



**Snohomish County
Office of the County Performance Auditor**

**AUDIT OF SNOHOMISH COUNTY
PARK MAINTENANCE**

December 17, 2007



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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 *Summary of Results*

Park Maintenance is responsible for the specialized maintenance of properties of the Parks and Recreation Department. Facility Maintenance Workers are a skilled group committed to quality and are led by a management team interested in improving Park Maintenance processes. More effective management systems will help ensure that maintenance is done in the best way with the most appropriate resources. Park leadership has welcomed the audit recommendations and many are already being implemented.

Adequate planning will ensure efficient and effective park maintenance.

Clear objectives and procedures for all activities and processes are needed in Park Maintenance. Reliable and accurate data should be used for inventory and condition assessment, backlog evaluation, resource needs appraisals, or work plan and budgeting considerations.

Although Park Maintenance personnel and culture are strong, additional processes must be put in place to ensure effective leadership. Prioritization; work assignment and deployment; supervision and feedback; accountability; and protection of assets have been implemented based solely on staff experience. Additional data and analytical focus will improve information and outcomes.

Park Maintenance should manage for results. Performance measurement and inspection programs have not yet been developed or implemented. Performance information could better inform decision-making and reporting.

Parks should improve maintenance contracting. There has been insufficient planning for contracts for maintenance services. Contracts do not include important components that will manage risk and ensure that county maintenance expectations are met.

1.2 *Notes*

Government Auditing Standards Compliance Statement

We conducted this performance audit in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards.¹

Audit Support

The auditors would like to thank interns Don Kramer and Angela Wallis for their invaluable support and assistance with this project.

¹ See Appendix A for audit objectives, scope, and methodology.



Acknowledgement

The auditors would like to acknowledge the commitment of the Department of Parks and Recreation to the audit process. The time and efforts of Park Maintenance and Parks administrative staff were significant and much appreciated. In particular, Al Stevens, Bob Leonard, and Bridgid Smith have worked long and hard to respond to audit questions and begin planning for new processes.

Limitations

Insufficient documentation limited some audit analysis and independent verification.

1.3 ***Strengths and Challenges of Park Maintenance***

Strengths:

- Snohomish County has diverse and attractive parks, trails, and open space that provide positive recreational activities for the public and is well maintained.²
- The Facility Maintenance Workers' are experienced, have longevity with the county, and are committed to quality.
- Parks Maintenance and the Parks and Recreation Department (Parks) management began planning and implementing processes in response to audit concerns immediately and had begun analysis of departmental strengths and weaknesses prior to the audit.
- Parks Maintenance leadership has demonstrated openness to new approaches that will assist them in developing the most effective and efficient park maintenance program.

Challenges:

The excerpt below from Washington State's Local Parks and Recreation Maintenance and Operations Task Force details the challenges facing local government park maintenance, including Snohomish County.

The challenges facing local governments as they work to maintain and operate their parks and recreation facilities include:

- the skyrocketing demand for parks and recreation programs and facilities, a product of the State's population growth, society's greater interest in fitness and outdoor recreation, and unprecedented popularity of organized athletics;
- increasing use of facilities and open space, resulting in more significant "wear and tear," which increases maintenance and operations costs;
- rising costs of utilities and employee medical benefits;
- declining resources...;

² There is a maintenance backlog that may impact the quality of park maintenance over time.



- aging facilities, which are more expensive to maintain and operate;
- the expanding mission of parks and recreation departments to include environmental stewardship and the provision of social services, which has diverted funds from maintenance and operations;
- dollars are available for acquisition and development but not for maintenance and operations; and
- resistance from citizens to user fees because they see parks and recreation as services that should be provided for free.

1.4 **Background**



Figure 1: Open space at Lake Goodwin.

Park Maintenance³ is a team of 14 Facility Maintenance Workers that manage Snohomish County's parks, recreational facilities, natural lands, and trails covering more than 9,800 acres. Within these acres are 21 restrooms, 15 play structures, 11,138 feet of dock, 219 campsites, 132 acres of turf, 446,000 square feet of planting beds, 2,831 acres of open space/preserve, 85,500 feet of fence, 47 miles of shoreline, 12 rental properties, and much more.

The Maintenance and Operations Division consists of:

- Park Maintenance: Facility Maintenance Workers do specialized maintenance including preventive maintenance, stewardship, and small-scale improvement projects⁴.
- Park Operations: Park Rangers serve as a resource to the public, provide basic security, and carry out day-to-day maintenance such as trash disposal. Park Operations was not included in this audit.

Ensuring that maintenance management is effective

This report reviews Park Maintenance management systems focusing on the three goals in Figure 2: 'Plan and Organize', 'Lead', and 'Assess and Enhance'. Parks has been attentive to shortfalls identified during audit work and has begun planning and/or implementing many new practices. They report that

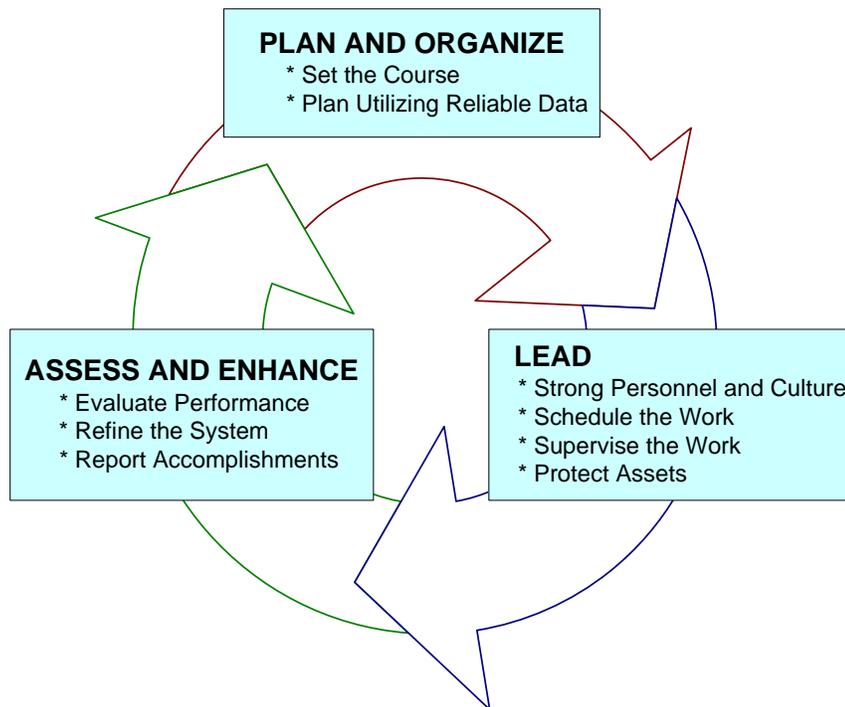
³ The Parks and Recreation Department's Maintenance and Operations Division's Maintenance Section is referred to in this report as "Park Maintenance."

⁴ Park Maintenance is split into two teams, one of which focuses solely on the Fairgrounds. The Fairgrounds team was not included in this audit.



there will be a focus on building analytic and strategic capacity in the coming months.

Figure 2⁵



Changes and innovations

Parks' 2007 Comprehensive Plan states, "Some future park development plans include a variety of facility types which will require higher levels of maintenance. Included in this category are sports fields, yurts, amphitheaters, community activity centers and active play facilities. The addition of these new elements also increases the overall number of facilities, creating an additional burden for day-to-day maintenance." Parks is aware that resources are being stretched and believes that working more efficiently, using technology, and enlisting the assistance of volunteers will address some of this burden.

Parks officials state that although technology and operational efficiencies will be a focus of their activity they will still need community support. Parks has developed a business plan addressing community partnerships. This includes plans to involve corporate support, nonprofit involvement, and general citizen

⁵ This chart was developed based on criteria cited in the *Maintenance Management Manual Summary*, the *Maintenance Manager's Standard Manual*, the Government Accountability Office's *Internal Control Standards*, and the Canadian Institute of Chartered Accountants' *Guidance on Control*.



volunteerism. Parks has begun collaborating with these groups and has received donations of cash, materials, and labor in addition to title sponsorships⁶ and sponsorships of events.



Figure 3: Whitehorse Park in Darrington is a newly developed park with two baseball fields.

Approximately 475 new acres of parkland will be added in 2007 and 2008. Park planners state that this acreage will be more intensively developed than current parks. Most of the new parks being built will have one or more ball fields. Park Maintenance has stated that turf management for ball fields is one of their most labor intensive activities.

⁶ Title sponsorships are park activities that are paid for by an entity outside of government for which they receive the right to name the event.



2 PLAN AND ORGANIZE

Planned and organized internal processes would provide reasonable assurance that Park Maintenance is effectively and efficiently caring for the community's parks.

2.1 ***Adequate planning will ensure efficient and effective park maintenance.***

2.1.1 SET THE COURSE

2.1.1.1 Set strategic direction and objectives

Although there are documents that state goals for the entire department, it is not clear how these goals translate to Park Maintenance activities. Clearly stated goals and priorities should flow from the department mission and provide a sound basis for performance measures. Management has begun the process of setting direction as a response to the audit. Park Maintenance goals will help management to act more strategically and Facility Maintenance Workers to understand how daily activities directly lead to the achievement of the department's mission.

2.1.1.2 Define activities, service types, and corresponding procedures/standards

Activities and procedures

Without a comprehensive procedure manual for Park Maintenance, authority, responsibility, and accountability are not clear and maintenance functions are planned and carried out inconsistently. A few individual procedures are in place and additional documentation has been developed during the course of this audit. A procedure manual will be especially important as long-term employees leave Park Maintenance and new employees are hired.

Service levels and standards

There have been efforts to develop service levels⁷ and implement standards, but none are in full operation. The Parks 2007 Comprehensive plan states that, "Establishing management priorities for the park system as a whole can be accomplished by creating a Stewardship Classification System" and sets out basic components of this service level system. In addition, the *Snohomish County Parks Maintenance and Operations Standards* document has been developed, but the standards have not yet been applied to specific

⁷ Service levels are a system that take into account the amount of public use, type of park, and amenities and describe standards for taking care of them.



parks or to the work of the Park Maintenance team. Service levels and standards will assist Park Maintenance to determine priorities and scalability as the number of park assets for which they are responsible increases.

2.1.2 PLAN STRATEGICALLY USING RELIABLE DATA

This section details a set of activities that, taken as a whole, will make Park Maintenance more effective and efficient. These processes will become more important as Parks takes on more maintenance responsibilities. Planning strategically using reliable data will help Park Maintenance:

1. prioritize and track status of work projects;
2. increase accountability;
3. evaluate the use and cost of deferred maintenance;
4. compare conditions between parks and with other jurisdictions;
5. establish a baseline for setting goals and tracking progress;
6. develop estimates and priorities for repair and replacement projects;
7. improve communication of conditions to stakeholders;
8. provide accurate and supportable data for budget planning and justification; and
9. establish funding priorities.

2.1.2.1 *Collect reliable and accurate data*

Data is not currently reliable although strides have been made in collecting data both over time and during the course of this audit. Park Maintenance manages some data in an Access database. A complete data collection plan including method, frequency, and general data procedures should be developed. Because data has not been reliable, it is not yet possible to make data-driven decisions that would result in increased effectiveness and efficiency.



Figure 4: This yurt at Kayak Point should be part of an inventory with maintenance requirements and condition for each asset.

2.1.2.2 *Take inventory and assess condition*

Although a complete inventory of Snohomish County parks assets exists, there is no documentation of asset maintenance requirements or current condition. The National Research Council's *Committing to the Cost of Ownership* states that condition assessments should identify deficiencies and result in a quantified description and cost

estimate for each deficiency. A management information review of Portland



Parks and recreation found that, “Without an explicit, well-organized knowledge of asset condition, it is impossible to plan, fund, and execute a meaningful maintenance management strategy.”

2.1.2.3 Address the backlog

Definition

Park Maintenance needs to clearly define their maintenance backlog. At the start of the audit Park Maintenance provided information that showed 450 backlogged maintenance work orders.⁸ The analysis in this section refers to the backlog as it was presented at the start of the project. There is currently an effort to more accurately define the backlog.

Management

There has not been active backlog management or an active plan to reduce backlog; however, management and reduction efforts began during audit work. When assigning maintenance tasks, the backlog is reviewed periodically to determine when tasks can be assigned but frequently there are new work orders that take precedence.

Preventive Maintenance

The backlog includes preventive maintenance work. Preventive maintenance is “care and servicing by personnel for the purpose of maintaining equipment and facilities in satisfactory operating condition by providing for systematic inspection, detection, and correction of incipient failures either before they occur or before they develop into major defects.”⁹ Insufficient attention to preventive maintenance will result in higher costs in the long term.



Figure 5: Deteriorating picnic bench at Kayak Point.

2.1.2.4 Resources needed

Staffing

Rigorous staffing analysis has not been done. Parks’ Comprehensive Plan states, “Evaluation of staff requirements to care for park properties is needed in order to maintain quality standards and meet the unique maintenance needs of each property.” A staffing model applied to current assets and maintenance requirements would determine what can be achieved with current staffing without reducing service or increasing the backlog.

⁸ As of August 2007.

⁹ Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms



Equipment

It is unclear if Park Maintenance equipment purchases and rental strategies are cost effective since no evaluation of equipment use and needs has been undertaken. The oldest six vehicles in the county¹⁰ belong to Parks and include heavy equipment from 1969 and the early '70s. The oldest county vehicle outside of Parks is a 1985 snowplow. Staff and management state that there are significant equipment needs. Maintenance workers pride themselves on being resourceful and keeping equipment running as long as possible. The Parks Maintenance mechanic is beginning to track time spent fixing each piece of equipment to facilitate efficiency analysis.

2.1.2.5 Develop work programs and budgets

Park maintenance has developed some work programs and budgets. A work program is a structured system of planned work; for example, preventive maintenance or new amenities. A more rigorous process would ensure that work programs and budgets are reflective of actual needs and can be more effectively communicated. It is not possible to determine if resources are sufficient or well spent until effective and reliable processes are implemented to prioritize, deploy, and account for maintenance efforts.

Recommendation 1:

Park Maintenance should improve planning and organizing using rigorous processes to:

- set strategic direction and objectives;
- define activities, service types, and corresponding standards;
- collect reliable and accurate data;
- take inventory and assess condition of assets;
- address the maintenance backlog;
- identify resources needed; and
- develop work programs and budgets.

¹⁰ Of those tracked by ER&R.



3 LEAD

Effective leadership could ensure that Park Maintenance objectives are being met.

3.1 ***Although Park Maintenance personnel and culture are strong, additional processes must be put in place to ensure the most effective leadership.***

3.1.1 ENSURE STRONG PERSONNEL AND CULTURE

3.1.1.1 ***Retain competent, trained, high performing staff***

Maintenance staff are highly qualified and internally motivated. Park Maintenance implements key processes to ensure that staff are competent, trained, and high performing:

- Minimum qualifications for employment
- Written and field testing for applicants
- Job descriptions
- Mentoring
- Training
- Safety program
- Problem-solving meetings

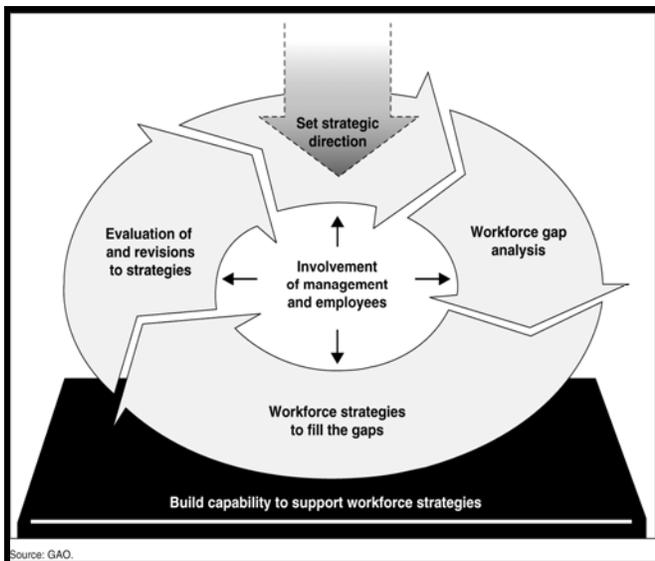


Figure 6: GAO depiction of effective workforce management.

Currently, the maintenance team has the skills to address maintenance needs that arise. As retirements and other turnover of maintenance staff occur management should conduct a workforce gap analysis as the Government Accountability Office describes in Figure 6. This process would determine what skills are needed to ensure that park maintenance needs are met.



3.1.1.2 Effectively communicate

Park Maintenance communicates effectively across the maintenance team, but communications from line staff to management are less effective. The management team has stated that communications will be a focus in the coming months. For team communication, daily meetings are held and cell phones are used throughout the day. The Lead Facility Maintenance Worker is in the field and generally visits several sites to coordinate, assist, and provide supplies. All staff interviewed believe that this communication within the team is effective and sufficient.

3.1.1.3 Maintain a culture of quality

The Park Maintenance staff culture is conducive to high quality work. The following criteria are present:

- they work together as a team
- there is tolerance for questioning processes
- they communicate openly and honestly, sharing ideas
- they have access to all the information they need
- they see tasks as learning experiences

In an inspection of a sample of completed work orders all items reviewed met or exceeded quality standards.

3.1.2 SCHEDULE THE WORK



Figure 7: Kayak Point Park is a minimum hour and a half round-trip from the maintenance base.

3.1.2.1 Prioritize

During the course of the audit, management developed and implemented a system to prioritize work orders based on defined criteria. This prioritization process is currently in transition to being more analytic. Outcomes may improve with the addition of data controls and staff experience with the process.

3.1.2.2 Assign work

The assignment of work should be based on work order priorities, staff skills, geographic considerations, and available materials/equipment. A draft procedure requires printing of the work order when assigned and a signature by the staff person(s) upon completion. More systematic work assignment will be required as prioritization, work programs, work quantity, and other factors become more complex.



3.1.2.3 Deploy workers

Facility Maintenance Workers currently drive to the maintenance base each morning to receive work assignments and pick up their vehicles and maintenance equipment. They formally meet three days per week. The management team has discussed alternate deployment structures. Formal analysis could result in significant savings in gasoline costs and staff hours with alternate deployment designs.

3.1.3 SUPERVISE THE WORK

3.1.3.1 Supervise and give feedback

Additional field supervision is needed. Although maintenance personnel are skilled and experienced and appear to function well with relative independence there is no authorized supervision in the field. The Lead Facility Maintenance Worker has a great deal of interaction with staff facilitating daily meetings, working on-site with Facility Maintenance Workers, has strong relationships and respect from maintenance staff, and is readily available for emerging questions or concerns; however, he does not have formal supervisory duties.

Staff performance evaluations have not been conducted regularly. The manager responsible for staff evaluations has little direct observation of the Facility Maintenance Workers' productivity, timeliness, and work quality since he is not in the field.

3.1.3.2 Ensure accountability for completion, timeliness, and quality

Additional methods should be employed to ensure accountability. According to the *Maintenance Manager's Standard Manual*, "The best productivity results when each individual in an organization has a definite job to do in a definite way and a definite time." Currently Park Maintenance uses timesheets with job costing¹¹ and sometimes there is a sign off on work orders when they are completed. Most other jurisdictions surveyed utilize formal processes to measure productivity and quality including:

- direct supervision
- individual performance measures
- customer feedback
- rework and callbacks
- inspections

Park Maintenance uses some of these processes informally, but documented processes will improve accountability and will allow performance to be effectively communicated both internally and externally especially as new workers are hired.

¹¹ Job costing is a system which tracks the amount of time spent by staff on specific projects.



3.1.4 PROTECT ASSETS

The Parks Department is currently revising their asset inventory system as a result of concerns identified during the audit. The security, accuracy, and completeness of current inventory processes have been insufficient; it is impossible to determine if inventory is lost, stolen, or managed sufficiently. The new inventory system should be developed by using a risk-based determination of what items to incorporate and should include:

- asset description
- storage location
- usability assessment

Tracked assets should be entered into the system before they are put into service and marked using a durable method. A draft countywide policy for small and attractive inventory is currently being reviewed and will assist the Parks Department in their inventory tracking method.

Recommendation 2:

Park Maintenance should build on its strengths in leadership to develop and implement systematic approaches to:

- skills gap analysis;
- communications up and down the organization;
- seeking out promising practices;
- prioritization of work orders;
- work assignment and deployment;
- supervision and feedback;
- accountability for completion, timeliness, and quality; and
- protection of assets.



4 ASSESS AND ENHANCE

Regular assessment and enhancement of park maintenance processes could ensure that Park Maintenance is using limited resources wisely.

4.1 ***Parks Maintenance should manage for results.***

4.1.1 EVALUATE PERFORMANCE

4.1.1.1 ***Measure Performance***

Park Maintenance should implement a performance measurement plan to ensure that they are meeting expectations. This should include:

- Statement of performance measurement purpose and how it will be used for management and accountability;
- Listing of measures relating to key maintenance functions;
- Relationship between goals and performance measures;
- Responsibilities for data collection and reporting; and
- Frequency and nature of reporting.

4.1.1.2 ***Inspect***

Park Maintenance does not have a sufficient inspection program relating to park maintenance responsibilities. Currently, the Parks Department regularly inspects playgrounds and parks in relation to Park Ranger duties, but the current inspections do not comprehensively address maintenance-related issues.

There should be a system and schedule for periodically assessing and documenting the condition of each park asset. Other jurisdictions differ in the frequency of their formal inspection programs; some inspect weekly, some quarterly, and some yearly.



There must also be a documented process to ensure that problems identified during inspection are rectified. In some of the inspections there was no documentation of resolution of identified problems. The auditors observed that problems documented on inventory forms ten months prior to audit evaluation remained open.

Figure 8: Playground surface needing repair noted on an inspection completed in November 2006. This photo was taken in September 2007.



4.1.2 REFINE THE SYSTEM

Management and staff should begin to use performance information for making decisions. Maintenance Division decisions are generally based on experience rather than data. This approach gives little assurance that priorities and goals are being met or that maintenance staff are being utilized efficiently or effectively. As the number and complexity of park assets managed by Park Maintenance grows it will become more difficult to effectively manage without utilizing data.

4.1.3 REPORT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Management should begin communicating performance results internally so that the organization can better understand how it is functioning and make adjustments in their work processes to achieve goals and peak performance. Reporting accomplishments will help Park Maintenance to show how they are effectively utilizing tax dollars and “provid[ing] safe, enjoyable, attractive parks and recreational facilities.”¹²

Recommendation 3:

Park Maintenance should assess and enhance their program by implementing:

- section-level performance measures;
- park inspections;
- data-based decision-making; and
- outcome reporting.

¹² Part of the statement of Parks and Recreation mission on the Sno-Stat Web page.



5 CONTRACTING FOR MAINTENANCE

Successful maintenance contracting can manage risk while ensuring that Snohomish County parks are efficiently and effectively maintained.

5.1 ***Parks should improve contracting processes and contract documents.***

5.1.1 BACKGROUND

The Parks Department hired a Contracts, Land, and Capital Projects Manager who began work in October 2007. The Parks Director reports that addressing the weaknesses in maintenance contracts is the new manager's first priority and that a review for rewriting and re-negotiating the contracts reviewed in this report will be complete by 2008.

Snohomish County has entered into contracts for the maintenance of five parks or sections of parks as shown in Figure 9. Two are municipal contracts in which cities or towns are responsible for maintenance of a county park located in their jurisdiction. Three are contracts with sports organizations who agree to maintain, and in some cases improve, sports fields in exchange for the use of the fields.

Figure 9: Five Snohomish County maintenance contracts.

Contractor	Park	Year Signed
City of Arlington	Twin Rivers Park	1984
Town of Darrington	Whitehorse Community Park	2000
Northshore Youth Soccer Association	Forsgren County Park Soccer Fields	2002
Alderwood Little League Association	Logan County Park Baseball Field	2003
North and South Mukilteo Little League Association	Paine Field Community Park Baseball Fields	2007

Currently, there is no countywide standard for contract components. This has led to gaps in maintenance contract contents and significant variations of contract language in each Parks Department contract. Recent contracts are more complete.

The weaknesses in the current contracts have contributed to inconsistent appearance of county parks. Specific examples of differences include signage and cleanliness.



Signage



Figure 10: Sign at Kayak Point maintained by Snohomish County



Figure 11: Sign at a park maintained by contract.

Cleanliness



Figure 12: Sample of a spotless Meadowdale Park maintained by Snohomish County.



Figure 13: Trash at fields maintained by contract.

5.1.2 CONTRACT PLANNING

Parks has not engaged in formal planning prior to entering into maintenance contracts. Parks may be more likely to encounter challenges with partner fulfillment of obligations, cost-effectiveness, and other concerns if sufficient



planning is not completed prior to contracting. There is currently varied capacity among the contracted partners to meet the terms of the contracts. One partner asked the county to take back responsibility for mowing and other field maintenance because they could not meet contracted responsibilities.

The following activities should take place prior to contracting:

1. *Due Diligence*
Can the offering entity provide services at the quantity and quality required by the contract?
2. *Cost Effectiveness*
Can the offering entity provide services at a lower cost than using in-house staff or an alternative delivery approach?
3. *Union Agreement*
Would the contract violate a civil service rule or labor agreement?
4. *Administrative Costs*
Would there be additional administrative costs, i.e. record keeping, staff to monitor contract performance, or other overhead costs?

5.1.3 CONTRACT COMPONENTS

Review of current contracts for park maintenance found opportunities for improvement in contract language. Each contracting situation may require a unique set of contract components. Some examples of areas for contract improvement include:

- **Scope of work and terms-**
Written expectations of contractors are frequently unclear and unenforceable.
- **Property under agreement-**
In some cases the description of land area for which the contractor is responsible is difficult to differentiate from Park Maintenance's area of responsibility.
- **Hazardous substances-**
Contractors are expected to use fertilizer to care for ball field turf areas but rules regarding the use, storage, and disposal of those substances are not defined in the contracts.

Recommendation 4:

The Parks Department should:

- plan sufficiently before they enter into contracts; and
- carefully review contract components with the prosecuting attorney's office to ensure that the best contract for each situation is drafted.



6 OFFICIAL RESPONSE



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December 12, 2007

MEMORANDUM

TO: Kymber Waltmunson, Performance Auditor
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FROM: Tom Teigen, Director
Snohomish County Parks and Recreation Department

RE: Response from the Snohomish County Parks and Recreation Department to the Auditor's Report: "Audit of Snohomish County Park Maintenance"

The Snohomish County Parks and Recreation Department is pleased to respond to the audit performed by the Snohomish County Office of the Performance Auditor. We appreciate the time, professionalism and evaluative feedback provided by Kymber Waltmunson and her team in conducting an audit of the County Park Maintenance section. The Parks and Recreation Department Director and leadership team were engaged in a strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats analysis (S.W.O. T Analysis), a staff skills-gap analysis and a departmental reorganization during the performance audit and found the interaction and collaboration with the audit team to be very beneficial.

Significant changes in the maintenance and operations culture were occurring prior to and continued throughout the audit process. The Executive's Office supported the Department's staff reorganization plan and the re-classification of positions as part of a new strategic and business based approach focused in creating meaningful performance measures, collecting reliable data, addressing the maintenance backlog, data-based decision making and accountability for completion of high quality work in a timely manner.



Memo to Kymber Waltmunson
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The Department is currently in the hiring process for the Resource Management and Community Partnership Division Manager position. The previous manager retired during the audit process and two lead staff have been working out-of-class and managing the section. As a result of these re-assignments, the general reorganization of the Department and the current hiring process for the new Resource Management and Community Partnership Division Manager the Department made significant progress in addressing the Performance Audit. The Performance Auditor identified three staff, Bridgid Smith, Al Stevens and Bob Leonard, who were instrumental in working with the audit team and I too wish to thank them for their extraordinary efforts in working with the audit team and immediately implementing changes to address the auditor's recommendations.

The four recommendations presented by the Performance Auditor are:

1. **Auditor's Recommendation No. 1:** *Park Maintenance should improve planning and organizing using rigorous processes to: set strategic direction and objectives; define activities, service types and corresponding standards; collect reliable and accurate data; take inventory and assess condition of assets; address the maintenance backlog; identify resources needed and develop work programs and budgets.*
2. **Auditor's Recommendation No. 2:** *Park Maintenance should build on its strengths in leadership to develop and implement systematic approaches to: skills gap analysis; communications up and down the organization; seeking out promising practices; prioritization of work orders; work assignment and employment; supervision and feedback; accountability for completion, timeliness, and quality and protection of assets.*
3. **Auditor's Recommendation No. 3:** *Park Maintenance should assess and enhance their program by implementing: section level performance measures; park inspections; data-based decision-making; and outcome reporting.*
4. **Auditor's Recommendation No. 4:** *The Parks Department should: plan sufficiently before they enter into contracts; and carefully review contract components with the prosecuting attorney's office to ensure that the best contract for each situation is drafted.*



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We are in agreement with most of the recommendations and all aspects of the recommendations are being addressed through the department reorganization, position re-classifications and more strategic leadership and data driven decision making processes implemented by the department leadership team. The Parks and Recreation Department looks forward to providing detailed updates and the opportunity to chart our successes through the scheduled audit review and follow-up process.

Again, I thank the Performance Auditor for her diligence and collaborative approach to the audit; I thank the County Executive for supporting the Park and Recreation Department's re-organization and strategic staffing plan; and I thank my leadership team for their ability to embrace change and their desire to build the best park system in the region.

Respectfully,

Tom Teigen, Director
Snohomish County Parks and Recreation



7 APPENDICES

7.1 Appendix A: Objectives, Scope and Methodology

The audit team evaluated the current status of the Maintenance and Operations group within the Parks Division of the Parks and Recreation Department except where a function relating to audit objectives occurs at a higher level. This audit focused on current status with past information for reference as needed.

Objectives and the section of the report where they are described are shown in Figure 10.

Figure 13

OBJECTIVE	Sub-Category	REPORT SECTION
Background		1
Does Park Maintenance have the structure in place to ensure that its goals and objectives are met efficiently and effectively?	Plan and Organize	2
	Lead	3
	Assess and Enhance	4
Is partnering with other entities for maintenance of county parks effective?	Maintenance Contracts	5

To obtain information the audit team:

- Analyzed electronic data from:
 - ✓ Access database containing work orders
 - ✓ FMS “Ultra Main” (database used by ER&R to track equipment)
- Conducted 50 interviews¹³ with:
 - ✓ Snohomish County officials and employees
 - ✓ Park maintenance officials and staff from other jurisdictions
 - ✓ Contracting staff from other jurisdictions
- Reviewed documents:
 - ✓ Snohomish County general information
 - ✓ General information from other jurisdictions
- Observed Snohomish County parks and Park Maintenance operations
- Reviewed a sample of Park Maintenance inventory
- Identified best practices
- Reviewed applicable literature¹⁴

¹³ See detail in Appendix B.

¹⁴ See detail in Appendix C.



7.2 *Appendix B: Officials Interviewed and Consulted*

County Staff

Parks

1. Tom Teigen, Parks Director
2. Brigid Smith, Administrative Services Manager
3. Kay Akerlund, Capital Funds Specialist
4. Ken Alskog, Maintenance & Operations Manager
5. Marc Krandel, interview-park planning
6. Russ Bosanko¹⁵, Contracts, Land and Capital Projects Manager
7. Bill Karras, Program Coordinator
8. Dianne Bailey, Park Property Administrator
9. Rich Patton, Park Operations Supervisor
10. Rich Fowler, Park Ranger Assistant/Inventory
11. Al Stevens, Facility Maintenance Worker Lead
12. Bob Leonard, Facility Maintenance Worker III
13. Greg Froberg, Facility Maintenance Worker III
14. Chuck Hagen, Facility Maintenance Worker III
15. Martin Bercier, Facility Maintenance Worker II
16. Randy Hoyt, Facility Maintenance Worker II
17. Darren Massie, Facility Maintenance Worker II
18. Gordon Hollis, Facility Maintenance Worker II
19. Eric Imhoff, Facility Maintenance Worker II
20. Chris Jones, Facility Maintenance Worker I
21. Darren Knutsen, Facility Maintenance Worker II
22. Jesse Swan, Facility Maintenance Worker I
23. Bert Regan, Facility Maintenance Worker I

Facilities Management

24. Candy Coomes, Property Coordinator, Property Management

Finance

25. John Navroth, Sr. Safety Officer, Risk Management Division
26. Marisa Snoey, Accounting Analyst, Financial Operations Division

Public Works/Fleet Management

27. Allen Mitchell, ER&R Fleet Equipment Manager
28. Peggy Thomson, Financial Systems Coordinator, Fleet Management

Prosecuting Attorney

29. George Marsh, Deputy Prosecuting Attorney
30. Michael Held, Deputy Prosecuting Attorney

Other Jurisdictions

31. Stan Hooper, Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District
32. Jim O'Connor, Santa Clara County, California
33. Denis Philbin, San Luis Obispo County, California
34. Paul Johnson, Maintenance Manager, New Castle County, Delaware
35. Matt Bohan, San Diego County, California
36. Michael Isner, Parks Services, Mecklenburg County, North Carolina

¹⁵ Mr. Bosanko was hired by Snohomish County as of 10-1-07 and was interviewed in this capacity as well as his King County capacity.



37. Gregg Yeldell, Park Maintenance Manager, District of Columbia
38. Chris Snow, Wake County, North Carolina
39. Eddie Canon, Operations Div. Director, Cobb County, Georgia
40. Mike Bays, Metro Nashville Davidson County, Tennessee
41. Marty Storch, Assistant Operations Director, Jefferson County, Kentucky
42. Keith Kerman, City of New York Parks & Recreation, New York
43. Robert Harbin, Maintenance Operations, Broward County, Florida
44. Rick Hults, Facilities Maintenance Supervisor, Pierce County, Washington
45. Lyla Boyd, Court Treasurer, Town of Darrington
46. Russ Bosanko, King County Parks Division Program Manager

Other

47. Gary Weikel, former Parks Director
48. Dave Burdyslaw, Mukilteo North/South Little League
49. Paul Dini, Alderwood Little League
50. Dave Shipway, Northshore Youth Soccer Association



7.3 Appendix C: Reference Documents

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2. City of Portland, OR. Office of the City Auditor. Bureau of Parks and Recreation: A Review of Management Systems. February 2000. <http://www.portlandonline.com/shared/cfm/image.cfm?id=5726>
3. Government Accountability Office. Executive Guide: Best Practices in Achieving Consistent, Accurate Physical Counts of Inventory and Related Property. March 2002. <http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d02447g.pdf>
4. Government Accountability Office. Human Capital: Key Principles for Effective Strategic Workforce Planning. December 2003. <http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d0439.pdf>
5. Government Accountability Office. Internal Control Standards: Internal Control Management and Evaluation Tool. August 2001. <http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d011008g.pdf>
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7. Local Parks Legislative Task Force. Local Parks and Recreation Maintenance and Operations. December 2001.
8. National Research Council. Committee on Advanced Maintenance Concepts for Buildings, Building Research Board. Committing to the Cost of Ownership: Maintenance and Repair of Public Buildings. 1990. http://www.nap.edu/catalog.php?record_id=9807
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11. Snohomish County Parks Maintenance and Operations Standards.
12. Sullivan, Paul and Katsuyama, Byron. "Interlocal agreements: Doing it jointly." Municipal Research and Services Center. July 2007. <http://www.mrsc.org/Publications/mrnews/articles/interlocal6-00.aspx>
13. The Canadian Institute of Chartered Accountants. Guidance on Control. 1995.
14. United States Department of Defense. Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms. As amended through September 2007. <http://www.dtic.mil/doctrine/jel/doddict/>
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16. Westerkamp, Thomas A., Maintenance Manager's Standard Manual. 1997.
17. Woods, John A., The Six Values of a Quality Culture. 1996. <http://www.antenor.no/upload/4504/values%20of%20Quality%20Culture.pdf>