



CITY OF WILMINGTON

Parks and Recreation - Maintenance

Internal Audit Review

July 28, 2021

City Auditor's Office

Terence J. Williams
City Auditor
(302) 576-2165

Highlights

Why We Did This Audit

The Internal Audit Department (IA) performed a scheduled audit of Parks & Recreation - Maintenance. The audit was in accordance with the 2021 Internal Audit Plan.

Methodology

The objectives were met thru interviewing management and staff, reviewing policies and procedures, analyzing work order data, and reviewing and observing inventory management methods.

Audit Review Committee:

Ronald Pinkett, Chair

Marchelle Basnight
Angelique Dennis
Cristofer Johnson
Tanya Washington

Objective and Scope

As part of our audit plan, Internal Audit (IA) conducted a Performance Audit of the City's Parks & Recreation - Maintenance. The audit objective was to determine whether the department of Parks & Recreation is using resources effectively and efficiently to meet the departmental mission and goals and to produce measurable outcomes with respect to Park Maintenance. The scope of the audit included the period of July 1, 2018, to December 31, 2020. IA believes that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives.

We conducted our audit in accordance with Generally Accepted Government Auditing Standards ("GAGAS"). These standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives.

Background

Wilmington's Department of Parks and Recreation provides various services to all constituents. The mission of the department is to provide comprehensive and quality programming that supports the holistic wellness of City residents by offering recreational, social, cultural, employment, and educational opportunities for all City residents regardless of age or physical barriers. The Department also operates the City's only community center, William "Hicks" Anderson Community Center, whose mission is to build and strengthen neighborhoods and people by bringing together residents of West Center City through meaningful community building and high-quality enrichment programming for all ages and backgrounds. The community center recently underwent its first full-scale interior and exterior refurbishing of the center in many years. Some of the highlights of the renovations are a refurbished gym, aquatic center, game room, kitchen, technology lab and dance studio.

This report focuses on a review of the department's division of park maintenance, that is responsible for maintaining the outside park areas across the city. Task performed include cutting grass, applying herbicides, trash collection, sweeping courts, trimming tree limbs, leaf collecting, maintenance of park equipment, and policing. During the winter months, park maintenance crews also perform snow removal or salting if necessary. Per the Superintendent of Park Maintenance, the City's division maintains 1,016 acres of park land. Park Maintenance crews are assigned by defined areas throughout the city (refer to Key Statistics section of this report for further breakdown of the park assignments).

Internal Audit analyzed the work order process for how tasks are assigned and tracked; observed the process for tracking and safe keeping of equipment and inventory items; and analyzed how the park maintenance division is complying with best practices and standards as defined by the National Recreation & Parks Association (NRPA). The NRPA is the leading non-profit organization dedicated to the advancement of public parks, recreation, and conservation. Their work draws national focus to the far-reaching impact of successes generated at the local levels.

Key Statistics

City of Wilmington

Population Estimate: 70,166

Land area in square miles: 10.90

Park land in square miles: 1.59 or ~15%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau & Superintendent of Park Maintenance

Parks Maintenance Distribution

Note: Each of the 6 areas defined below are assigned a dedicated 4-man crew

North East	North West	South East	South West	Canby	Rodney Square
BBW	Haynes	Kosciuszko	Kirkwood	Canby	Rodney Square
Speakman	Eastlake	Judy Johnson	East 7 th St	Barry & Union	Spencer
Kingswood	Matson Run	Helen Chambers	Eden	Harrington Triangle	Del-Tech
Eastlawn	Brandywine Mills	Father Tucker	Christina	Pulaski	Soldiers & Sailors
Johnston	Cool Springs	Woodlawn	Barbara Hicks	Michaels	Lafayette Median
Sellers	Tilton	Mack	Elbert	Cihocki	Delaware Ave
	Bancroft Pkwy (E)	Bancroft Pkwy (W)	Brandywine Playground		HB DuPont
		Jenny Weaver	MLK		Fountain Plaza
	Stapler	4 th & Rodney	Kruse		Columbus Triangle
	24 th & Tatnall	3 rd & Connell	Holloway		Clifford Brown Lot
	Lovering Ave	3 rd & Adams	Truitt		6 th & Willing
	Gilpin		Millie Cannon		5 th & Rodney
	Harrison Triangle		Stoney Davis		Garfield
	Boulevard Triangle				LL Redding
	23 rd & Madison				

Source: Superintendent of Park Maintenance; See attachment C for Parks Master Plan Facilities Map

What we found

Key Findings

Following are key issues that resulted in a process/area to be risk rated a three or four. See **Attachment A** for the detail of these and all comments identified during the review.

Risk Ranking:		(See Attachment B for full rating definitions)			
Process / Area	Process / Area Owner	1 Strong Controls	2 Controlled Effectively	3 Controlled - Improvement Required	4 Significant Improvement Required
Strategic Plan	Ian Smith				✓
Data Entry	Ian Smith			✓	
Inventory Control	Ian Smith			✓	
Policies & Procedures	Ian Smith			✓	

Strategic Plan

1. Based on inquires with staff, it was noted that a written Comprehensive Preventative Maintenance Plan (CPMP) for the parks system does not exist. Although a CPMP does not exist, staff perform playground checks and repairs daily. The playground checks are logged into Cityworks®. Capital Projects handles all the depreciation and analysis data that corresponds with whether new equipment should be purchased for the various parks.

Data Entry

2. Due to the of incomplete and duplicate work orders identified during testing, controls need strengthening with respect to data entry of Park Maintenance work orders in Cityworks®.

An analysis of approximately 11K work orders processed through Cityworks® from July 1, 2018, to December 31, 2020, reflected many that failed to define the task completed. As well for many work orders there was a failure to enter a start to finish date and time total.

Inventory Control

3. Controls need strengthening surrounding inventory management. Although an analysis and observation of the park maintenance inventory of equipment and supplies reflected an improvement from the prior review in 2016; the following areas noted additional improvements are deemed necessary:
 - The supplies inventory checklist lacked dates for when items were restocked or used.
 - Equipment inventory file does not reflect date as of when the inventory is current.
 - Six of 13 vehicles assigned reflected employees first name only.
 - Three large equipment items were missing an identification number per the inventory spreadsheet.
 - Three light trailers and 1 cargo trailer were missing a license number.
 - Seven large equipment items were missing estimated useful life data.
 - There is a listing of items that are to be signed in and out that included shovels, rakes, weed eaters, etc.; however, the listing only contained the quantity for each. It does not include an “as of” date or identification numbers for these items.
 - The herbicide storage room used to store chemicals and other landscaping tools (digging shovels, square shovels, yard rakes, field rakes and pitchfork rakes) does not have a sign in/out sheet.

Policies and Procedures

4. Policies and procedures are lacking with respect to park maintenance work order management. For instance, work orders require multiple data entry points within Cityworks®, such as task completed, potential time, total time, and inspected by to name a few.

Additional Observations

1. Communication with a National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) Senior Research Manager and verification via the NRPA website of accredited agencies revealed that the City’s Parks and Recreation Department is not a Commission of Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA) accredited agency. Although not required, achieving accreditation will demonstrate that the agency meets national standards of best practices and proves to decision makers, stakeholders, and the public that the agency is operating with the best practices of the profession.
2. Communication with the NRPA also revealed that the Department of Parks and Recreation has never participated in the NRPA Park Metrics, the most comprehensive source of data standards and insights for parks and recreation agencies. Although not required, the Department should utilize this resource to assist in the effective management and planning of their operating resources and capital facilities. The NRPA Park Metrics offers the ability to filter data by agency type, size, and geographic region. The experience can be enhanced even further by allowing the city to enter its own data, after which you can generate reports that compare the City’s data with the key metrics of agencies throughout the United States.

Management Responses to Audit Recommendations

Summary of Management Responses

Recommendation #1: Management should utilize National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) resources and sample plans of other parks and recreation agencies to develop, draft and approve a Comprehensive Preventative Maintenance Plan for the City of Wilmington's parks.

Management response & action plan: The Department of Parks and Recreation acknowledges the finding and have taken steps to create a Comprehensive Preventative Maintenance Plan. We are currently evaluating our existing operating procedures as well as utilizing resources on the NRPA website. This will allow the department to create a preventative maintenance plan to promote reliable, effective and cost-effective operations.

Completion Date: October 1, 2021

Recommendation #2: Management should make it a priority to communicate to the park maintenance crews the importance of documenting correct and complete data when entering work order information into Cityworks®. In addition, a periodic review of work order data within Cityworks® should be completed to ensure crews' compliance. For instance, when missing information is noted, management should use that as an opportunity to re-educate the crew regarding the importance of accurate and complete data entry and to ensure compliance. Management should also ensure that the correct information is being captured to meet the goal of reporting from Cityworks®.

Management response & action plan: The Department of Parks and Recreation acknowledges the finding. Daily reviews are conducted by Supervisors to ensure that crews are entering data into Cityworks®. Weekly meetings are used to remind and reeducate staff on the importance of entering accurate and complete data.

Completion Date: Complete

Recommendation #3: Management should ensure that spreadsheets currently used to track inventory and supplies are capturing dates and complete data to make certain that at any point this information is researched an accurate snapshot is revealed. In addition to sign in/out sheets already in use, Management should also institute one to be used in the herbicide room. The recommendation should be used to improve the current method of keeping inventory, which is using Excel spreadsheets; however, Park Maintenance should ultimately implement an inventory software program that will assist in more efficient and accurate tracking of equipment and inventory supplies on hand.

Management response & action plan: The Department of Parks and Recreation acknowledges the finding. The department has updated the current spreadsheet to include a date and identification number field. Asset tags have been purchased to identify all equipment. The

department has recently started a free trial with Maintenance Pro, a software program designed for asset tracking, parts inventory and maintenance notifications that will be helpful to the department.

Completion Date: Complete

Recommendation #4: Management should develop a policy and procedure to define tasks that are to be completed. The policy and procedure should also document potential times for each task as this is used to compare with the actual total to document a percentage of time completion. The potential times should be updated as data is collected, and more accurate time estimates are developed. The policy and procedure should also define the process for supervision and inspection of each work order before the work order can be closed.

Management response & action plan: The Department of Parks and Recreation acknowledges the finding. The department will update all policies and procedures to reflect current operations in work order management. This will also include the appropriate standard for supervision and inspection for each work order prior to closing.

Completion Date: December 1, 2021

Audit Team

Michael J. Maldonado, Senior Auditor
Tamara Thompson, Audit Manager