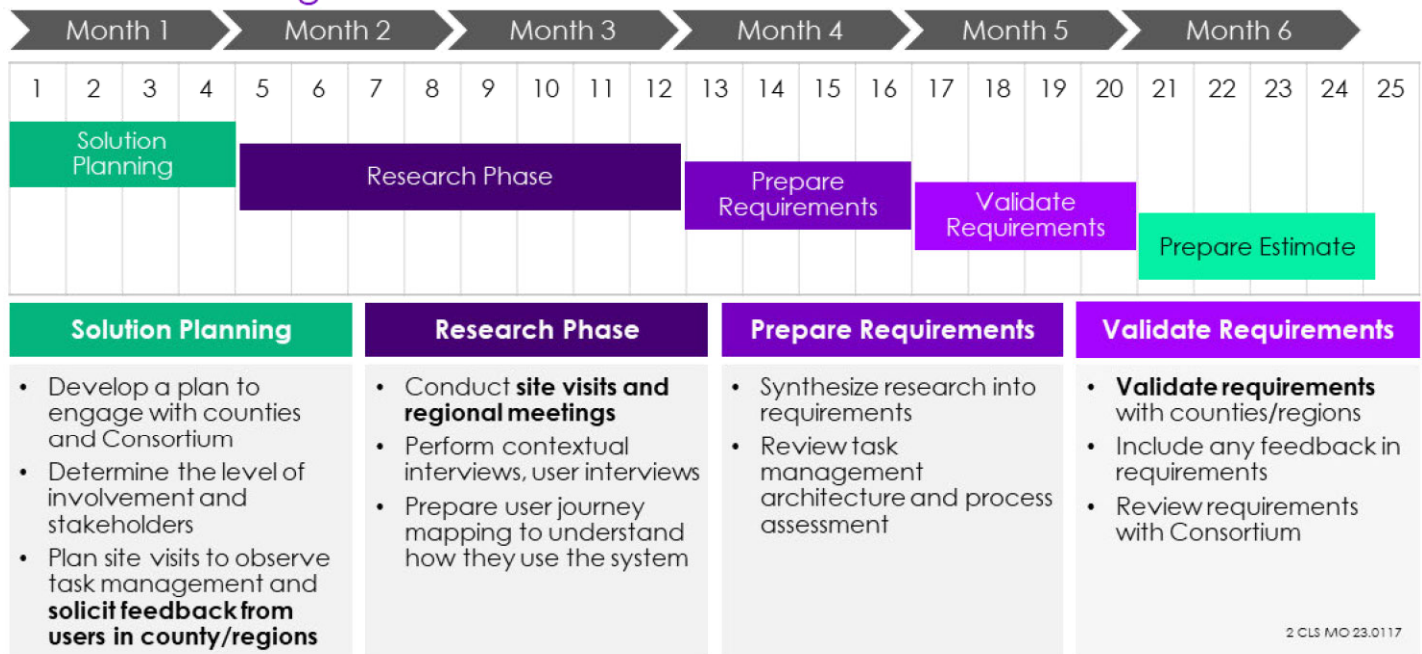


Figure 4-12. A focused UCD approach will enhance task management user experience.

Stakeholder and Advocate Engagement

The goal of stakeholder and advocate engagement is to minimize client burden in learning about, applying for, and keeping county administered benefits. As an example, State stakeholders may be identified to participate in new policy implementations with client impact. Alternately, if the SCR has public-facing elements—such as text messaging, IVR, lobby management, kiosks, and non-State client correspondence—advocate involvement may be required.

Stakeholder and advocate engagement levels will be identified during the [REDACTED] of each SCR. Guidelines will be established for what [REDACTED] stakeholder and advocate involvement. Also, during the [REDACTED], the project will determine the appropriate vehicle for soliciting feedback aligning with established Consortium processes and **collaboration model**. This may include engagement through focus groups, dedicated meetings, or email. During the Initiation phase, **research activities** will be performed with the identified stakeholders and advocates to identify feedback. This feedback will then be synthesized to either update existing requirements or add new requirements, as shown in Figure 4-13. All requirements will then be prioritized within the [REDACTED] for the respective effort.

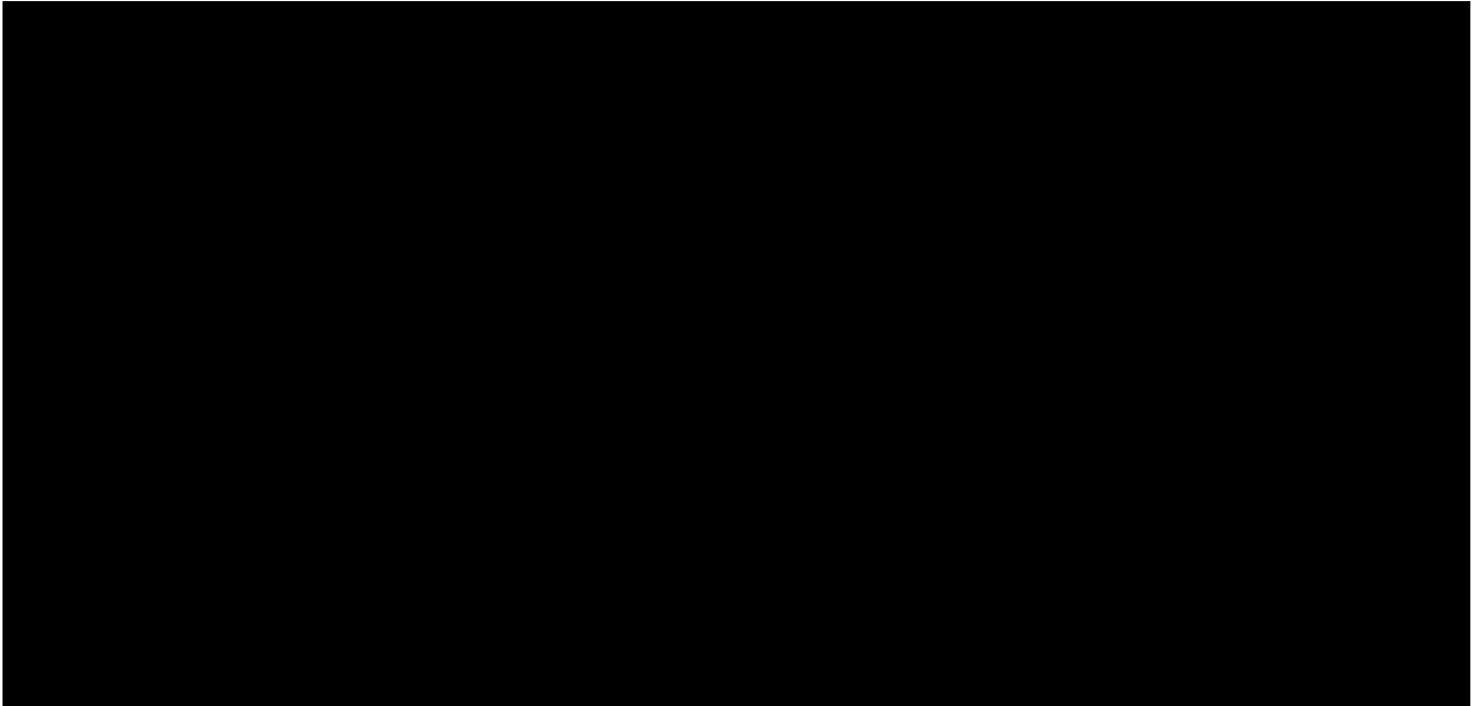


Figure 4-13. We will jointly identify engagement levels for each SCR during solution planning.

Implementation Timeline

Our implementation timeline for UCD changes aligns with the SDLC implementation timeline because the changes are complimentary to a new SDLC introduction. We will approach UCD improvements in [REDACTED]



During [REDACTED], we will assess detailed opportunities for improvement in the as-is processes and **define the UCD vision**. Based on that, we will define the to-be processes and ways of working across user engagement and SCR delivery approaches. Our team will also focus on obtaining county buy-in as described further in this section. As an outcome of the [REDACTED], we will create an implementation plan along with KPIs and measures of success. We will present the plan to our [REDACTED] before moving into the [REDACTED].

During [REDACTED], we will **pilot the UCD improvements** [REDACTED]. We will measure success as defined in the [REDACTED], establish feedback loops, and present the [REDACTED] to the [REDACTED]. We will incorporate key lessons learned into revised UCD improvements before expanding across all project teams.

In the [REDACTED], we will **expand the UCD improvement process to all teams and** [REDACTED]. At this time, we will align our SCR and UCD approaches to verify that the proper groups are involved.

The proposed timeline for UCD transformation activities is based on getting the needed participation from the Consortium, counties, and potentially the new Infrastructure contractor for dependent activities. This timeline, phases, and key activities within each are illustrated in Figure 4-14.

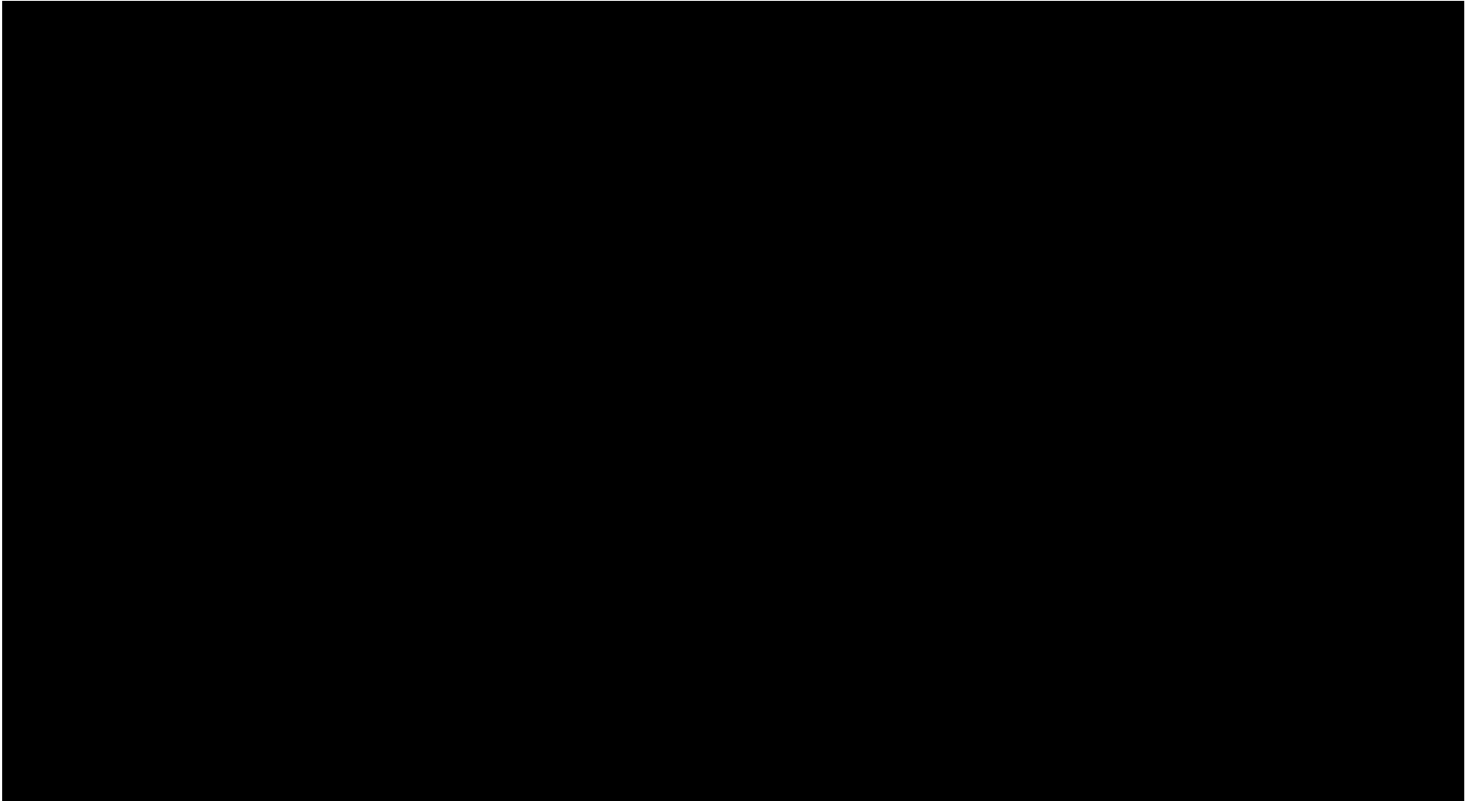


Figure 4-14. Our proposed approach [REDACTED] for CalSAWS.

Obtaining County Buy-In on the UCD Approach

The cornerstone of user-centered design is involvement of the end users and impacted stakeholders. This involvement will require an investment of both the CalSAWS project and county users. The value of any increased involvement needs to outweigh the costs. Similarly, the project needs to be [REDACTED]. Our approach to obtaining county buy-in recognizes this and will emphasize the flexibility in our Hybrid-Agile methodology design to be mindful of county demands, as detailed in Figure 4-15.

Our plan to introduce user-centric design engages project and county executives during the [REDACTED] of the transition period. During this phase, [REDACTED] our user-centric design process. There will be an emphasis on highlighting value of increased user input to improve the user experience while respecting increased county engagement in the project. During [REDACTED], we will engage [REDACTED] and other stakeholders to participate in the UCD process. We will train these groups on the UCD activities to clearly outline the expectations. There will be complete

transparency with the end users and executives to demonstrate the outcome of their engagement. The process will be continually refined along the way through a continuous feedback loop. Finally, user-centric design will only be scaled after the process has been refined and county executives have shown their support for their increased participation in the process.

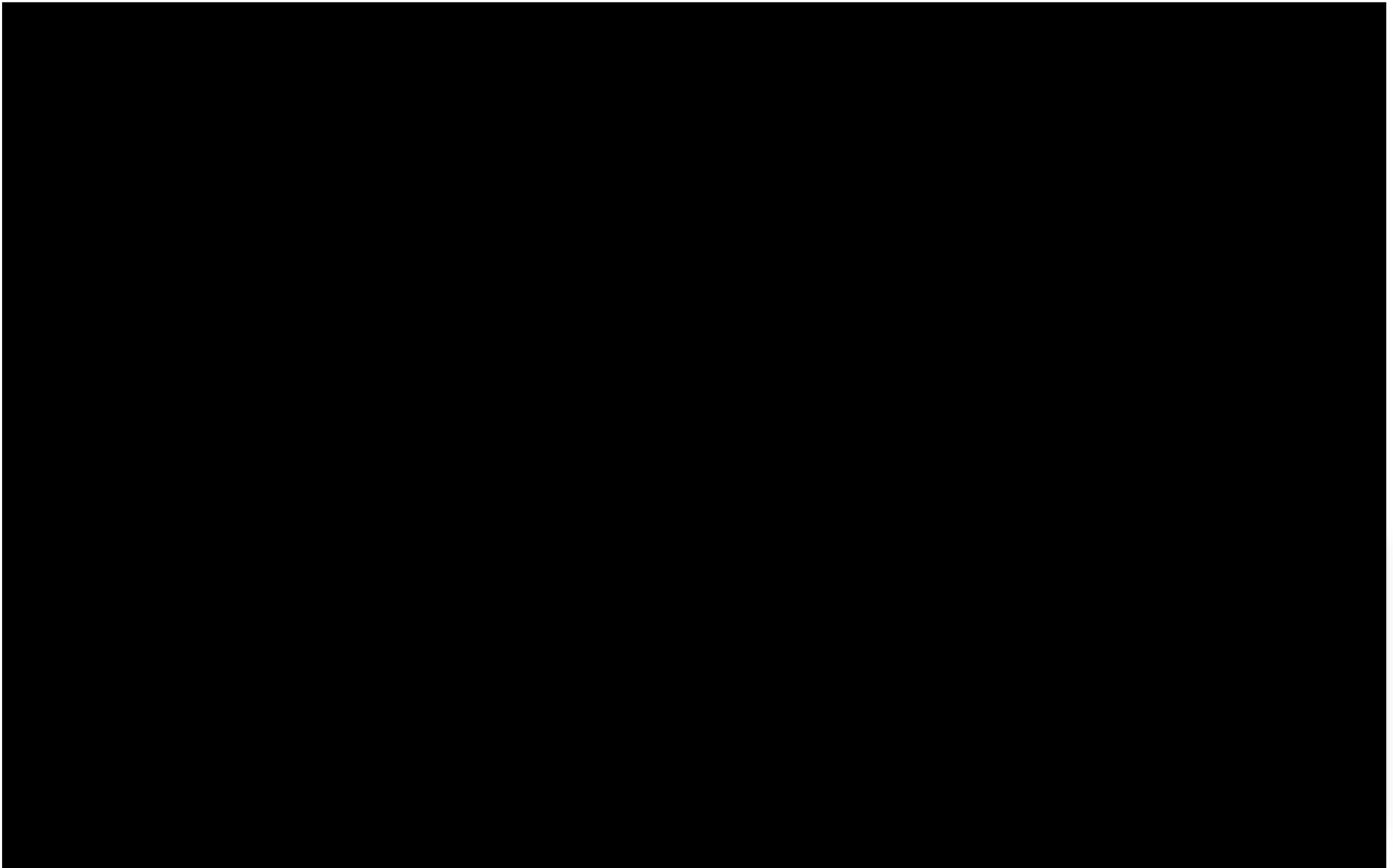


Figure 4-15. [REDACTED] promote understanding and acceptance.

Managing Change and Communication

No other contractor understands the relationship between the Consortium and the counties the way Accenture does. We know that your many stakeholder groups have their own specific needs and priorities. Because of this, we are uniquely positioned to anticipate these intricacies as they relate to UCD and to proactively communicate throughout the process. Our proposed approach to UCD improvement entails a medium-to-high level of change for the CalSAWS Project. Therefore, we will bring a communication plan and a training approach to guide how we will perform the following activities, guided by our Organizational Change Management (OCM) Lead, Leticia Robinson:

- Communicate to committees about the importance of UCD, why we will consult users, and how the process will work
- Communicate through proper [REDACTED] about the value of UCD for CalSAWS, our planned approach, features and benefits, and associated risks
- Advertise success stories across the program to highlight the value of usability discussions and time-saving improvements
- Provide metrics to appropriate stakeholders to quantify the value of UCD outcomes

Rationale for our Approach to Incorporating UCD into the SDLC

Our proposed approach to incorporating UCD in the design process focuses on a few key outcomes:

- **Prioritize county and stakeholder impact in designs:** By collecting user and stakeholder feedback early in the process, design solutions can consider user impact as a primary focus.
- **Solicit user feedback early in the development process:** Involving users in every stage of design and development delivers feedback earlier. This helps the final product meet specific user needs—improving system quality and worker efficiency while maintaining system integrity.
- **Increase opportunities for users and stakeholders to provide feedback:** Users and stakeholders can provide feedback [REDACTED]

- [REDACTED]

Continuous Improvement

We view user-focused design for CalSAWS as a journey rather than a destination. In this spirit, our approach to UCD is built on continuous improvement and innovation. As part of our project-wide continuous improvement program (CIP), we will evaluate and implement ongoing improvements to our approach to UCD, such as speed, quality, cost, process, user experience, and communication effectiveness. At the end of each quarterly cycle, our Transformation and Continuous Improvement Manager, Sean Swift, will work with our UCD Lead to:



- Summarize feedback and suggestions from stakeholders, end users, and project teams.
- Bring suggestions to change tools, processes, and people to improve objectives and to address the qualitative feedback, such as changing how we track improvement, modifying the UCD process, and providing additional channels for feedback.
- Conduct a quarterly retrospective to gather and solicit lessons learned from various CalSAWS parties—the Consortium, BenefitsCal team, QA vendor, and others—and present findings and improvement ideas to the Consortium leads, committees, QA vendor, and other contractors.
- Develop and implement approved improvement ideas each quarter.

4.3.3.2 Tools and Technology

To support our improved approach to UCD detailed in this section, we bring the tools described in Table 4-3. Today in the CalSAWS Project, our teams are already using the Mural digital whiteboard tool, Mentimeter online survey tool, and Forumbee.

Tool	Features and Benefits
Mural	A digital whiteboard and exercises to facilitate UCD meetings with interaction and engagement
Forumbee	Community forum and knowledge base provides development teams with a forum for soliciting information and getting feedback on designs
Mentimeter	Online survey tool enabling the CalSAWS Project to request and compile feedback on the application and designs with real-time metrics
Deque axe DevTools	Accessibility testing tool for HTML pages to help find and fix accessibility errors during development and testing; provides details on where accessibility issues may occur or where additional review is needed; confirms that the system meets Section 508

Tool	Features and Benefits
	accessibility and ADA compliance requirements; used during the UCD process for prototyping and aiding in the design of accessible and compliant pages

Table 4-3. Our proposed toolset will help facilitate an improved UCD approach for CalSAWS.

4.3.3.3 Results Delivered

Using UCD to improve design for CalSAWS

Our Approach in Action:

Previously, we have embraced UCD to improve design for CalSAWS, and we share your view that this is an area of opportunity to leverage committees and bring end users into the process.

For the CalWIN migration in 2018, we created a special workgroup and system for task management. More than 100 users from 58 counties were invited to provide feedback on requirements and needed enhancements.

Moving forward in the CalSAWS Project, we share your enthusiasm and commitment to incorporate more user input via an improved and expanded UCD approach.

Results Delivered:

- Constructed requirements and created the design with users' needs and voices at the forefront.



Using UCD for the City of New York to address its diversity

Our Approach in Action:

For the City of New York Human Resources Administration (HRA) ACCESS HRA website, Accenture brought a keen focus on the client. Involving clients in the design of the user interface helped HRA significantly improve user adoption.

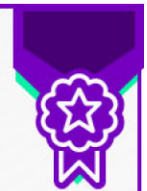
User-centered design approaches were key to addressing New York City's diversity. A unique aspect of ACCESS HRA that targeted New York City's diverse clients is the use of User Experience (UX) design principles across the range of digital services to create intuitive, user-friendly experiences. Together, we created a document upload mobile solution using an iterative design approach focused on user experience and continuous optimization of application functionality. We used A/B testing to collect feedback on designs.

We used crowdsourcing and collaboration to broaden design input, observing clients using ACCESS HRA to identify pain points and areas for improvement. We then used an iterative design approach to deliver software features and enhancements such that designs could be tested and improved over time. The result was a much-improved user interface that was tailored to the needs of HRA's clients and was optimized for the devices they most commonly use to interact with HRA's digital services.

We additionally introduced behavioral science techniques to further augment our UX work—developing the language and design to encourage a high rate of response. For example, instead of sending out a reminder that says, "You have an upcoming due date," HRA crafted the behaviorally informed notice that says, "You'll lose your benefits if you don't act now."

Results Delivered:

- Clients who received push notices were 5.5 percent less likely to miss an application step and 12.9 percent more likely to submit a recertification form and complete phone interviews earlier.
- 75 percent of online applications are now submitted outside of HRA centers. New capabilities save unnecessary trips to agency offices and delays in receiving assistance and reduce the number of applications rejected due to a failure to provide documentation, reducing the risk and rate of hunger in New York City.
- The ACCESS HRA document upload function saves HRA an estimated four minutes of processing time per document.



4.3.3.4 How We Exceed the Requirement

Our approach to improving UCD will exceed your requirements via the additional goals detailed in Table 4-4.

Going Over and Above	Benefit
Create a process for receiving user feedback in addition to the SCR process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides real-world feedback after changes are being used in production Gives end users a voice and mechanism to improve the system based on their experiences Creates an environment that prioritizes user experience and enables continuous improvement
Conduct regular delivery team site visits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eliminates silos for SCR definition, design, and implementation Unifies stakeholders and project teams through iterative inclusion Discover new ideas for system evolution and improvements (which would otherwise not be considered) through user shadowing

Table 4-4. Our proposed UCD improvements will strengthen CalSAWS' usability.