

# Optimization of portfolio and project management for the municipality of Tilburg.

A future-proof and resilient project organization

*We really invested in working together as a team. We are now reaping the benefits of that.*

Yvonne Tack  
Project leader municipality of Tilburg



Arnold Tilgenkamp of Promista and Yvonne Tack of the municipality of Tilburg



Municipal



[www.tilburg.nl](http://www.tilburg.nl)



Tilburg, the Netherlands

## ABOUT THE MUNICIPALITY OF TILBURG

With its 227,694 inhabitants (1-1-2023), Tilburg is the 7th largest city in the Netherlands. Approximately 2,500 people work for the municipality of Tilburg. Together they perform all municipal tasks and responsibilities and also work on a diversity of projects, ranging from executive projects and procurement to administrative change plans.

## LONG-TERM COLLABORATION

The Municipality of Tilburg started a PPI department in 2012: Program, Project and Interim Management. The goal of this department is to bring the approach to project-based work more in line. To support this department, software from Fortes is chosen, then Principal Toolbox, later Fortes Change Cloud (FCC).

Over the past 10-plus years, the use of FCC has continued to expand. In total, as many as 19 departments of the Municipality work with FCC. Within these departments it is used for

- writing time,
- project administration and
- resource management.

As of 2023, over 1,200 projects are being administered within FCC. Within the Municipality, the PPI department is the department that uses FCC most intensively.

## THE INTERNAL SUPPORT FOR FCC

Currently, the PPI department consists of about 130 employees, including 23 PMO (Project Management Support Officers) and about 107 project managers. The PPI department is divided into four teams:

- Urban development
- Public space
- IT
- Organization



PPI employees



projects



teams

To support colleagues in using FCC, each team in the PPI department has a Key User - an experienced user who serves as the first point of contact. In addition, there are three functional administrators department-wide. Together, the project managers, key users and functional administrators make up the **core FCC team**.

### NEED FOR OPTIMIZATION

In 2022 personnel shifts take place. Yvonne Tack, formerly a Key User, takes on the role of FCC project leader, along with Arnold Tilgenkamp (Promista). Some bottlenecks emerge as a result of the personnel changes:

- A lot of essential knowledge is vested in only a few employees. The loss of those employees is palpable.
- Not all departments are running on the latest version of FCC. As a result, not everyone can use the latest features.
- The functional administrators not only handle far-reaching technical questions, but also perform tasks that are operational in nature. Some of these tasks should be performed by the key users.

### ACTION PLAN

The municipality of Tilburg has involved Promista as an implementation partner in the use of FCC since the beginning. Promista is a consultancy organization and trainer in the field of project and portfolio management with great expertise around Fortes Change Cloud. Promista supports the Municipality of Tilburg in multiple facets of FCC. Yvonne and Arnold start in the summer of 2022 to develop an Action Plan to identify the challenges and opportunities and to optimize the utilization of Fortes Change Cloud.

The Action Plan is completed in the second half of 2022. Included in it are four key focus areas. These key focus areas (see the frame on the right) are linked to strategic goals. The focus of the project is on **diligence**: the key focus areas will each be developed into a sub-plan. Ample time will be taken to work out the plans in cooperation with the teams. Ample time is also planned for implementation.



Source: Gemeente Tilburg

- 1 Future-proofing:**  
A new team structure of key users and functional administrators and a new division of roles should make teams more resilient and self-reliant.
- 2 Urban Development Accountability:**  
The Urban Development team has heavy accountability with a semi-annual reporting cycle. Within this cycle, efficiencies can be gained by automating reporting better.
- 3 Migration to latest version:**  
Three teams were still working in the classic version and were using macro-holding reports. These teams have yet to be migrated to the new version and reporting techniques need to be made more future-proof.
- 4 Knowledge sharing and knowledge growth:**  
To make the project organization as a whole more efficient and less vulnerable to staff turnover, knowledge must be more broadly invested and increased and then kept up-to-date.

## BROAD SUPPORT

In drawing up the plans - especially those around migration - special attention was paid to involving employees. To engage people, task forces were formed for each team:

**FCC Migration Working Group.** The members of that task force serve as forerunners within their departments. They not only consist of key users, but also of employees with a special feeling for efficient project management and the needs and ambitions of the municipality of Tilburg.

The task force is continuously involved in the migration process. They provide feedback on the plans, approach and setup design.

Then the new setup and approach is **presented to the entire team through training sessions** for employees to deal with the migrated environment. There is room for feedback and questions there as well.

Finally, a **walk-in session** was organized. This allowed employees to also express their questions, concerns and areas of interest individually.

## BEST PRACTICES

With such a large project, there are always things that actually turned out to be very valuable and things you would approach differently next time. Yvonne and Arnold give the following recommendations:

### Investing in engagement

A lot of time and energy was invested in engaging the employees. The impact is two-fold: the team is more involved in the project, but questions and needs that are not within your original scope also surface. Often, though, those questions and needs are presented with urgency. That requires **discipline in saying no**, but the involvement also yields enormous benefits. Yvonne: *'One of the core team members said that she felt much more like a team than in the past. We have really invested in that as well. And that also pays off outside of this project.'*

In addition to core team involvement, strong efforts have also been made to **involve the Management Team**. A few times a year, Arnold and Yvonne present the vision, progress and next steps to the MT. The mostly positive feedback from these presentations has given the core team additional motivation and energy.



The FCC Migration task force

### The right people in the team

Especially in migration projects, it turns out to be important to include the right people in the project team. The “right people” are people who not only **understand** the tool and the technology, but also the **organization**. The set-up of a tool like FCC has to match how your organization is set up and what information you want to get out of it. In addition, of course, people must have **sufficient space in the agenda** to do their tasks. ‘We have gradually become more critical and have checked: are these the people who have the skills and time to actively think with us?’ says Arnold, ‘It’s nice to have sharp, assertive people on your team who can indicate what is really needed’.

## AMBITIONS

When asked what the plans and ambitions are for the near future, Yvonne indicates that the focus is first on completing the initial plan of action. Recently, the management plan has been written. This will set up the management phase and secure the knowledge sharing and knowledge growth of the fourth key focus area. Yvonne and Arnold's mission is to ensure tranquility and stability within the project organization, a smooth migration and macro-free reporting. Arnold especially hopes not to be needed in the long run. *‘If the plan works, everything functions as we designed it, we will be redundant. Then the goal will have been reached!’*

## BENEFITS

The benefits of the project - besides achieving the strategic goals, are clearly felt:

- ✓ The completion time of support tickets is much shorter.
- ✓ There is more team experience and cooperation. Functional administrators and key users know each other better, so there is also more mutual coordination and utilization of each other's strengths.
- ✓ Increased visibility and positive sentiment about FCC.

*“ I experience the contact with Fortes as positive. There is regular coordination about developments. That way we get to know each other better and we know what to expect from each other. ”*

Yvonne Tack  
Projectleader municipality of Tilburg



Successes should be celebrated together, preferably with cake.

## SUPPORT AND INNOVATION

Partners like Promista help Fortes' customers implement and optimize the use of FCC. By maintaining close contact with these partners and our customers, Fortes as an organization can remain responsive to the needs of large project organizations. In this way, Fortes consistently delivers innovative technology and Promista provides the services that help our customers get the most out of their investment.

## ABOUT FORTES

Fortes has been developing solutions for effective management of projects and project portfolios for more than 20 years. Fortes Change Cloud is number one in local and central Dutch government for Strategic Portfolio Management. Fortes supports programs, projects, agile teams and Strategic Resource Management, matching available manpower to current and future demand.

Fortes stands out for its great ease of use, flexibility and scalability. It supports from a small department with a handful of projects to a large ministry with dozens of portfolios and more than 1,000 initiatives.

Want to know how Fortes can help you get a better grip on your strategic direction? Then request a demo today.

PLAN A DEMO

## One platform to connect the dots

### Fortes Change Cloud

