



Office of the City Auditor

**Report to the City Council
City of San José**

**PARK MAINTENANCE:
IMPROVED DATA
COLLECTION AND
ANALYSIS WOULD
ENHANCE PARK
MAINTENANCE
OPERATIONS**

**Report 20-04
August 2020**

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August 21, 2020

Honorable Mayor and Members
Of the City Council
200 East Santa Clara Street
San José, CA 95113

Park Maintenance: Improved Data Collection and Analysis Would Enhance Park Maintenance Operations

The City of San José's Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services (PRNS) Department operates about 200 neighborhood parks and nine regional parks as well as facilities such as the Happy Hollow Park & Zoo. PRNS' Parks Division oversees and maintains the City's parks, trails, sports fields, and other outdoor park facilities. The objective of this audit was to assess the efficiency and allocation of park maintenance staffing and resources Citywide.

Finding 1: PRNS Can Improve the Park Condition Assessment Process to Better Inform Resource Decisions. PRNS conducts annual Park Condition Assessments (PCAs) that are point-in-time evaluations of the condition of the City's parks. The purpose of the PCA is to improve park conditions by helping PRNS prioritize and allocate capital and maintenance resources. We found:

- PRNS' annual assessments can be a useful tool for documenting park conditions, but PCAs have not consistently included all parks and park features in its scoring.
- Some parks consistently scored low over multiple years, yet staffing and maintenance hours at those parks did not appear to be modified to improve conditions.
- PCA scores do not currently distinguish capital infrastructure from routine maintenance issues, which would facilitate allocation of appropriate resources.
- The scoring rubric for the PCAs does not align with PRNS' draft park maintenance standards, which define the level at which parks should be maintained.

RECOMMENDATIONS

We made several recommendations to improve the Park Condition Assessment (PCA) process. PRNS should:

- Develop and use a standardized list of parks and park features each year during the PCA process
- Develop procedures to use PCA scores to address low-scoring parks and park features
- Tie PCA scoring to maintenance standards, and develop separate capital and maintenance scores

- When dollars were set aside for capital improvements at low-scoring parks, these were not fully utilized. For example, the FY 2019-20 Adopted Budget approved \$400,000 for replacing water fountains at parks but this money was not used in FY 2019-20.

Finding 2: PRNS Should Reassess Its Data Collection to Better Inform Decision Making. In 2013, PRNS launched a Business Intelligence strategy to enhance service delivery by tracking daily work data of maintenance staff to measure staffing and resource needs in an asset management system - Infor EAM. Staff track their hours, equipment usage, and barriers to completing a task in this software system. As a result, supervisory maintenance staff spend a large amount of time either entering data or using Infor to generate new daily work orders. We found:

- Data entry can be cumbersome and leave staff with little time to analyze results. Moreover, the data was subject to errors and not all hours or other relevant information were consistently tracked.
- PRNS has not comprehensively reviewed its data collection priorities in recent years, and doing so can help PRNS align data collection to clear business needs and determine whether its current software meets those needs.
- PRNS aims to address “Health and Safety” work orders within 24 hours 100 percent of the time. In FY 2018-19, they addressed 84 percent of “Health and Safety” work orders within 24 hours.
- For all other work orders, PRNS did not have performance targets making it difficult to evaluate the impact of these types of work orders on workload.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To fully use data to improve performance, PRNS should:

- Reassess its data collection efforts by defining clear business goals and tie data collection to outcomes
- Increase staff training to reduce data entry and collection errors
- Develop performance targets for all corrective work orders, then track to those goals

Finding 3: Efficiencies in Resource and Staffing Allocation Can Help Better Prioritize Park Maintenance. Each Park District contains varying types of facilities, including regional and neighborhood parks, library and community center grounds, sports complexes, and trails. In addition, varying park amenities and other factors impact workload, including the number of special events, homelessness, access to functioning equipment, and others. We found:

- There appeared to be large variation between Park Districts and allocation of staff across Park Districts should be reassessed.
- PRNS partners with the County of Santa Clara’s General Assistance Office and the Sheriff’s Office for maintenance labor through the County’s Weekend Work Program and Public Service Program, however no formal agreement exists to define the scope of responsibilities.
- PRNS has had to rely on aging vehicles and equipment to perform their maintenance duties. Better inventorying

RECOMMENDATIONS

To allocate resources more efficiently, PRNS should:

- Realign staffing according to park conditions, facility types, acreage, and other relevant factors
- Work with the City Attorney’s Office to formalize an agreement governing donated labor arrangements

and tracking of assets can help PRNS share assets more efficiently, and prioritize its oldest vehicles and equipment for replacement.

- Staff spend large amounts of time on non-maintenance activities, such as staff meetings, data entry, and travel.
- Maintenance staff have access to eight service yards, which are not spread optimally throughout the City. The lack of easily accessible storage facilities can contribute significantly to travel time.

- Track larger equipment and vehicles, and improve internal coordination of vehicle purchases
- Set goals around how much staff time should be spent on non-maintenance activities
- Use temporary storage containers at appropriate parks to make equipment easily accessible to staff

Finding 4: PRNS Should Improve Language Access at Some Parks. Providing language-appropriate signage at park facilities with contact information about the Park Concerns Hotline and other information ensures that all residents can reach staff if needed. We found:

- The Park Concerns Hotline is generally posted at parks, but signage is only in English. Some parks serve areas with very high concentrations of limited English-speaking households.

RECOMMENDATION

To ensure more equitable access to City parks and staff, PRNS should:

- Assess language needs and provide signage in different languages at appropriate parks

This report has 13 recommendations. We plan to present this report at the September 1, 2020 City Council meeting. We would like to thank the Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services Department for their time and insight during the audit process. The Administration has reviewed the information in this report, and their response is shown on the yellow pages.

Respectfully submitted,



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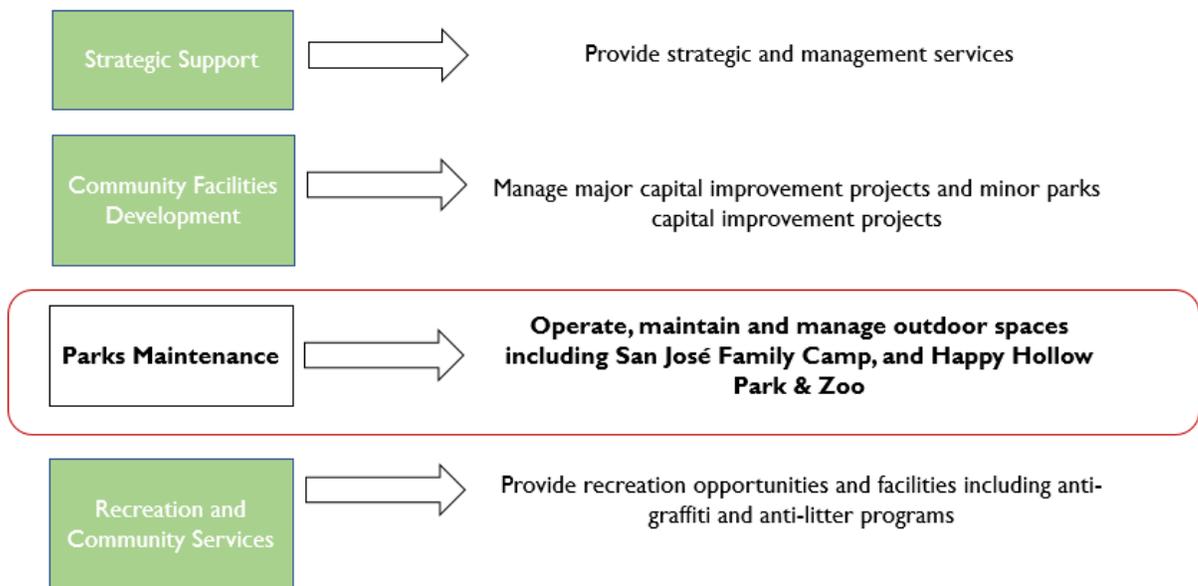
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Background

The City of San José’s Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services Department (PRNS) operates the City’s regional and neighborhood parks, as well as facilities such as the Happy Hollow Park & Zoo. The City has over 200 neighborhood and regional parks which cover over 3,500 developed and undeveloped acres. The department also manages the City’s trails and provides a wide range of community programs for seniors, children, and youth. PRNS is made up of four core services.

Exhibit I: PRNS Is Made Up of Four Core Services



Source: 2019-20 Adopted Operating Budget.

The Parks Division Is Responsible for Maintaining About 200 Parks and Other Facilities in San José

The Parks Division maintains and operates neighborhood and regional parks, as well as many other civic spaces, including sports complexes, trails, and the grounds of libraries and community centers.

Exhibit 2: The Park Maintenance Inventory Includes Many Different Types of Facilities

Sports Fields	Parks	Other Facilities
Camden Park Soccer Field	Almaden Lake Park	Lake Cunningham Action Sports Park
		
Arcadia Ballpark	Municipal Rose Garden	Butcher Dog Park
		

Source: PRNS.

Each type of facility has different amenities which can influence how a park is maintained and potentially how a park is staffed. For example, Lake Cunningham Park, a regional park, also contains a BMX park and a skate park (collectively, the Action Sports Park). Another regional park, Overfelt Gardens, includes lakes, marble statues, and a variety of gardens.

Exhibit 3: Description of the Different Types of Facilities

Type of Facility	Description
Regional Parks	Parks with diverse, unique features that attract both residents and visitors from around the Bay Area
Neighborhood Parks	Parks with various amenities meant to serve the day-to-day recreation needs of residents
Sports Fields	These range from regular turf practice fields to sports complexes with artificial turf and seating
Trails	Facilities that offer easy access to recreation, function as commute routes, and help preserve natural areas
Other facilities	Library, community center, and civic grounds; BMX & skate parks; dog parks; and open space

Source: San José 2009 Greenprint.

Routine and Corrective Actions Make Up Park Maintenance Work

PRNS maintenance staff's work is divided into the following:

- routine maintenance activities such as playground inspections, mowing, and garbage pickup, and
- corrective maintenance work such as repairs to irrigation systems, playgrounds, etc.

Residents may report any issues or concerns related to park safety, appearance, and usage through a Park Concerns Hotline that can be accessed via telephone or the City website. Issues received through Park Concerns generate “corrective work orders” within PRNS’ work order tracking system.

Health and safety related work orders command the greatest urgency and the expectation is that these will receive a response within 24 hours. Examples of health and safety work orders include broken glass, broken equipment, etc.

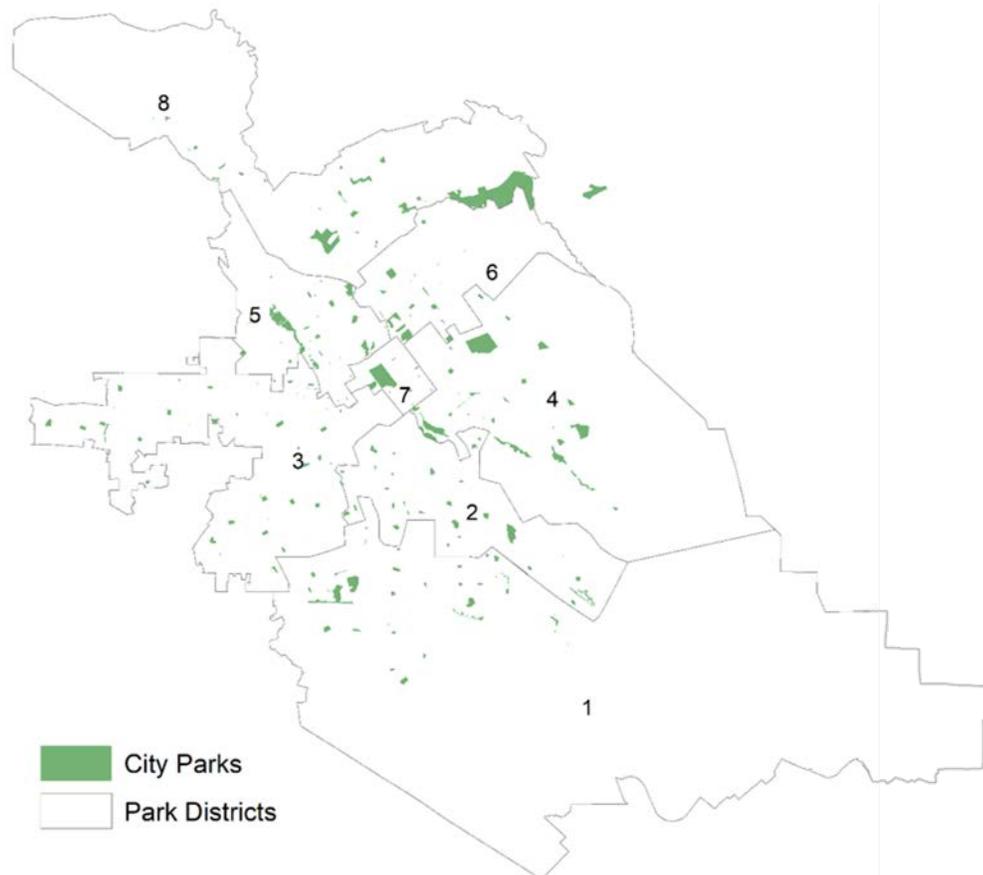
Work orders are classified in five ways:

- a) 1-Day Health and Safety
- b) 3-Day Critical
- c) 7-Day Repairs
- d) 21-Day Non-Critical
- e) 30-Day Non-Critical

Maintenance Operations Are Managed Through a Park District Model

PRNS uses a district-based park maintenance model and until recently park facilities were divided into eight Park Districts. The Park Districts are distinct from the 10 City Council Districts (CD). Park Districts are made up of a mix of regional and neighborhood parks, as well as other types of facilities. The Parks Division has recently undertaken a reorganization and reduced the number of Park Districts to six, and includes a new unit that is focused on destinations, events, and sports.

Exhibit 4: PRNS Has Managed Park Maintenance Through Eight Park Districts

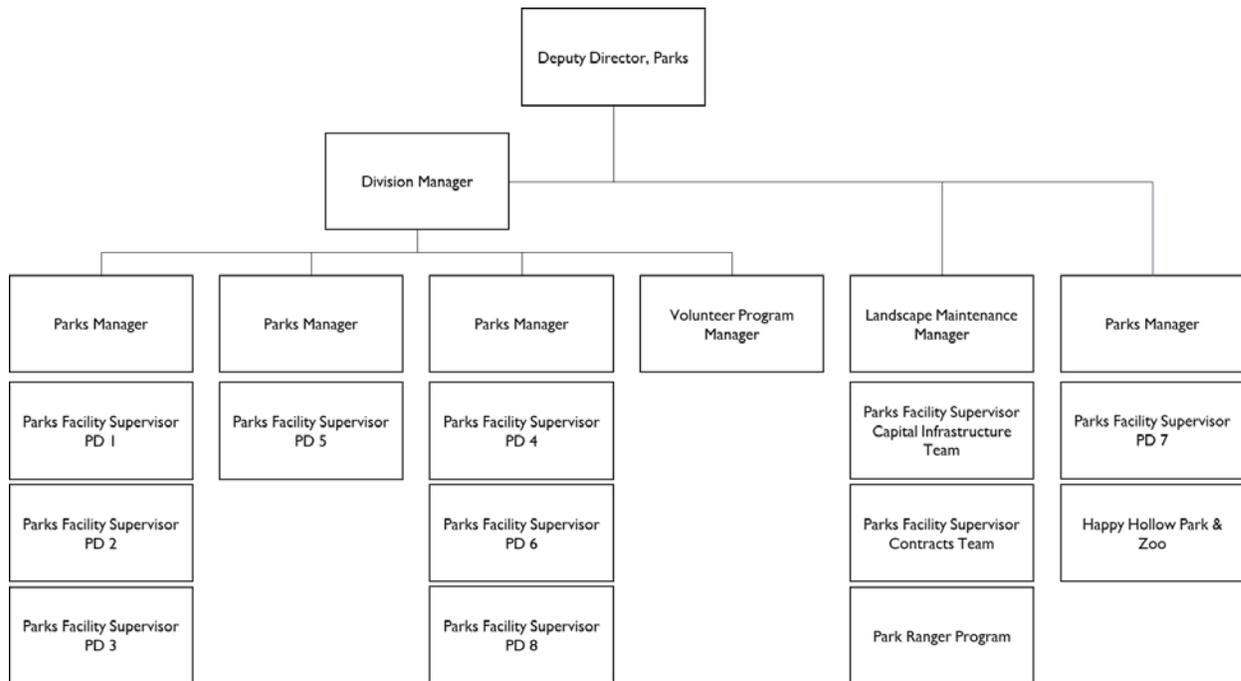


Source: Auditor analysis of GIS data provided by PRNS.

During the time of the audit, a Deputy Director oversees the Parks Division, which was divided into roughly two main functions: management of the Park Districts, and other special or peripheral parks functions. Each of San José's eight Park Districts is overseen by a Parks Facility Supervisor, who reports to a Parks Manager.

Although staffing allocation varies within each Park District, and some Parks Facility Supervisors oversee recreational staff and programs, the organizational structure of park maintenance staff is generally the same. Maintenance staff are, for the most part, dedicated to the parks and outdoor facilities contained within their Park District.

Exhibit 5: Parks Division Management Organizational Chart¹



Source: Auditor rendition of PRNS organizational chart, as of Sept. 5, 2019.

Beyond what is outlined in the Parks Division organizational chart, there are several other entities that play a role in the City’s park maintenance operations such as contractors, volunteers, and mandatory community service programs like the Weekend Work Program, which will be described later in the report.

PRNS Has Begun Setting Minimum Service Levels for Park Maintenance

In 2018, the Parks Division began setting minimum service levels for different types of parks, based on intended use of the park, visitation, and resource capacity. These service levels indicate the expected frequency of maintenance service for each type of park. Setting minimum service levels for each type of park was intended to standardize maintenance.²

¹ The Park Rangers Program is overseen by two Supervising Park Rangers. Happy Hollow Park & Zoo includes a Parks Facility Supervisor, Public Information Representative I/II, and a Zoo Manager. Additionally, the Parks Division includes the San José Family Camp, overseen by a Parks Facility Supervisor.

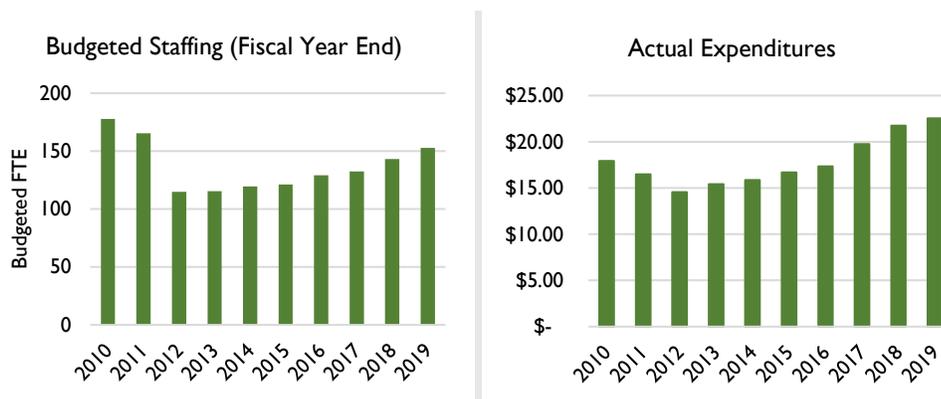
² Service levels are divided into four categories, labeled A through D, with A signifying those parks with the highest levels of service required and D signifying those with the least amount of service required. For example, some parks receive garbage pick-up services multiple times per week whereas other parks may receive garbage services only once per week. Other services provided are mowing, edging, blowing, playground inspections, etc.

Budget and Staffing for Maintenance Operations

Expenditures for Park Maintenance in FY 2018-19 totaled about \$22.5 million. In FY 2018-19, there were 153 budgeted positions for maintenance operations. For FY 2019-20, maintenance positions increased to 168 almost entirely with the addition of one-time positions and programs which could be eliminated unless extended through the budget process.

Additional one-time staffing included support for the Police Athletic League Stadium, turf replacement, and pest management. While actual maintenance staffing has steadily increased since staffing reductions between FY 2008-09 and FY 2011-12, it has not yet returned to its FY 2008-09 peak of 200 positions.³ We should note that since the recession and accompanying service reductions between FY 2008-09 and FY 2011-12, PRNS has added additional responsibilities to the maintenance team. These include a bike park at Lake Cunningham, the opening of Arcadia Ballpark, and the restoration of Monday open hours at all regional parks.

Exhibit 6: Park Maintenance Expenditures and Budgeted Staffing, FY 2009-10 to FY 2018-19



Source: The City’s Financial Management System and PeopleSoft.

Note: Staffing counts in this exhibit include all positions classified under the grounds maintenance function in the City’s Financial Management System (FMS). These include some administrative and recreational positions, like the Part-time Recreation Leader and Community Coordinator classifications, among others. Additional positions were added for FY 2019-20.

³ Some positions that have been added are time-limited positions and have been reliant on one-time funding. For example, \$3.6 million from the Coleman property sale proceeds in FY 2019-20 were budgeted to support pest management within the park system, infrastructure repairs, turf replacement, and a Parks Rehabilitation Strike and Capital Infrastructure Team.

The General Fund Is the Primary Source for Park Maintenance Funding

Park maintenance operations are primarily funded through the General Fund.⁴ Capital and special funds also contribute to parks maintenance or capital projects. For example, the Construction and Real Property Conveyance Tax funds provide capital funding for park improvements, with some portion going to the General Fund for parks maintenance.

The Park Trust Fund provides funding from developer fees to build or improve parks, provided the park projects are within a certain distance from the development which paid the fees. Also, some donations to the Gift Trust Fund may be dedicated specifically for park improvements or maintenance.

Contracted and Volunteer Services Augment PRNS Maintenance Activities

PRNS contracts for some maintenance functions, including \$460,000 per year for janitorial services, and \$835,000 per year for a contractor to maintain 68 small parks (those under two acres) and grounds at 46 civic facilities.⁵

The City also relies on volunteers to help maintain San José's parks and trails. These volunteers augment park maintenance services by picking up litter, removing graffiti, weeding, mulching, cleaning playground equipment, pruning roses and rosebushes, and performing a range of other tasks. In FY 2018-19, volunteers donated 35,000 hours through a variety of different opportunities, ranging from one-day events to PRNS' Adopt-A-Park program.⁶

Additionally, PRNS works with the County of Santa Clara's General Assistance Office and the Sheriff's Office for use of workers who perform mandatory community service.

Impacts of the COVID-19 Emergency

On January 21, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) confirmed the first diagnosed case of a U.S. resident with the novel coronavirus known as COVID-19. On March 16, 2020, Santa Clara County issued a Shelter in Place

⁴ According to the ActivateSJ strategic plan, PRNS generates about \$22 million per year in fee and program revenues. This includes revenues from parking, reservation of park facilities, and outdoor recreation programs. While most of these revenues do not directly fund the parks maintenance function, they serve as sources of funding for the General Fund.

⁵ PRNS also maintains agreements with some organizations for additional maintenance services or maintenance of specific facilities. For example, the San José Conservation Corps and the Downtown Streets Team provide general park support services. Additionally, PRNS works with organizations for some services, such as enhanced maintenance, tree services, and weed abatement.

⁶ Adopt-A-Park provides long-term volunteer opportunities for residents who wish to adopt a neighborhood park in their community. Fifty-three parks were adopted Citywide as of November 7, 2019, with the greatest number of adopted parks located in Council District 10.

order beginning on March 17, 2020. The order restricted residents from leaving their residence except to perform essential activities.

As a result, all non-essential business and economic activities were halted. The impact of this pandemic on the City's budget situation has been significant. The FY 2020-21 budget impact was a shortfall of over \$71.6 million and may result in service impacts at parks and parks maintenance. For instance, PRNS implemented centralized control of its Parks Irrigation Controllers to decrease water usage to save an estimated \$1.25 million. Additionally, PRNS eliminated \$130,000 in non-personal one-time funding for contractual maintenance services at three City fountains at Plaza de César Chávez, Municipal Rose Garden, and the Pool of Genes in Guadalupe River Park. The fountains were shut off, primarily due to the social distancing restrictions associated with the COVID-19 pandemic.

According to PRNS staff, the department deemed park maintenance essential from the beginning of the COVID-19 emergency and limited operations to focus on health and safety (litter/liners/posting closure signs and caution tape). Two-person park maintenance teams performed basic maintenance functions at 10 parks per day. Mowing was added back soon after and, by the end of May, the department resumed almost a full model of maintenance. Some of PRNS' maintenance positions are funded through one-time monies that may no longer be available to PRNS due to this economic crisis. Prioritizing services through efficient use of existing resources will be important in the upcoming years.

Finding I PRNS Can Improve the Park Condition Assessment Process to Better Inform Resource Decisions

Summary

PRNS' Park Condition Assessment (PCA) is an annual evaluation of the City's parks and other outdoor facilities. The PCA reflects a point-in-time condition of the parks and gives guidance to the department regarding its future needs. However, PRNS can make the PCA process more consistent, and make changes that can allow for better interpretation of results. PRNS has not consistently scored the same parks or park features each year, making it difficult to compare conditions over time. In addition, the scoring methodology makes interpretation difficult because aggregate PCA scores obscure the distinction between capital and maintenance issues, as well as the variance between different features within a park. Additionally, even though some parks consistently scored low over multiple years, staffing and maintenance hours at those parks were not increased to address the poor conditions. We recommend that PRNS develop a standardized inventory of parks and park features for the PCA evaluations, tie PCA scoring more closely to maintenance standards, develop separate capital and maintenance scores, and develop procedures to prioritize PCA scoring into funding and resource decisions.

Park Condition Assessments Are Intended to Reflect Previous Years' Service

In 2015, PRNS began conducting Park Condition Assessments (PCA) of the City's parks and other facilities. The PCA is a point-in-time evaluation, and according to PRNS the intent of this evaluation is to:

- Prioritize and schedule capital and maintenance resources
- Communicate the condition of San José parks
- Improve park conditions through efficient resource allocation and improved maintenance

PRNS staff conduct the PCAs each summer for all parks and civic grounds, and rate each park feature on a scale of 1-5, defined as follows:

- 1 Unacceptable – cannot be repaired; must be replaced
- 2 Needs Improvement – needs major renovation
- 3 Acceptable – needs work, but generally functional
- 4 Good – generally good condition; needs minor repairs
- 5 Excellent – new or like new

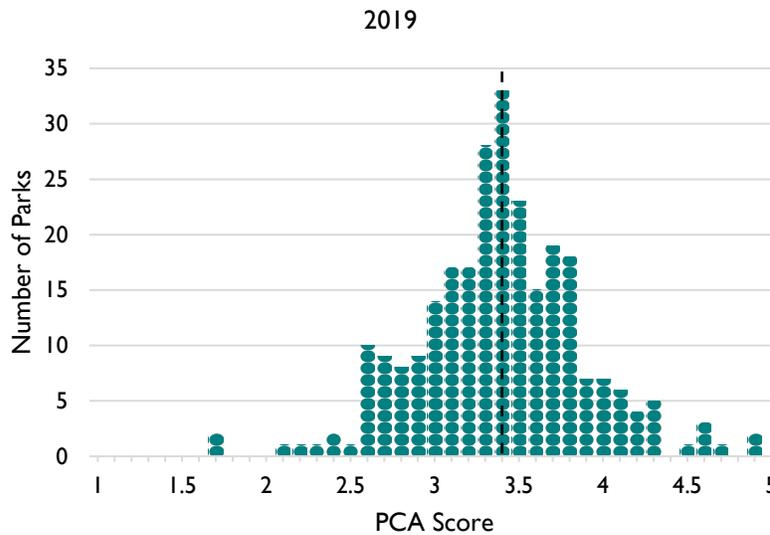
Staff are divided into teams and conduct the assessments over the course of one month. Each facility can contain up to 27 possible types of features, which in 2019 included turf appearance, playgrounds, trees, and sports fields, among others. For each feature present at a given park, evaluators will assign a score in accordance with department guidelines. For example, to score a “5” for turf appearance, a park’s turf must have 10 percent or fewer weeds, bare spots, and brown patches, as well as no gopher or squirrel activity. The feature scores are then averaged to get a final park PCA score.⁷

PRNS Rated Three-Quarters of Park Facilities as Acceptable or Better in 2019

Most City parks scored between a “3” and a “4” in the 2019 PCA. The overall PCA score has hovered around 3.3 to 3.4 each year since 2015. The distribution of PCA scores across all years can be found in Appendix C.⁸

The overall 2019 PCA score was 3.4.

Exhibit 7: 72 Percent of Parks Scored Between a “3” and a “4” in 2019



Source: Auditor analysis of 2019 Park Condition Assessment data.

Because the PCA scores are meant to measure prior fiscal year service levels and determine where future resources will be needed, having a complete and robust evaluation process is essential.

⁷ Staff generally enter their assessments on paper documents that are then transferred to a database. While staff have an option to electronically enter this information in the field, technical challenges and spotty internet access have been noted as issues.

⁸ See Appendix E for a breakdown of the 2018 and 2019 PCA scores by San José City Council District.

Not All Facilities Were Consistently Assessed During the Annual PCA Process

Although PRNS aims to rate all park facilities each year, there have been inconsistencies over time. This is because the department lacks formal documentation for which parks should be rated in a given year and which features should be rated at a given park.

In 2019, four facilities did not receive PCA scores.

For example, in 2019 there were at least four facilities that did not receive ratings that should have.⁹ As many as 30 facilities may not have received a rating in at least one year between 2017-2019.¹⁰

Even for parks that were consistently assessed each year, not all their park features were included in every assessment. Specifically, of the park facilities that were consistently scored from 2017 to 2019, 88 percent of these facilities did not have consistent feature scoring from year to year.

As an example, in Overfelt Gardens – which has consistently scored low (2019 PCA score of “2.1”) – features such as parking lots, reservable barbecue pits, and game tables were missing scores at least once over the last three years. Scoring all features consistently over the years would provide PRNS with more usable information on which features need improvement and which features are consistently problematic.

⁹ These include Evergreen Park, Townsend Park, Sylvia Cassell Park, and Southside Community Center. According to PRNS, scores for the latter two were impacted by software issues.

¹⁰ For some missing facilities, we observed that PRNS had previously reported overall PCA scores in memos to the City Council. However, at the time of this audit, PRNS was unable to provide the underlying data supporting those scores.

Exhibit 8: Since 2017, Not All Features in Overfelt Gardens Were Consistently Scored

Feature	2017	2018	2019
Overall Aesthetics	3	3	1
Turf Appearance	1	1	1
Trees	1	4	2
Shrubs	3	2	2
Landscaped Beds	1	1	1
Sidewalks	4	3	3
Pathways	2	3	1
Parking Lots	Not rated	3	3
Reservable Picnic Tables	2	3	3
Reservable BBQ Pits	Not rated	3	Not rated
Non-reservable Picnic Tables	2	3	1
Game Tables	1	Not rated	Not rated
Drinking Fountains	3	2	1
Benches	2	2	5
Restroom Buildings	3	2	1
Shade Structure	3	4	4
Final Score	2.2	2.6	2.1

Source: PRNS Park Condition Assessments (2017 to 2019).

Note: Only includes features scored in at least one year.

San Francisco developed lists of features that should be rated for each of their parks (see Appendix F) and, according to staff, has a database that lists all sites needing evaluation. Further, in San Francisco, each instance of a feature in a park is separately scored. A park with multiple soccer fields would receive a separate score for each soccer field, unlike in San José where sports fields are collectively given one score at a park.

Additionally, during San Francisco’s park evaluations, only those features that exist at a park will appear for scoring. If a team forgets to score a feature, the system will warn the team and follow up as needed until the feature receives a score. Developing a comprehensive list of parks and their features would allow San José to compare changes and determine where the resources are most needed.

Recommendation #1: To ensure the Park Condition Assessment is complete, accurate, and useful for monitoring changes in parks, PRNS should:

- a) **Develop a standardized list of parks and park features for measuring and analyzing park condition,**
- b) **Regularly update this list as new parks and features are added or are closed, and**
- c) **Use this standardized list for the annual Park Condition Assessment on an ongoing basis.**

PRNS Could Improve Follow-up on Underperforming Parks

Some parks consistently scored low in the annual PCA process; however, PRNS did not always follow up with more targeted support or resources.

Exhibit 9: Some Parks Consistently Scored Below a “3” for the Last Three Years

Park	PD	CD	PCA Score		
			2017	2018	2019
Boys & Girls Club (Smythe Field)¹¹	4	8	1.0	1.0	1.7
Guadalupe River Park – Courtyard Garden	5	3	2.6	2.2	1.7
Overfelt Gardens	6	5	2.2	2.6	2.1
Columbus Park	5	3	2.6	2.5	2.2
Hester Park	5	6	2.9	2.9	2.5
Roosevelt Park	5	3	2.5	2.9	2.6
Parkview II Park	2	10	2.7	2.7	2.6
Parkview I Park	2	10	2.8	2.7	2.6
Brigadoon Park	4	8	2.6	2.8	2.8
Meadows Park	2	10	2.9	2.8	2.8
Alviso Park	8	4	2.7	1.9	2.9

Source: PRNS Park Condition Assessments, 2017-2019.

Note: PD refers to Park District; CD refers to Council District.

¹¹ In 2019, the PCA score for Smythe Field improved from prior years only because the “pathways” feature was rated “3,” even though this feature was not rated for this facility in prior years.

Parks with consistently low PCA scores over multiple years indicate that more targeted improvements are needed. In at least one instance, PRNS added funding to improve low-scoring parks and features. For example, Hathaway Park had received the lowest PCA score in 2015, largely due to turf appearance, picnic area BBQ pits, and a play area. In FY 2016-17, PRNS requested an additional \$122,000 for capital improvements to the park. Another \$1.2 million was set aside for additional improvements in FY 2017-18. These are currently underway, and include potentially replacing par course stations, rehabilitating the restroom, renovating the turf, and replacing play equipment at the park.

Low-Scoring Parks and Features Did Not Always Result in Additional Support the Following Years

In other instances, when parks consistently scored below “3,” there was not always a resulting change in staffing or resources. Using Overfelt Gardens as an example, although the park scored a “2.6” in 2018, it received relatively fewer hours of maintenance compared to other regional parks the following fiscal year. In 2019, Overfelt Garden’s score dropped to a “2.1” primarily due to low scores on park features like turf appearance, landscaped beds, and overall aesthetics.

In addition, Parks staff communicated that they are supposed to create corrective work orders for any features with low scores (under a “2”) during the PCA. However, this did not always appear to occur, indicating that follow-up should be improved to ensure that low-scoring features are addressed or remedied.

From 2017-19, PCA scores when broken down by feature show that certain park features routinely receive lower scores.¹² For example, drinking fountains, sports fields, and tot lots (playgrounds for children aged 2-5 years) score much lower than shade structures and artificial turf overall.

Some park features – like fountains, tot lots, and sports fields – routinely scored low.

Targeted Funding for Improvements Remains Unused

During the 2017 and 2018 PCAs, PRNS identified drinking fountains as a low-scoring or declining feature. As a result, PRNS received an additional \$400,000 during the FY 2019-20 budget process to replace drinking fountains, as well as park furniture. However, none of this funding was spent in FY 2019-20 and in our subsequent review of Overfelt Gardens, we noted multiple leaking or broken drinking fountains in need of repair or replacement.

¹² See Appendix D for 2017-2019 park feature scores.

Exhibit I0: Drinking Fountains at Overfelt Gardens Were Broken or Leaking

Source: Auditor review of Overfelt Gardens, February 7, 2020.

The process for drinking fountain replacement appears to have been left to the discretion of each Park District supervisor. Communication from executive management appeared to be lacking in terms of direction to individual Park District supervisors on using these set-aside funds for drinking fountain and furniture replacements. We understand PRNS is currently working on a spending plan for this funding.

One goal of the PCA is “improving park conditions through efficient resource allocation.”

Developing formalized policies around using PCAs and setting aside funds to target resources at low-scoring parks can ensure PRNS meets its goal of improving park conditions.

Recommendation #2: PRNS should develop policies surrounding use of Park Condition Assessment scores to strategically address low-scoring parks and features, and utilize allocated funding to make improvements in a timely manner.

The Current PCA Methodology Makes Interpretation of Results and Follow-up Difficult

Some low-scoring features – drinking fountains, benches, artificial turf, playgrounds – may require additional capital repairs beyond routine maintenance, but the current PCA methodology does not separate maintenance from capital issues.

For example, playgrounds can receive a score of “2” if the equipment needs replacement, or if the surface material (e.g., Fibar or sand) is below a specified safety line. Parks maintenance staff or even volunteers can replenish certain surface material, but repairing or replacing playground equipment may be a more extensive capital project. The PCA score for playgrounds alone does not distinguish whether the playground needs more routine maintenance or a capital investment.

Other jurisdictions categorize park amenities into features similar to San José, but delineate the features and scoring further to allow for easier interpretation of results.

- San Francisco breaks down park features into “elements,” such as cleanliness, graffiti, surface quality, and structures, etc. In 2019, San Francisco began categorizing the different elements into cleanliness, repair work, and capital projects to further specify the type of follow-up work needed.
- New York places its 16 park features into three broad categories: cleanliness, structural, and landscape. Rather than having one score for “Overall Aesthetics,” as San José does, New York divides their cleanliness category into several features, such as glass, graffiti, litter, and weeds.

Scoring park features in these ways allows park maintenance staff to distinguish the type of improvements that may be needed at different parks (e.g., more cleaning/litter pick-up, grounds maintenance, or capital repairs/projects), as well as to target resources at parks.

Aligning PCA Scoring with Park Maintenance Standards Would Facilitate Better Follow-up

Although PRNS drafted maintenance standards in 2018 specifying criteria for how park facilities should be maintained, the current PCA scoring rubric does not include these criteria. Using turf as an example, PRNS' draft maintenance standards specify that turf should be mowed to a height of 2.5 inches. However, the PCA scoring rubric specifies that the highest score of "5 – new or like new" is given to turf with 10 percent or less weeds, brown or bare spots, and no gopher or squirrel activity.

PCA ratings are not aligned with current draft maintenance standards.

The maintenance standards give a clear guideline for maintenance staff, while the PCA scoring rubric comingles many potential deficiencies. For example, if a park's turf scored a "1," it would not be immediately clear whether the park requires more weeding, adjusting the irrigation to address brown spots, or increasing pest management to address gopher or squirrel activity.

By contrast, in San Francisco, the park evaluation score represents how well a park met established maintenance standards. As mentioned previously, San Francisco breaks down park features into distinct elements. For athletic fields, the mowing element specifies that the turf should be mowed to 4.5 inches. Turf that is higher than 4.5 inches would fail the mowing element. There are additional elements for other aspects of athletic fields.

Tying the scoring rubric for PCAs directly to established maintenance standards would inform maintenance staff on why features scored low and how they can be improved. Further, staff can understand where maintenance practices are successful and where they are deficient.

Recommendation #3: To make full use of the Park Condition Assessment scores, PRNS should revise its Park Condition Assessment methodology to tie scoring to established maintenance standards and determine how to categorize park features to more easily identify the type of follow-up needed.

Separating Out Infrastructure PCA Scores for Construction and Conveyance Tax Fund Allocation

In FY 2019-20, the City budgeted \$36 million from Construction and Conveyance (C&C) tax revenues to improve City facilities.¹³ C&C tax revenues are allocated

¹³ The Real Property Conveyance Tax, or conveyance tax, is a tax on the sale or transfer of real property located within San José. The tax is based on the sale price (and including any outstanding debts or liens) of a given property transfer, or on the fair market value of the property if the transfer value cannot be definitively determined. The construction tax is a tax on any new construction built in the City. Together, the construction and conveyance taxes are referred to as "C&C taxes."

between park improvements and general improvements. The park improvements allocation, which accounts for at least 64 percent of C&C taxes collected, is intended to facilitate the development, construction, and improvement of parks Citywide.¹⁴

Part of the park allocation returns to the General Fund for parks maintenance. The remainder is distributed among Citywide and Council District C&C funds for improving or renovating their neighborhood parks, as well as for capital projects such as replacing playgrounds and renovating turf fields.¹⁵

Revenues distributed among the Council Districts come in two parts: a base amount divided equally among the Council Districts, and a variable amount determined by a formula. PRNS uses PCA scores in its formula to determine improvement needs.¹⁶ To that end, the PCA scores are important for helping the City identify which Council Districts have parks with the greatest need for capital improvements.

Separating PCA Infrastructure from Maintenance Features Will Help Prioritize Capital Repairs and Projects

The PCA score measures park condition, but as noted previously, the score generally reflects a mix of custodial, grounds maintenance, and capital infrastructure issues.

Adjusting the PCA scoring process to separate capital issues from grounds maintenance issues would better inform the Construction and Conveyance Tax fund allocation formula. Separating infrastructure from the maintenance scoring would ensure funding for capital improvements can be more targeted to where there are infrastructure needs.

This separate infrastructure score could also help PRNS prioritize capital projects that have been in its deferred maintenance and infrastructure backlog, which was estimated at \$382 million for FY 2019-20. This estimate includes the backlog for park grounds, trails, regional facilities, and park yards.¹⁷

¹⁴ Up to 15 percent of the general improvement allocation can also be dedicated to park maintenance, though this structure is ultimately determined by the City Council within the constraints of the ordinance.

¹⁵ Before distributing funding to the Citywide and Council C&C funds, the City Council can reserve funding in the parks allocation for “fixed costs,” including preventative capital maintenance costs, and non-construction costs.

¹⁶ The formula for allocating C&C tax revenues to Council Districts considers the following: total neighborhood park acres per 1,000 residents, developed neighborhood park acres per 1,000 residents, PCA scores of neighborhood parks, square footage of community centers per 1,000 residents, and building condition scores for community centers.

¹⁷ In future years, PRNS expects to break down “park grounds” into categories such as playgrounds, sport courts/fields, pools, and bridges.

Recommendation #4: To ensure appropriate allocation of capital resources for park improvements in Council Districts and help prioritize capital budgeting, PRNS should:

- a) Develop separate maintenance and capital/infrastructure Park Condition Assessment scores, and**
- b) Use the capital/infrastructure Park Condition Assessment scores in the Construction and Conveyance Tax Fund allocation formula.**

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Finding 2 PRNS Should Reassess Its Data Collection to Better Inform Decision Making

Summary

In 2013, PRNS launched a Business Intelligence (BI) strategy to track data on daily maintenance work to inform staffing and resource decisions. However, data management challenges have limited PRNS' ability to see the full benefit of the project. Specifically, data entry is cumbersome and time-consuming, leaving little to no time for reviewing and analyzing the results. In addition, not all hours have been consistently tracked, and the data has been subject to errors. We recommend PRNS review and refocus its data collection efforts based on its business needs and determine if its current asset management system meets those needs. PRNS also did not appear to meet timeliness goals for all "health and safety" work orders. For other work orders PRNS did not have performance goals. PRNS should develop performance targets for all types of work orders so that the department can better assess how well it is doing and determine how best to allocate resources.

Challenges Persist in PRNS' Adoption of a Data-Centric Approach

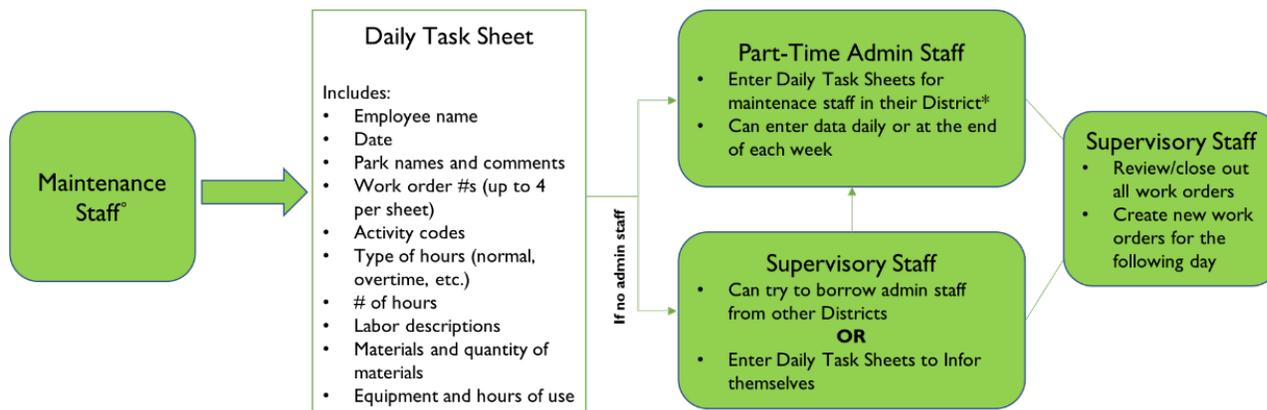
Starting in 2013, PRNS launched an internal Business Intelligence strategy to collect and analyze workload data for staffing and resource decision making. The City's park maintenance teams have been using an asset management tool, Infor EAM (Infor), to track daily work. This was to help PRNS better quantify how much labor, material, and equipment was needed to maintain and improve park conditions.

To date, it appears that the department's efforts to this end have focused on data collection surrounding maintenance activities. It is not clear how the data has been used or analyzed for management decision making.

Data Entry and Upkeep Have Been Challenging

Maintenance staff in each Park District manually track their hours in a Daily Task Sheet. The task sheet is a paper form and is designed to record every task undertaken by staff and the length of time it takes. This includes routine maintenance work, time spent on corrective work orders, administrative time, travel time, and other tasks. The information from the task sheets is later transferred into Infor.

Exhibit 11: Process for Inputting Maintenance Activity



[†]Includes Maintenance Assistants (PT/FT), Groundworkers, Groundskeepers, Repair workers, Gardeners
^{*}Admin staff are sometimes shared ad hoc between Park Districts to help with data input into the Infor data management system

Source: Auditor rendition of PRNS' process for Infor EAM data input.

Some Park Districts have administrative staff to enter data from these sheets at the end of each work day and in some cases work week, while others do not. Park Districts without administrative support rely on supervisory or lead staff to complete these data entry tasks or borrow administrative staff from another Park District. Additionally, supervisory staff must also approve and close out each work order completed by their maintenance team.

Supervisory staff must review and close out each work order completed by their maintenance team, and often fall weeks behind.

Because of the volume of activity and the manual nature of this process, staff rarely complete the daily data entry. Staff across all the Park Districts expressed concerns with the volume of data entry and admitted that they may fall weeks behind. Supervisors also explained that this can

leave them with little to no time for analyzing the inputted data or performing other supervisory work that they would normally do, such as park inspections or other activities in the field.

Inconsistency of Data Entry Makes Data Analysis Challenging

Data has not always been consistently entered into Infor, which can limit the ability of supervisors to analyze or translate data. For example:

- Task codes¹⁸ in Infor have not been kept up-to-date, and appear to have been used incorrectly or inconsistently across Park Districts

¹⁸ Task codes are numbers used to categorize specific tasks in the asset management system (i.e., garbage and litter, pest management, etc.).

- It appears that not all staff hours are entered in Infor. In FY 2018-19, total labor hours in Infor could not account for about one-fifth of staff hours that were potentially available¹⁹
- There are discrepancies in how consistently staff create corrective work orders for issues identified during the PCA process
- Staff differ in how frequently they enter data into the Infor system
- Some supervisors enter their time into Infor, while others do not
- Most work orders are missing descriptive comments, which are supposed to be standard protocol²⁰

While PRNS has begun putting together protocols around Infor usage, it is unclear how consistently these have been implemented across the Park Districts. For example, as of January 2020, PRNS developed written procedures providing guidance on how work orders should be addressed. However, roll-out of these procedures is ongoing.

Additionally, staff training for data entry and usage is limited. To keep up with data management, supervisory staff have had to design and lead trainings, and there is currently work being done to standardize Infor-related trainings across the park system.

Supervisors have also stated that they either do not use or don't have access to any meaningful reports from Infor. Moreover, some reports generated from Infor are no longer available to supervisory staff in most Park Districts because of technical issues that have yet to be fully identified and resolved.

Turnover in staffing for database administration has led to further gaps in data analysis, reporting, and training. At the time of our audit, PRNS had one staff person managing the department-wide data analytics function, and we understand that this position is currently vacant. Overall, this limits their analytical capabilities and PRNS has been unable to turn data they are collecting into operational decisions.

Business Need Should Be Reassessed to Refocus PRNS' Data Collection Efforts

A first step should be to develop meaningful goals on the overarching purpose of data collection efforts. This may involve reassessing PRNS' Business Intelligence goals and determining whether Infor meets those goals. It can also involve a reassessment of the costs and benefits of data collection and analysis. This could

¹⁹ The available staff hours assume a 7 to 12 percent average vacancy rate across all Park Districts during FY 2018-19.

²⁰ Comments should include why work was not completed, descriptive details for health and safety related repairs, and general information about what work is needed based on each situation.

help identify where data is most valuable, or where the administrative burden potentially outweighs the benefits gained.

Unlike San José, other jurisdictions have either moved away from using Infor for tracking labor hours, or avoided tracking routine scheduled maintenance altogether. For example, the City of New York initially used Infor to track daily maintenance activities, but reported that the system did not fully meet their needs because it required considerable customization. Eventually, New York switched to an in-house reporting system that is fully customized.

Other jurisdictions have decided against tracking all maintenance activities because of the administrative burden to manage all the information in a database. For example:

- San Francisco only tracks corrective work orders and not routine, daily activities. Since preventive or scheduled maintenance occurs regularly, San Francisco chose not to track this type of work, although they initially tried to but found it too burdensome and difficult to operationalize. Rather, it appears that to drive maintenance activities as needed San Francisco focuses more on clearly stated goals – like cleanliness, height of turf, and structural integrity of park components like benches, tables, and play equipment.
- San Diego only tracks the corrective work orders completed by their citywide maintenance team. The neighborhood maintenance teams performing routine maintenance do not track their labor hours in a work order system. This helps cut down on redundancy of inputting staff hours, including absences, into multiple city databases or workforce tracking systems.

Further, supervisory staff work on data entry in addition to other responsibilities, indicating limited resources dedicated to data collection and analysis. Therefore, in the interest of efficiency and prioritization of staff time, PRNS should define its highest priority business goals, determine where data collection efforts could best benefit its maintenance goals, and whether the current software system meets those needs.

Recommendation #5: To ensure that data collection efforts adequately meet its needs, PRNS should:

- a) Refocus data collection priorities, determine short-term and long-term data collection and data analytics goals, and set clear objectives on achieving those goals,**
- b) Reassess the use of Infor EAM to determine if it meets those needs, and**

c) Develop an ongoing training program for staff to ensure that data entry is consistent and accurate and meets its business goals.

Setting Performance Targets Can Help Improve Performance

Park maintenance staff generally create corrective work orders upon noticing features in need of repair or when residents call in issues through the Park Concerns Hotline (see Exhibit 12). PRNS has timeliness standards for corrective work orders based on their priority level.

<u>Timeliness Standard</u>	<u>Description</u>
1-day Health & Safety	Any issue that poses an immediate health and safety risk (e.g., broken glass, broken playground equipment, not-stocked restrooms, and trip hazards)
3-day Critical	Any issue that poses safety risks (e.g., leaking drinking fountains or water features; graffiti; clogged toilets; infrastructure issues with benches, fences, tables, etc.)
7-day Repair	Repairs that do not need immediate attention (e.g., broken restroom sinks/fixtures, trash or dumping-related issues, insect nests, weed encroachment, playground hardware issues, irrigation problems)

In FY 2018-19, across all Park Districts, PRNS did not always meet those timelines. Overall, PRNS completed 84 percent of 1-day Health and Safety repairs within one day. Health and Safety work orders that came in through the Park Concerns Hotline were completed 63 percent of the time within one day, and those that did not come in through Park Concerns were addressed 87 percent of the time within one day.

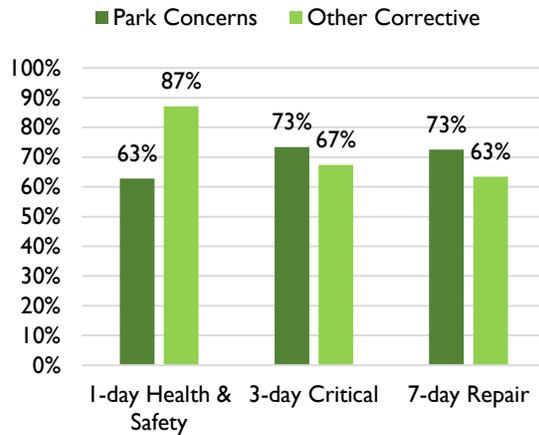
PRNS has an informal target that 100 percent of 1-day Health and Safety work orders be completed on-time. However, PRNS does not have similar formal or informal performance targets for Critical or Repair work orders. Also, PRNS noted that Park Concerns work orders are a higher priority in general, but again, this not reflected in a performance target.

We also observed some issues with data accuracy including, for example, incorrectly assigning a work order as 30-day Non-Critical when it should have been 3-day Critical or another as “No Priority” when it should have been 3-day Critical. Additionally, the scheduled start and end dates don’t correspond with the appropriate cycle time in some instances.²¹ Many of these issues can be corrected through better performance tracking and training.

Setting performance targets around the percentage of work orders that should be completed within their cycle times can help PRNS better understand how well they are performing across different maintenance priorities, which can help drive decisions around resource deployment.

Recommendation #6: To manage performance and analyze workload, PRNS should develop completion goals for corrective work orders and track performance against those goals.

Exhibit 12: Timeliness of Response for Corrective Work Orders



Source: Auditor analysis of PRNS work order data
Note: Total work orders (from left to right) – 43, 279, 64,141, 186, 394.

²¹ There were also significant outliers, with some labor booked many weeks before the work order was created, and some booked many weeks after their deadlines.

Finding 3 Efficiencies in Resource and Staffing Allocation Can Help Better Prioritize Park Maintenance

Summary

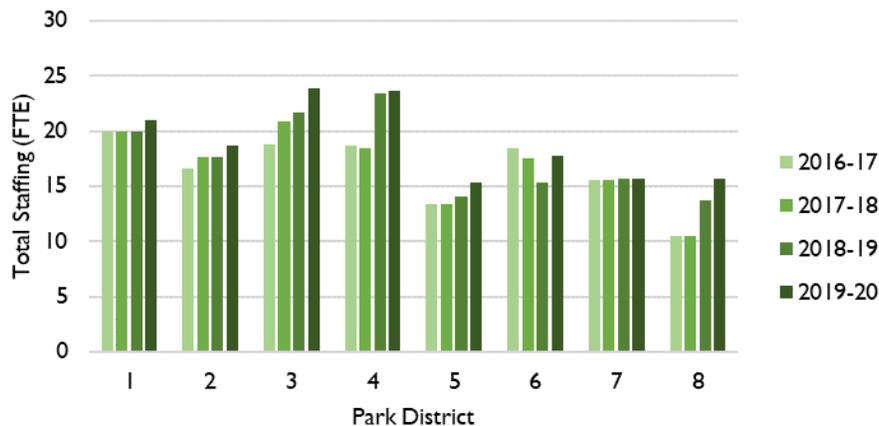
Each Park District contains varying types of facilities and amenities, including regional parks, neighborhood parks, library and community center grounds, sports complexes, and trails. This can greatly impact the staffing and services needed across Park Districts. Other factors can also impact a Park District's workload including homelessness, high park usage, special events, and pest and weed management. Allocation of staff varies greatly between Park Districts and should be reassessed to account for the various workload factors. As an example of the need for this reassessment, the Park District with the least number of allocated maintenance staff had the second highest amount of park acreage and included two regional parks along with multiple neighborhood parks. In addition, in FY 2018-19, only approximately 60 percent of staff time was spent on maintenance activities. The remaining time was spent on non-maintenance activities, including staff meetings, travel time, and other administrative activities. PRNS can potentially reduce this time by reevaluating the timing of team meetings and existing park maintenance routes, and by making storage lockers or other facilities available within Park Districts.

PRNS' Allocation of Staff in Park Districts Should be Reassessed

Staffing among Park Districts varies significantly. For example, for FY 2019-20, Park District 3 had 24 FTE allocated to it, whereas Park District 5 had 15. As described below, some of the Park Districts with the lowest staffing had more special events, regional parks, and/or homelessness impacts. In total for FY 2019-20, maintenance staff in PRNS made up about 152 budgeted FTE.²²

²² See note below Exhibit 13.

Exhibit 13: Allocation and Growth of Staffing Varied across Park Districts



Source: Auditor analysis of PeopleSoft data provided by PRNS.

Note: Staffing counts include only those maintenance positions outlined in the January 23, 2017 Sustainable Park Maintenance Memo, namely the following: Parks Facility Supervisor, Maintenance Supervisor, Senior Maintenance Worker, Gardener, Groundswoker, Maintenance Assistant, Park Maintenance Repair Worker, Maintenance Worker, Heavy Equipment Operator, and Groundskeeper. We did not include administrative positions in this Exhibit.

Several Factors Contribute to Park Maintenance Workload

Park maintenance needs can vary across the City and within Park Districts because of 1) the size and variety of park facilities, 2) persistent garbage and illegal dumping, 3) homelessness, 4) special events, and 5) other factors such as rodent or other pest activity. In addition, parks located in areas impacted by gang activity can face other maintenance challenges.

It should be noted that, while increasing, maintenance staffing overall in PRNS has not yet returned to the staffing levels that existed prior to FY 2009-10, and many positions that contributed to these increases are one-time budgeted positions. Given that, considering the various contributors to park maintenance workload is essential for ensuring the Park Districts are appropriately and equitably staffed.

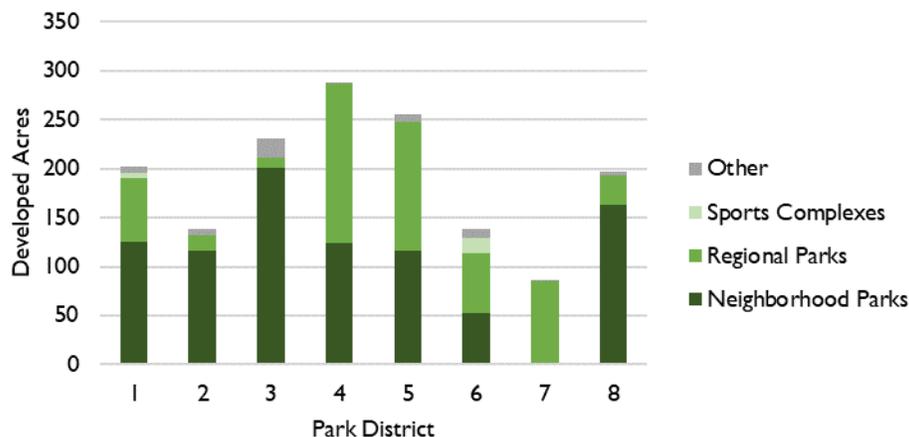
Size and Variety of Park Facilities

One indicator of workload within a Park District is the size of its park system. The size and number of parks can impact the staff resources needed for adequate maintenance. For example, Park District 5 has the second highest estimated total acreage, at 255 acres of facilities and, as shown in the exhibit above, the lowest number of staff among the Park Districts.

Park size is not the only indicator of the resources required to maintain parks. Parks range in complexity based on the type of facility, whether they are the grounds of a community center or an expansive regional park.

Regional parks and sports complexes are the most labor-intensive facilities for maintenance given their wide variety of amenities and features. For example, Emma Prusch Farm Park, a regional park in Park District 6,²³ contains a barn with farm animals, a rare fruits orchard, an administrative center, community and demonstration gardens, multiple reservable picnic areas, playgrounds, as well as a 6-acre urban farming project managed through a non-profit partner.

Exhibit 14: Type and Acreage of Park Facilities Vary by Park District



Source: Auditor analysis of acreage data and GIS data provided by PRNS.

Note: Excludes facilities maintained by contractors. “Other” includes community centers, community gardens, and civic grounds. The Parks Division also maintains around 60 miles of trails spread throughout the city which could mean additional workload.

Although Park District 2 and Park District 6 have similar acreage, Park District 6 has a greater portion of regional parks and sports complexes. However, Park District 2 currently has 18.7 staff compared to the 17.7 maintenance staff in Park District 6.

We should note that although Park District 7 has the lowest acreage of all the Park Districts, that acreage consists of the Kelley Park complex, including Happy Hollow Park & Zoo,²⁴ and the Japanese Friendship Garden. Park District 7 also has the second-least amount of staff, at 15.6 FTE.

²³ This corresponds to Council District 5.

²⁴ Park District 7 maintenance staff are only responsible for maintenance and landscaping of Happy Hollow Park & Zoo’s grounds. Zoo operations are separate and have their own dedicated staffing.

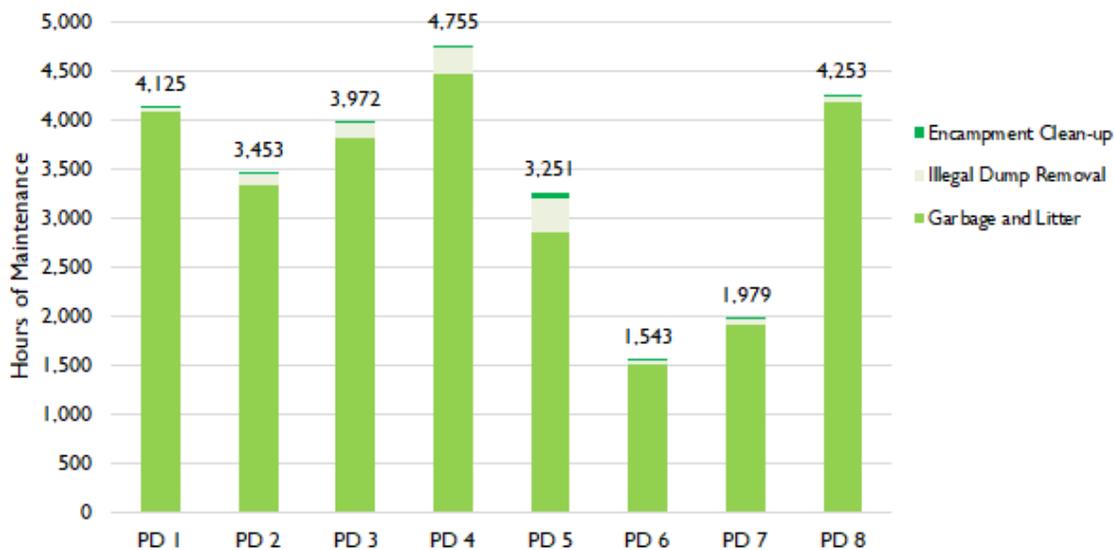
Garbage & Litter, Illegal Dumping, and Encampment Clean-up

27,300 hours

of garbage and litter removal, and illegal dump and encampment cleanups

Certain maintenance issues impact some parks more than others, resulting in significant use of staff resources. For example, garbage, litter, and illegal dumping impact numerous parks. In FY 2018-19, park maintenance staff spent 27,300 hours toward garbage and litter pick-up, illegal dump removal, and homeless encampment clean-ups. This comprised 15 percent of total staff hours, or the equivalent of 13 FTE.

Exhibit 15: Garbage & Litter, Illegal Dumping, and Encampment Clean-up Hours by Park District



Source: Auditor analysis of FY 2018-19 PRNS Infor EAM data.

While most Park Districts spent considerable time on garbage and litter pickup, Park District 4 and Park District 5 spent more hours on both illegal dumping and encampment clean-up compared to other Park Districts.

A greater presence of garbage, litter, and illegal dumping can be attributed to many factors. For example, some parks such as regional parks have more frequent visitors and special events and tend to collect more trash and litter.

Litter can also vary during the week, generally peaking during the weekends. Maintenance staff have cited the increased garbage during the weekends as the reason for previously dedicating Mondays and Fridays to garbage and litter pickup, though maintenance scheduling is transitioning to a daily work order system based on service levels.

Impacts of Homelessness

A related issue is homelessness, which has presented additional staffing and maintenance challenges in some Park Districts. Having a larger unhoused population has led to significant challenges for maintenance staff, including: increased garbage and litter, irrigation systems that have been tampered with, limiting access to some park restrooms, and safety concerns leading to staff working in pairs or groups.²⁵ Some Park Districts are more impacted by homelessness than others. For example, parks in Downtown San José and those located near creeks see more unhoused individuals than others.²⁶

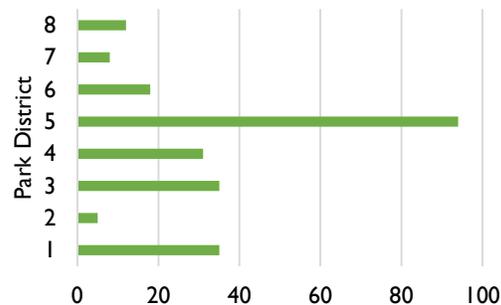
Special Events

Parks maintenance staff are also involved with the preparation and clean-up of parks and other locations for special events, the number of which varies across Park Districts. These can be shorter, one-day events put on by non-City organizers like the Rotary Fireworks Show in 2018, or those that take place over the course of an entire month, like the Almaden Valley Summer Concert Series. In FY 2018-19, Park District 5 (15 FTE) had almost 100 special events compared to 5 events in Park District 2 (19 FTE).

PRNS' Special Park Use (SPU) unit works with event organizers to determine event needs. Maintenance staff must do repairs and related follow-up work after larger events. SPU staff along with park maintenance staff do a pre- and post-event walkthrough to ensure that park conditions are documented. Event organizers are billed for any repairs post-event. Some events can be much more resource-intensive than others. For example, Park

District 5 had many large events spread out over multiple days such as Downtown Viva Parks in St. James Park and the College Football Championship. In contrast, Park District 2 hosted smaller events such as National Night Outs.

Exhibit 16: Number of Special Events Varies by Park District



Source: Data provided by PRNS Special Events Team.

Note: The data only provides a total event count and does not reflect the size of the events.

²⁵ In February 2017 San José’s Mayor launched the BeautifySJ initiative, a multi-departmental effort to address ongoing complaints of blight related to litter, trash, illegal dumping, graffiti, and street maintenance conditions in San José. BeautifySJ staff reports responding on a regular basis at City parks for clean-ups, including those related to encampments.

²⁶ See Appendix B for information on the distribution of homelessness in San José, based on the 2019 point-in-time count.

Other Factors Can Divert Resources from Regular Maintenance Responsibilities

There are additional factors that can complicate maintenance, including integrated pest management (IPM). IPM is a system of controlling the presence of pests and weeds using non- or low-chemical and less toxic means, like mechanical traps or more environmentally-friendly chemicals. For FY 2018-19, the pest management component of IPM accounted for approximately 1,270 hours, or 1 percent of total maintenance hours, while the weed component totaled 12,090 hours, or 7 percent.

Exhibit 17: Summary of Select Factors to Consider in Staffing and Resource Allocation

Park District	FTE	Developed Acres	Regional Parks	Neighborhood Parks	2019 PCA Score	Hours for litter, garbage*	Hours for Integrated Pest Management	# of special events
1	21.0	203	1	24	3.5	4,078	1,166	35
2	18.7	139	1	23	3.4	3,335	737	5
3	23.9	231	0	26	3.4	3,817	1,921	35
4	23.7	289	1	18	3.4	4,464	2,262	31
5	15.4	255	2	15	3.2	2,854	1,876	94
6	17.7	138	2	7	3.4	1,505	1,136	18
7	15.6	86	1	0	3.4	1,919	3,347	8
8	15.7	197	1	16	3.4	4,170	914	12

Source: Auditor summary of PRNS staffing, acreage, work order, and special events data.

Note: FTE for FY 2019-20; all other data based on FY 2018-19. Acreage and types of facilities exclude facilities maintained by contractors. Red text signifies values that may translate to a heavier workload, while green text signifies a relatively lighter workload.

* We should note that these hours only take into consideration garbage and litter. For total hours related to garbage and litter, illegal dumping, and encampment clean-up, refer to Exhibit 15.

A holistic analysis of park maintenance needs, including the type and size of facilities, the impact of litter, the frequency of special events, and the presence and impacts of the unhoused will help PRNS more effectively allocate park maintenance staff.

Recommendation #7: To ensure that staffing is appropriately and equitably distributed across Park Districts, PRNS should review and realign current staffing based on workload, such as type of park, acreage, park conditions, and other factors as appropriate.

Weekend Work and Public Service Programs Need Formalizing

The courts of Santa Clara County identify low risk offenders and assign them to participate in the Weekend Work Program or the Public Service Program, which are alternative work programs in lieu of a jail sentence. These work programs require participants to perform manual labor tasks as required by the job site and includes routine janitorial work, landscape/grounds maintenance, and other assigned duties.

The City receives participants from these programs for maintenance and landscape-related tasks at some City parks. For example, program participants regularly perform clean-ups, weeding, and other landscaping activities for the City's Kelley Park.

To supervise program participants, City staff are expected to complete an annual training provided by the County Office of the Sheriff Custody Bureau - Programs Unit. However, there is currently no agreement that formalizes this relationship. Having an agreement with the County would better define roles and responsibilities, including workers' compensation liabilities in case of injuries.

Recommendation #8: PRNS should work with the City Attorney's Office to formalize an agreement with the Santa Clara County Sheriff's Office governing the Weekend Work Program, Public Service Program, and other similar donated labor arrangements.

Access to Proper Vehicles and Equipment

Park maintenance staff rely on trucks and other equipment, like mowers, tractors, and aerators to perform their job. In FY 2019-20, 22 percent of PRNS' 158 trucks (35 of 158) exceeded their 10-year, 100,000-mile replacement cycle. The City's Public Works Department sets the 10-year, 100,000-mile replacement criteria.²⁷

On average, PRNS' equipment and vehicles were 13 years old and were down for maintenance for an average of two weeks during the first six months of FY 2019-20. PRNS' mowers had a median age of 11 years and were down for maintenance for a median of 11 days during the first half of FY 2019-20.

When aging vehicles are pulled out of service, it can lead to interruptions in workflow for park maintenance staff. Currently, the loss of vehicles can be abrupt, and without a replacement vehicle, staff may have to combine routes with other maintenance teams within a Park District or even be redirected to non-maintenance duties as they await a new vehicle.

Internal Coordination to Replace and Track PRNS Fleet Can Be Improved

PRNS has a fleet manager who, along with other responsibilities, oversees the department's inventory of vehicles and equipment and who coordinates with Public Works' Fleet Division. There is no formal process for coordinating or communicating with Park Districts to determine which vehicles need to be replaced and how to prioritize the replacement.

²⁷ Note: The City Auditor's Office published [Fleet Maintenance and Operations: Public Works Can Continue to Improve Fleet Operations](#).

This lack of coordination between the fleet manager and Park Districts, as well as across Park Districts, makes it difficult to track both large and smaller equipment. The Park Districts do not have standardized procedures for tracking smaller equipment (i.e., mechanical/electrical equipment below \$10,000). Every Park District manages its own assets through a variety of means, and at least one doesn't have any discernable system.

PRNS does not have a formal process to track its vehicles and equipment.²⁸ Tracking assets is not only prudent but would provide the department with the ability to share assets as they are needed across Park Districts and ensure that the City's assets are accounted for.

Recommendation #9: PRNS should develop a formal process to track and reconcile its larger equipment and vehicles and improve internal coordination of vehicle purchases and asset management.

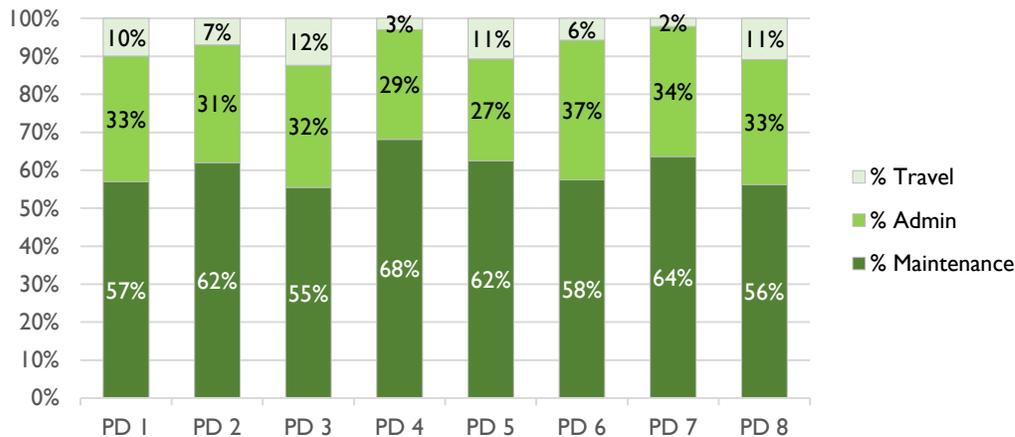
Maintenance Activities Made Up Approximately 60 Percent of Documented Staff Time

Data in Infor showed that a large amount of staff time appeared to be for non-maintenance activities. This includes travel time and administrative tasks like data entry and team meetings.²⁹ Excluding absences, time spent on non-maintenance tasks across all Park Districts amounted to almost 72,500 hours, or the equivalent of nearly 35 FTE. In sum, the amount of time spent on non-maintenance activities across all Park Districts made up nearly 40 percent of total staff time.

²⁸ Staff told us that they were able to track about 50 percent of the assigned fleet. They were unable to provide us with this data during the audit, but are working with the Finance Department to reconcile their assets.

²⁹ Daily team meetings accounted for 12,500 hours, or 22 percent of total admin hours and almost 7 percent of total staff hours. Trainings (whose hours are commingled in a category including job-related trainings, appointments, conducting interviews, and OER meetings) accounted for 5,500 hours, or 10 percent of administrative time.

Exhibit 18: Non-Maintenance Activities Accounted for Large Portions of Staff Time



Source: Auditor analysis of FY 2018-19 PRNS Infor EAM data.

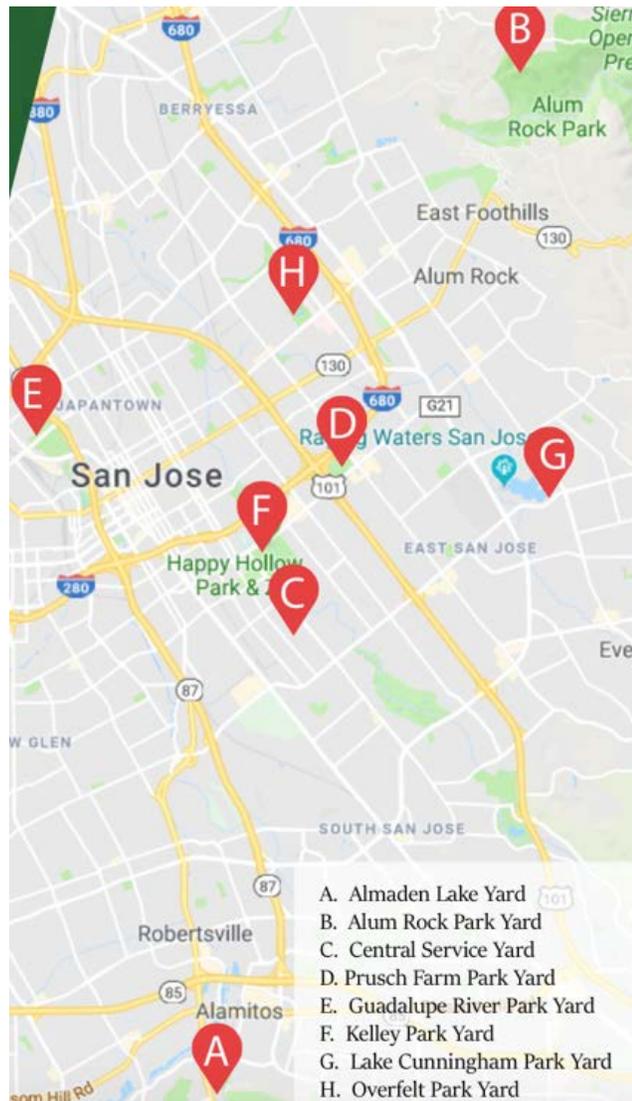
Note: Total maintenance hours entered vary across Park Districts.

Service Yard Locations Contribute to Long Travel Times

PRNS stores its equipment and vehicles at eight different service yards. On a daily basis, maintenance teams pick up equipment at these yards, load their vehicles, and then head out on their routes. The relative location of these yards to the Park Districts can impact how much time maintenance staff spend traveling.

Some Park Districts have maintenance sites located far from their designated service yard. This can contribute, sometimes significantly, to travel time. For example, Park District 3 and Park District 8 are based out of the Central Service Yard (CSY), but have sites bordering Cupertino in the case of Park District 3, and Alviso/North San José in the case of Park District 8. This can add significant travel time. Staff in Park Districts 3 and 8 spent roughly 12 and 11 percent of their time, respectively, on travel in FY 2018-19.

Exhibit 19: Park Maintenance Service Yard Distribution Adds to Travel Time



Source: Map of service yards taken from PRNS' draft service yard study.

PRNS Has Undertaken a Service Yard Study

To better understand service yard needs, PRNS has undertaken a service yard study that found that many of its service yards are at capacity and do not meet the needs of the department. Among its preliminary findings, the study noted that park yards are undersized by as much as 70 percent, and not strategically located given the size of the City's parks system.

Because space is limited, some Park Districts have been using temporary service sheds to store equipment. For example, some Park Districts use on-site trailers or ConEx containers for local storage. It may take some time and additional resources to fully evaluate, restructure, and potentially augment the City's use of

park yards. In the meantime, PRNS should assess the use of additional temporary sheds or localized storage units to help reduce travel times while more long-term solutions are considered.

Timing of Required Staff Meetings May Also Add to Travel Time

Another factor that can add to travel time is daily mandatory staff meetings, which accounted for seven percent of total staff time. Staff start their days at 6 a.m. and participate in a daily team meeting that can last up to one hour, before heading out on their routes to service the parks. This can result in staff heading out to park sites during rush hour traffic, as in the case of Park District 3, whose parks are in West San José toward Cupertino.

Team meetings are important, but modifying the frequency, duration, and time of day of these meetings may help staff avoid morning traffic and reduce some of the time that is spent on non-maintenance activities.

Recommendation #10: In order to optimize staff time dedicated to maintenance-related activities, PRNS should:

- a) Consider making more storage units within existing Park Districts available to staff**
- b) Review timing, duration, and frequency of team meetings.**

Reevaluation of Existing Park Maintenance Routes Could Yield Some Potential Efficiency Gains

Redesigning existing maintenance routes across the eight Park Districts could also help eliminate unnecessary or excessive travel time between sites.

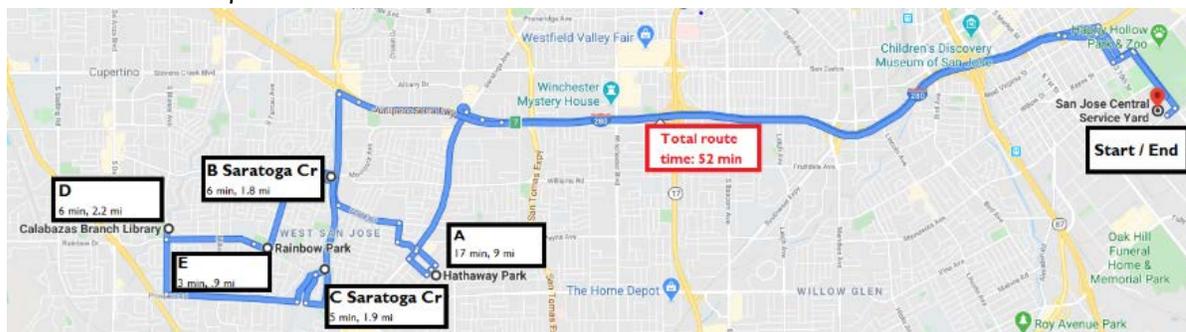
Currently, each Park District determines its maintenance routes with little or no central guidance. This means that there is very little standardization between Park Districts in terms of how routes are designed. Although different factors affect how routes are organized and they vary by Park District, this siloed approach limits internal information sharing around designing maintenance routes. It also makes it difficult for executive staff to give guidance on limiting inefficiencies like excess travel time between maintenance sites.

Exhibit 20: Example of Route Improvement Based on Existing Park District 3 Route

Current Route for Park District 3



Auditor Simulation of Alternative Route



Source: Auditor analysis of Park District 3 maintenance route A (M/W/F), received from PRNS.

Note: Original route on top, auditor revised route on bottom. The route on the bottom reduces travel time by 12 minutes and 5 miles.

This is 1 of 14 unique routes for Park District 3, and this route includes the Saratoga Creek trail. Routes can vary, and often include community centers, trails, and bike paths, as well as other facilities that require maintenance. A redesign of this route A, which is traveled on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, could save an estimated 12 minutes and 5 miles per day. When aggregated over one week, the savings from just this single route translate to nearly 40 minutes and 18 miles, which leaves more time for maintenance and reduces wear on City vehicles.

Recommendation #11: To reduce travel time, PRNS should reassess routes with consideration for traffic peak times, park locations, and staffing.

Optimizing Non-Maintenance-Related Activities

As described earlier, park maintenance staff spent nearly 40 percent of staff time on non-maintenance activities. In addition to travel time, this also includes administrative tasks such as data entry, meetings, and other tasks. As discussed in Finding 2, refocusing the approach to data gathering could help alleviate time spent on tasks other than maintenance activities, such as data entry.

Other cities strive for 80 percent of hours toward direct maintenance

On the other hand, New York City and Seattle aim to dedicate at least 80 percent of total time to maintenance tasks. While Park Districts may not always meet maintenance, administrative and travel time goals, having and reviewing these targets would help PRNS prioritize park maintenance.³⁰

Recommendation #12: To refocus staff time toward activities directly related to park maintenance, PRNS should review and set realistic goals around time spent performing administrative tasks, such as staff meetings, work order data entry, and travel.

³⁰ The data used for this analysis is based on FY 2018-19 work order data from the Infor asset management system. As previously noted, there have been issues with data integrity and entry, with some Park Districts regularly entering data and others not. Therefore, our analysis is based on what was available in the Infor system, after reasonable data testing and validation to the extent possible.

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Finding 4 PRNS Should Improve Language Access at Some Parks

Summary

The Park Concerns Hotline, which allows residents to report issues or concerns related to park safety, appearance, and usage, is generally posted at parks across the city. However, signage is only in English. Some City parks are located in areas of the city that have a very high concentration of non-English speaking households. Providing the appropriate language access to these areas would ensure that all residents have access to information about how to reach staff for park concerns and other relevant information.

Signage for Park Concerns Hotline Is Only in English

The Park Concerns Hotline, which allows residents to report issues or concerns related to park safety, appearance, and usage, is generally posted at parks across the city. However, signage is only in English. Further, there were instances of parks where posted signage did not include information about the Park Concerns Hotline, or where park signs were not easily visible.

Exhibit 21: Park Signs Are Provided in English Only



Source: Auditor picture taken during visit at Almaden Lake Park.

Language Access Policy and Park Signage for Limited English Speakers

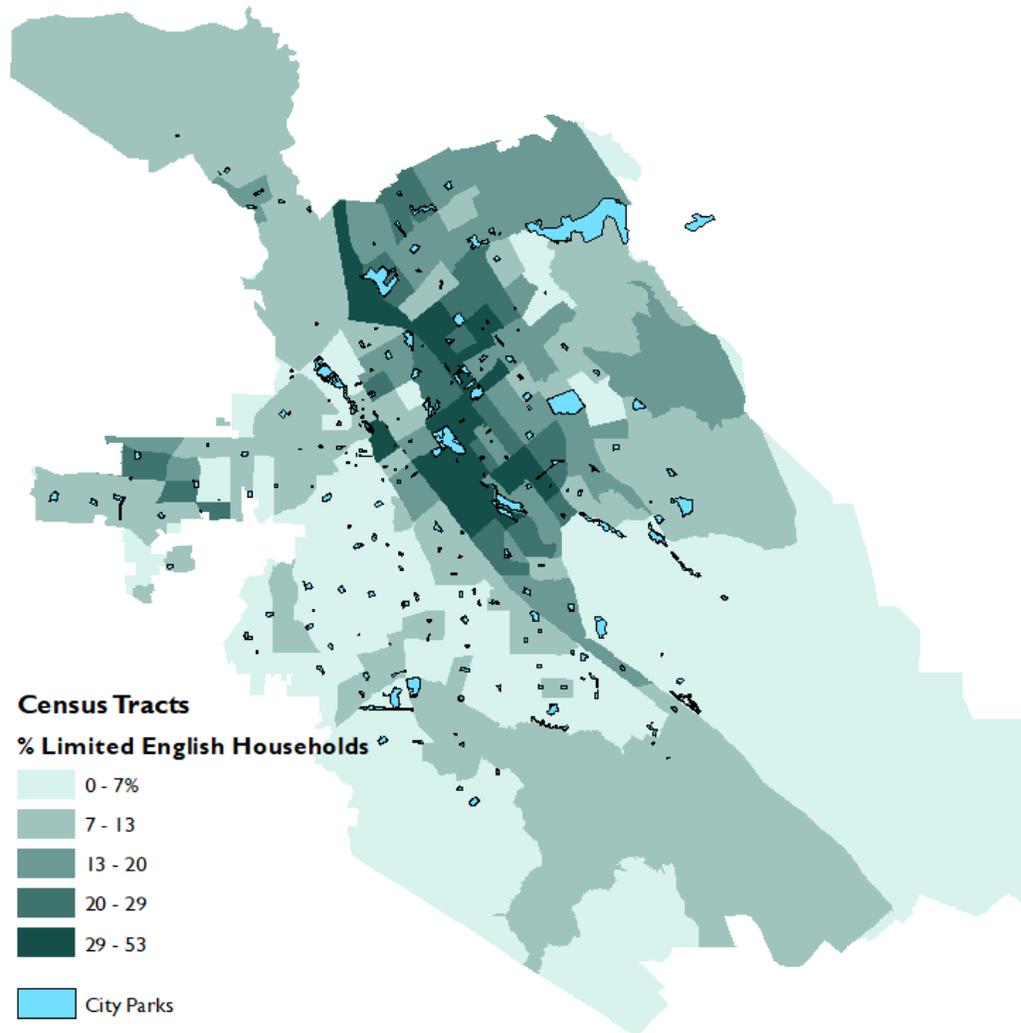
The City's Language Access Policy (CPM 6.1.10) gives general guidance around the types of written and print communication that may be translated, including administrative complaints. Park signs include useful information on park hours, allowable uses, and the call numbers for reporting problems or suggestions for improvements.

Translating these signs would be particularly helpful for certain Park Districts with large populations of residents whose first language is not English, including Park Districts, 4, 6, and 7.³¹

Employees should
"make reasonable efforts to minimize barriers to accessing City programs or services for customers with limited English proficiency and ensure equal access regardless of language proficiency and cultural background."
-City of San José
Language Access Policy

³¹ These Park Districts correspond to City Council Districts 5, 7, and 8.

Exhibit 22: Percentage of Limited English Households by Census Tract



Source: Auditor analysis of GIS data provided by PRNS and American Community Survey 2018 5-year estimates.

Recommendation #13: PRNS should assess language access needs for parks in areas with higher concentrations of limited English households and provide information and resources in multiple languages in those areas.

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Conclusion

PRNS began using a data-driven approach in 2013 to help with resource allocation at City parks. Although PRNS has been conducting annual Park Condition Assessments to document park conditions, the process can be improved to ensure assessments are more consistent and distinguish between different types of improvements that a park may need. Also, low-scoring parks did not always receive additional support and monies allocated for improvement of low-scoring features were not always spent. PRNS should also reassess its tracking of daily maintenance work as the current system is time-intensive and subject to errors, leaving staff little time to analyze results. Further, staff allocations across Park Districts have varied considerably, and some Districts face challenges due to the size and number of parks in their District, different park amenities, homelessness, and other factors. We found that staff are only spending 60 percent of their time on maintenance activities. Moreover, better tracking of equipment would help Parks staff manage and share inventory between Park Districts. Finally, because some City parks are located in areas with high concentrations of limited English speakers, PRNS should provide park signs in the appropriate languages to ensure equal access to park information and resources.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Finding 1: PRNS Can Improve the Park Condition Assessment Process to Better Inform Resource Decisions

Recommendation #1: To ensure the Park Condition Assessment is complete, accurate, and useful for monitoring changes in parks, PRNS should:

- a) Develop a standardized list of parks and park features for measuring and analyzing park condition,
- b) Regularly update this list as new parks and features are added or are closed, and
- c) Use this standardized list for the annual Park Condition Assessment on an ongoing basis.

Recommendation #2: PRNS should develop policies surrounding use of Park Condition Assessment scores to strategically address low-scoring parks and features, and utilize allocated funding to make improvements in a timely manner.

Recommendation #3: To make full use of the Park Condition Assessment scores, PRNS should revise its Park Condition Assessment methodology to tie scoring to established maintenance standards and determine how to categorize park features to more easily identify the type of follow-up needed.

Recommendation #4: To ensure appropriate allocation of capital resources for park improvements in Council Districts and help prioritize capital budgeting, PRNS should:

- a) Develop separate maintenance and capital/infrastructure Park Condition Assessment scores, and
- b) Use the capital/infrastructure Park Condition Assessment scores in the Construction and Conveyance Tax Fund allocation formula.

Finding 2: PRNS Should Reassess Its Data Collection to Better Inform Decision Making

Recommendation #5: To ensure that data collection efforts adequately meet its needs, PRNS should:

- a) Refocus data collection priorities, determine short-term and long-term data collection and data analytics goals, and set clear objectives on achieving those goals,
- b) Reassess the use of Infor EAM to determine if it meets those needs, and
- c) Develop an ongoing training program for staff to ensure that data entry is consistent and accurate and meets its business goals.

Recommendation # 6: To manage performance and analyze workload, PRNS should develop completion goals for corrective work orders and track performance against those goals.

Finding 3: Efficiencies in Resource and Staffing Allocation Can Help Better Prioritize Park Maintenance

Recommendation #7: To ensure that staffing is appropriately and equitably distributed across Park Districts, PRNS should review and realign current staffing based on workload, such as type of park, acreage, park conditions, and other factors as appropriate.

Recommendation #8: PRNS should work with the City Attorney's Office to formalize an agreement with the Santa Clara County Sheriff's Office governing the Weekend Work Program, Public Service Program, and other similar donated labor arrangements.

Recommendation #9: PRNS should develop a formal process to track and reconcile its larger equipment and vehicles and improve internal coordination of vehicle purchases and asset management.

Recommendation #10: In order to optimize staff time dedicated to maintenance-related activities, PRNS should:

- a) Consider making more storage units within existing Park Districts available to staff
- b) Review timing, duration, and frequency of team meetings.

Recommendation #11: To reduce travel time, PRNS should reassess routes with consideration for traffic peak times, park locations, and staffing.

Recommendation #12: To refocus staff time toward activities directly related to park maintenance, PRNS should review and set realistic goals around time spent performing administrative tasks, such as staff meetings, work order data entry, and travel.

Finding 4: PRNS Should Improve Language Access at Some Parks

Recommendation #13: PRNS should assess language access needs for parks in areas with higher concentrations of limited English households and provide information and resources in multiple languages in those areas.

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APPENDIX A

Audit Objective, Scope, and Methodology

The mission of the City Auditor's Office is to independently assess and report on City operations and services. The audit function is an essential element of San José's public accountability, and our audits provide the City Council, City management, and the general public with independent and objective information regarding the economy, efficiency, and effectiveness of City operations and services. In accordance with the City Auditor's Fiscal Year (FY) 2020-21 Audit Work Plan, we have completed an audit of park maintenance operations. The audit was conducted in response to a request from a Councilmember.

We conducted this performance audit in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards. Those 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. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives.

The objective of this audit was to assess the efficiency and allocation of park maintenance staffing and resources Citywide. To understand management controls and meet our audit objectives, we did the following:

- Reviewed PRNS' parks maintenance staffing allocation across park districts for FY 2016 – 2020, and total maintenance staffing for FY 2008 – 2020 and interviewed PRNS management to understand the process for allocating staff across Park Districts.
- Documented total number of parks including differences in various amenities across various park districts
- Analyzed parks maintenance program expenditures and budgets including:
 - PRNS' Adopted Operating Budget (FY 2015-2020)
 - Parks and Community Facilities Development Capital Improvement Program (FY 2020-2024)
 - Expenditure data from the City's financial management system (FY 2011 -2019)
- Reviewed park maintenance funding sources including:
 - Construction & Conveyance Tax Funds
 - Gift Trust Fund
 - Lake Cunningham Fund
 - Park Trust Fund
 - Emma Prusch Memorial Park Fund
 - St. James Park Management District Fund
 - Community Facilities District Funds
- Reviewed the City's Municipal Code sections related to parks including
 - Parks (SJMC Section 13.44)
 - Park impact requirements (SJMC 14.25)

- Parkland dedication (SJMC 19.38)
- Use of Construction Tax and Real Property Conveyance Tax Revenues (SJMC 4.55)
- Reviewed agreements to maintain select parks and restrooms with the following vendors:
 - Bayscape Management, Inc. (landscape maintenance services for civic grounds and small parks)
 - GCA Services Group (janitorial services at City park restrooms)
- Reviewed PRNS' Park Condition Assessment results and methodology for 2015 to 2019
 - Reviewed PRNS' Park Sustainability memoranda to understand reporting related to the PCA results
 - Reviewed PCA scoring by park features and compared the methodology across various years to determine changes
 - Reviewed Park Condition Assessment evaluator guidelines and the 2019 evaluator training documents
 - Observed PCA evaluations at 10 parks and facilities to understand how different staff perform these evaluations
- Analyzed PRNS' Geographic Information System (GIS) and the 2018 American Community Survey and mapped the following:
 - City parks by Park District
 - Percentage of limited English speaking households by census tract
- Reviewed PRNS park maintenance standards for various years, including the current draft standards
- Reviewed PRNS' data tracking in Infor EAM for FY 2018-19. The audit began during the fall of 2019 which made the FY 2018-19 data the most recent available data. Delays due to impacts of COVID-19 and the shift of PRNS' maintenance activity during FY 2019-20 makes use of this data reasonable. We reviewed and analyzed the data for the following information:
 - Total hours reported by type of activity: administrative, travel, maintenance related, holidays and vacation time, etc.
 - Timeliness of corrective and scheduled maintenance work orders
 - Garbage/litter, dumping, and homelessness-related work orders
 - Distribution of special events across Park Districts
 - Number of Park Concerns by Park District
 - Total hours of maintenance across the regional parks
- To understand controls around data entry and reporting, we did the following:
 - Interviewed PRNS' Business Intelligence analyst and reviewed the process for entering data and closing out work orders
 - Reviewed training materials for Infor EAM

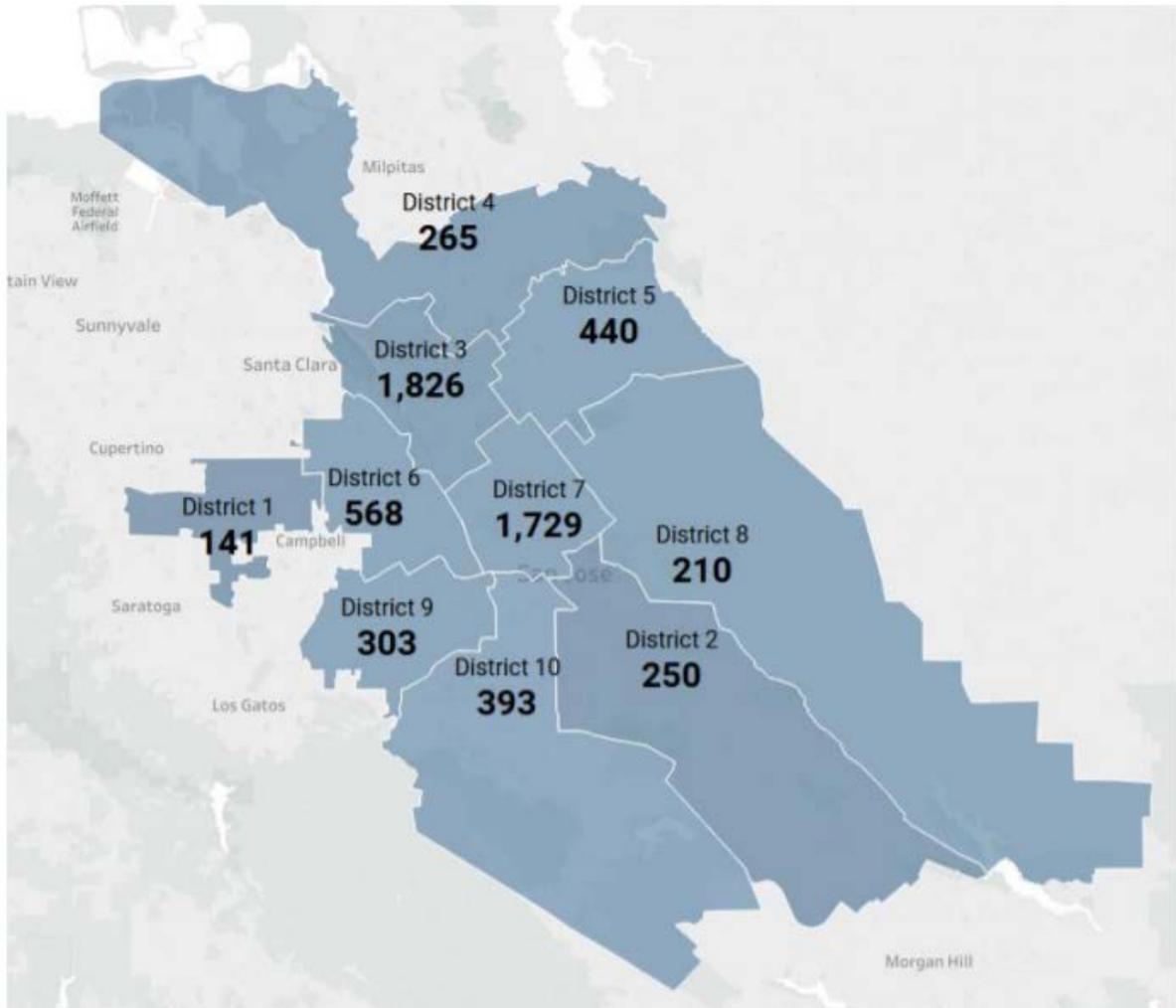
- Reviewed Infor EAM dashboard reports
 - Interviewed various lead staff to understand Infor EAM data entry challenges and usability of reports generated
- Reviewed and reassessed PRNS park routes to determine efficiency
- Interviewed the following staff:
 - Parks Facility Supervisors from the Park Districts
 - PRNS' Business Intelligence analyst to understand data controls and reporting
 - PRNS contract management staff to understand PRNS' contract compliance
 - Staff from BeautifySJ to understand its intersection with park maintenance
 - Analysts from the City's Budget Office
 - The City Attorney's Office to understand the City's responsibilities under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
- Visited the following parks to understand actual park condition
 - Overfelt Gardens
 - Brigadoon Park
 - Canoas Park
 - Tully Community Ballfields
 - Welch Park
- Benchmarked the following jurisdictions to understand their park condition assessment process
 - City and County of San Francisco
 - City of New York
 - City of San Diego
 - City of Seattle
- Reviewed benchmark standards in park maintenance including:
 - Best Management Practices Used at Urban Parks in National and International Locations by the National Park Service
 - Investing in Equitable Urban Park Systems by The Urban Institute
 - The National Accreditation Standards by the Commission for Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agency (Fifth Edition, 2014)
- We analyzed vehicle and equipment condition data from Public Works' fleet management database and interviewed PRNS' fleet manager and Parks supervisors to understand how assets are tracked and replaced. We reviewed the fleet management database to document:
 - Number and age of park maintenance vehicles

- Number and age of park maintenance equipment
- Hours of downtime reported by Public Works for park maintenance vehicles
- Mileage of park maintenance vehicles
- Reviewed data from PRNS' Special Events Team to understand the number of events held at the different Park District and the process to bill event organizers for those events.
- Reviewed the City's Language Access Policy (City Policy Manual 6.1.10) to understand language access at the City's parks and facilities

The Office of the City Auditor thanks the Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services Department for their time, information, insight, and cooperation during the audit process.

APPENDIX B

2019 Homeless Point-In-Time Count

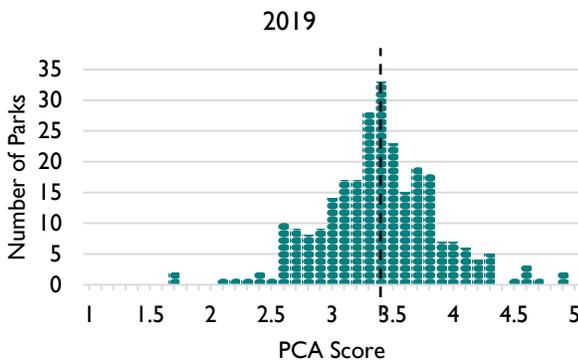
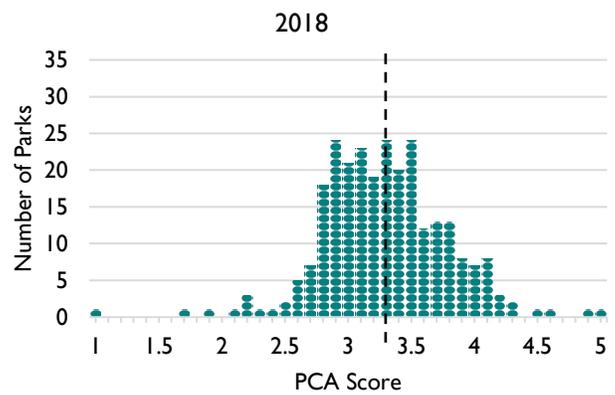
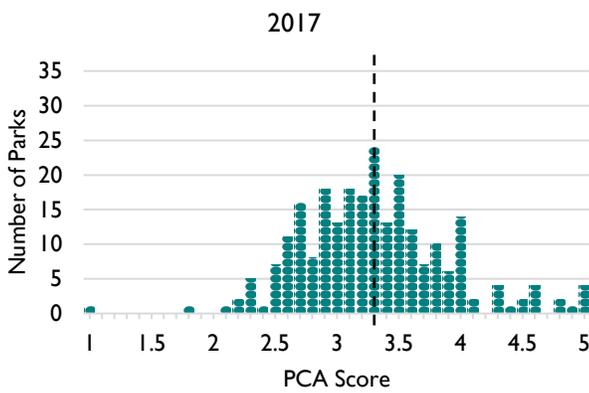
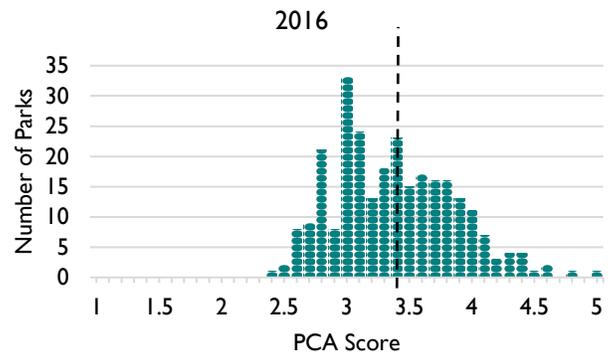
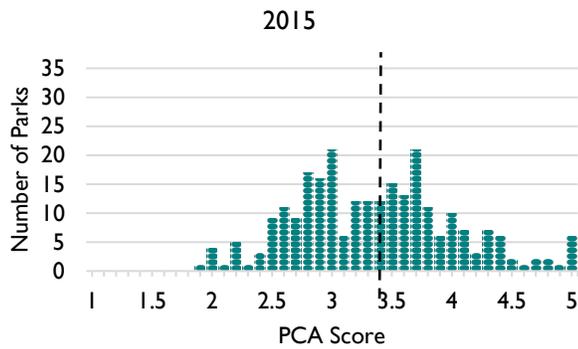


Source: 2019 Homeless Point in Time Count for San José by Applied Survey Research (ASR).
See <https://www.sanjoseca.gov/home/showdocument?id=47511> for full report.

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APPENDIX C

Distribution of PCA Scores, 2015-2019



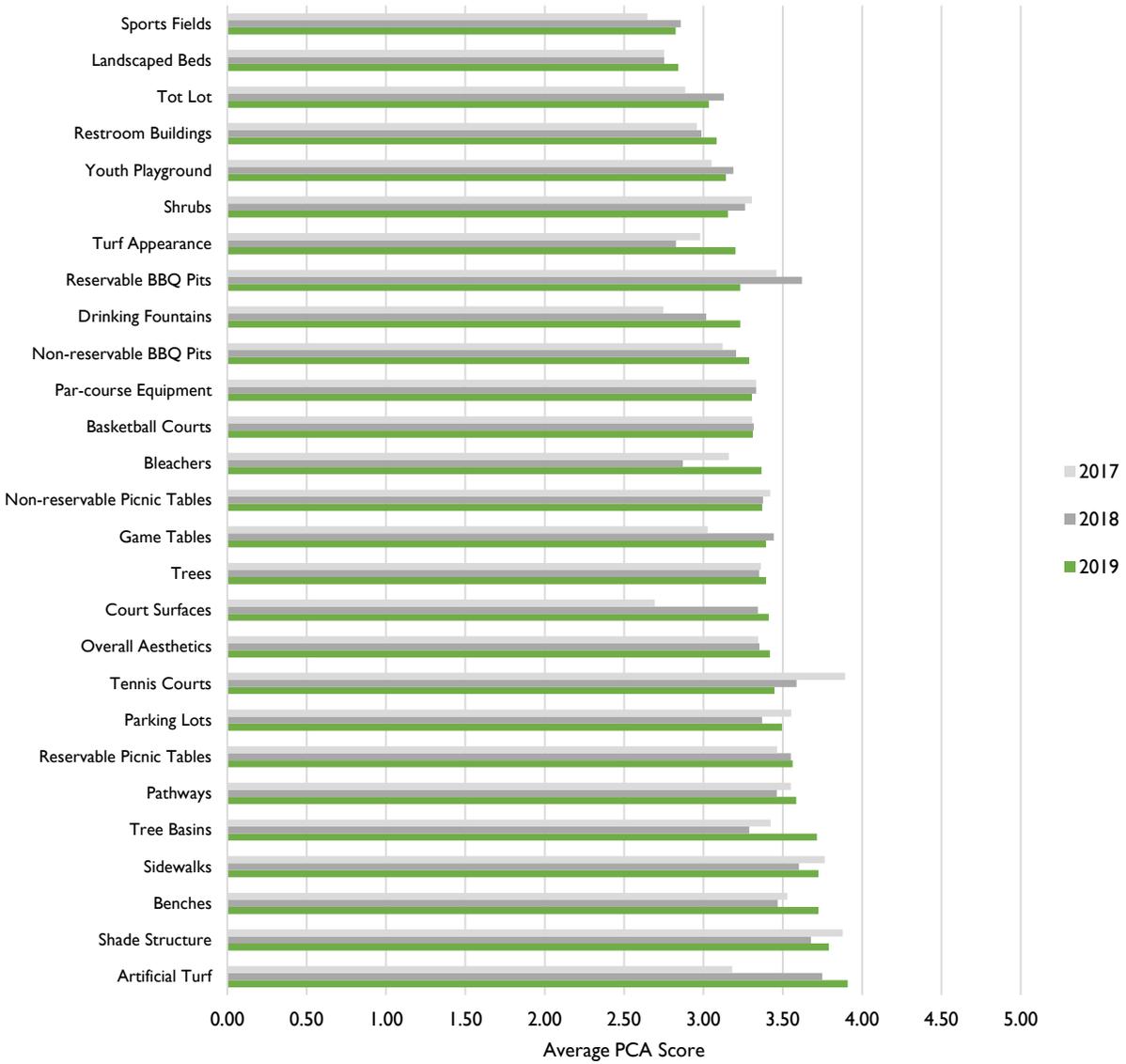
Source: Auditor analysis of PCA data provided by PRNS.

Note: Dotted line represents the overall average score. Total facilities rated each year are as follows: 2015 – 265, 2016 – 271, 2017 – 246, 2018 – 266, 2019 – 265.

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APPENDIX D

Citywide Average PCA Scores by Feature, 2017-19



Source: Auditor analysis of PRNS PCA data

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APPENDIX E

PCA Scores by City Council District and Facility (2018 and 2019)

The scores below are as recorded and reported by PRNS staff. As noted in the audit, not all facilities were scored consistently over the PCA scoring period. Finally, due to the subjective nature and methodology challenges of the PCA process, the Auditor's Office was unable to verify the extent of improvement or decline in individual facility features.

	SAN JOSÉ CITY COUNCIL DISTRICT 1	
Facility	2018 PCA	2019 PCA
Calabazas Library	3.6	3.6
Calabazas Park	3	3.4
Cypress Senior Center	3.3	3.1
Gleason Park	3	3.7
Gullo Park	3.3	3.8
Hathaway Park	3.3	3.2
John Mise Park	3.2	3.5
Marijane Hamann Park	3.1	2.7
Murdock Park	2.8	3.1
Rainbow Park	2.9	2.7
San Tomas Park	3.1	3.6
Saratoga Creek Park	3.1	3.4
Starbird Park	2.7	3.3
West Valley Library	3.8	4
Westside San Jose Community and Policing Center	3	3.2

	SAN JOSÉ CITY COUNCIL DISTRICT 2	
Facility	2018 PCA	2019 PCA
Avenida Espana Park	3.3	3.4
Basking Ridge Park	2.8	3.3
Calero Park	3.6	3.5
Century Oaks Park	4	3
Charlotte Commons Park	3.5	3.8
Chynoweth Park	3	3.4
Coy Avenue Park	3.2	3.3
Danna Rock Park	2.8	3.2
Edenvale Garden Park	2.9	3.4
Edenvale Library	3.5	4.1
Edenvale Youth Center	3.2	4.1
George Page Park	3.1	3.4

Great Oaks Park	3.3	2.8
La Colina Park	2.8	3
Los Paseos Park	3.5	3.5
Melody Park	3.5	3.1
Metcalf Neighborhood Park	3.4	3.3
Miner Park	3	3.3
Miyuki Dog Park	3.4	3.6
Palmia Park	2.9	3.3
Piercy Park	3.9	3.4
Police Sub-Station (Southside)	4.2	4.5
Raleigh Linear Green	3.6	3.8
Ramac Park (Hitachi Park)	3.3	3.6
Santa Teresa Library	4.1	4.3
Shady Oaks Park	3.3	3.4
Silver Leaf Park	3.7	3.7
Southside Community Center	3.6	Not rated

	SAN JOSÉ CITY COUNCIL DISTRICT 3	
Facility	2018 PCA	2019 PCA
Backesto Park	3	3.1
Bestor Art Park	4.2	3.9
Biblioteca Lib/Washington Yc/Lopez Park	3.2	3.4
Biebrach Park	3.1	2.9
Bonita Park	3.9	4.3
Brenda Lopez Plaza	3.1	2.6
Cannery Park - 10th and Mission	NEW	4.9
City Hall	4.1	3.7
Columbus Park I (Part of Guadalupe Gardens)	2.5	2.2
Discovery Meadow	2.9	2.8
East San Jose Carnegie Library	3.4	3.3
Environmental Innovation Center AKA Las Plumas Warehouse	3.4	4.3
Fallon House	3.5	3.8
Forestdale Tot Lot	4.1	4.7
Gardener Community Center	3.7	3.7
Guadalupe Gardens and Heritage Rose Garden	2.9	2.7
Guadalupe River Park - Arena Green (East)	3	3.3
Guadalupe River Park - Arena Green (West)	2.9	2.9
Guadalupe River Park - Courtyard Garden	2.2	1.7

Guadalupe River Park - Historic Orchard	3	2.3
Guadalupe River Park - St. John to I-880	2.3	3.4
Guadalupe River Park- Discovery Dog Park	2.9	2.9
Hacienda Park	3.5	3.5
John P. McEnery Park	3.7	3.2
Joyce Ellington (Empire) Branch Library	3.9	3.8
Luna Park	3.9	3.7
Martin Park	3.4	2.6
Newhall Park	4	3.6
Northside Community Center	3.8	3.3
O'Donnell Garden Park	3.7	3.5
Orchard Park - (Fox Properties)	4.2	3.8
Parque De La Pobladores (Gore)	2.9	3.3
Parque de Padre Mateo Sheedy	3.5	3.5
Pellier Park	3.1	4.3
Peralta Adobe	4	4
Plaza De Cesar Chavez	3.3	3.5
Raymond Bernal Jr. Memorial Park	3.1	2.9
Roosevelt Park	2.9	2.6
Rosemary Garden Park	3.5	3.3
Ryland Dog Park	3.4	3.4
Ryland Park	2.8	2.9
Selma Olinder Park	2.8	3.1
St. James Park	3.4	3.3
Super Block Parking Lot	2.9	3
Tamien Park	4	4.1
Washington United Youth Center	Not rated	2.6
Watson Park	3.5	3.9
Watson Soccer Bowl	Not rated	Not rated
West PD Substation	3	3.3
William St. Park	2.9	2.9
Willow Glen Community Center/ Rec Center in River Glen Park	3.1	3.4

	SAN JOSÉ CITY COUNCIL DISTRICT 4	
Facility	2018 PCA	2019 PCA
Alviso Library & Community Center (New)	3.8	2.9
Alviso Library & Community Center (combined)	2.6	Not rated
Alviso Park	1.9	2.9

Alviso Police Substation	3.3	3.1
Alviso Youth Center (Same as CC)	3.1	3.1
Berryessa Community Center	3.3	3.2
Berryessa Creek Park	3.7	3.8
Berryessa Library (New and Old)	3	3.5
Brooktree Park	3.2	3.4
Cataldi Park	3.5	3.4
Commodore park	Not rated	3.7
Educational Park Library (Leased)	3.3	2.4
Evergreen Community Center	3	3.2
Flickinger Park	2.8	3.1
Gran Paradiso Park	4.3	3.4
Metzger Ranch House	2.9	3.4
Moitozo Park	3.3	4.6
Noble House (Old Berryessa Teen Center)	2.8	3.7
Noble Park	2.8	3.7
Northwood Park	3	3.1
Old Alviso Community Center	3	3.3
Penitencia Creek Park	3.4	3.2
River Oaks Park	3.5	3.7
Riverview Park	4.1	4.2
Townsend Park	2.4	Not rated
Vinci Park	3	3.1
Vista Montana (5 acre)	3.7	3.6

	SAN JOSÉ CITY COUNCIL DISTRICT 5	
Facility	2018 PCA	2019 PCA
Alum Rock & 31st St	3.3	4.3
Alum Rock Library	4.1	3.7
Alum Rock Park	3.2	2.7
Alum Rock Youth Center	3.3	3
Capitol Park	3.8	3.4
Children Of Rainbow Park	3.1	3.3
Cimarron Park	2.9	3.1
Emma Prusch Farm Park	3.5	4
Fleming Park	3.5	3.8
Hank Lopez Community Center	2.8	3.1
Hillview Park	2.9	3.3
Lo Bue Park	3.5	3.3

Madden Park (aka Jackson Madden Park)	3.5	3.2
Mayfair Park	2.9	3
Mckinley Neighborhood Center (Leased)	2.7	Not rated
Mt Pleasant Park	3.8	3.2
Nancy Lane Plaza	3	3
New Hillview Library	3.1	3.5
Our Park	3.6	3.4
Overfelt Gardens	2.6	2.1
Pal Stadium	3.2	3.5
Parque De La Amistad	3.2	3.1
Plata Arroyo Park	3	3
San Antonio Tot Lot	4.6	3.4
Sheppard Sports Field	2.7	4
Sylvia Cassell Park	3.4	Not rated
Zolezzi Park	3.4	3.7

	SAN JOSÉ CITY COUNCIL DISTRICT 6	
Facility	2018 PCA	2019 PCA
Bascom Branch Library	4	3.2
Buena Vista Park	4.1	3.8
Cahill Park	3.2	3.3
Canoas Park	3.1	2.8
Del Monte Park	4.1	3.5
Fire Training Center	2.6	2.6
Frank M. Santana Park	3.1	3.4
Fuller Park	3.1	3.8
Gregory Plaza Tot Lot	3.8	3.5
Hester Park	2.9	2.5
Hummingbird Park	3.6	4.1
Lincoln Glen Park	Not rated	3.3
Municipal Rose Garden	3.5	3.5
O'Connor Park	3.9	3.7
River Glen Park	3	3.2
Rose Garden Library	3.6	3
Roy Avenue Park	3.8	3.5
Rubino Park	2.8	2.8
St. Elizabeth Park	3.9	3.6
Theodore Lenzen Park	3.7	3.9

Wallenberg Park Site/Community Garden	3.2	3.3
Wilcox Park	3.7	3.8
Willow Glen Library	3.7	4
Willow Street Frank Bramhall Park	3.4	3.2

	SAN JOSÉ CITY COUNCIL DISTRICT 7	
Facility	2018 PCA	2019 PCA
Alma Senior Center (Same as Community Center)	2.8	3.2
Bellevue Park	3.4	2.7
Central Service Yard	Not rated	Not rated
Communication Hill	4	4
Dove Hill Park	3	3.4
Elaine Richardson Park	4.3	4.2
Fair Swim Center & Tot Lot	3.5	3.1
George Shirakawa Community Center	3.2	2.8
Happy Hollow Park & Zoo	3.8	3.8
Kelley Park - History Park	3.2	3.3
Kelley Park - Japanese Friendship Garden	3.2	3.6
Kelley Park - Vietnamese Heritage Garden	4.1	2.7
Kelley Park / Open Areas	3.4	3.4
La Ragione Tot Lot	3.3	3.9
Lone Bluff Park	3.2	2.4
McLaughlin Park	3.6	3.7
Municipal Rifle Range	3	2.6
Nisich Park	4.5	4.6
Ramblewood Park	3.1	3.3
Roberto Antonio Balermino Park	3.7	3.6
Rock Springs Tot Lot Park	3.8	3.3
San Jose Animal Care Center	2.8	3.6
Seven Trees Community Center	3.8	2.7
Solari Park	3.1	3.4
Stonegate Park and Skate Park	3.3	3.1
Tully Community Ball Fields	3.7	3.5
Tully Library	3.4	3.5
Turtle Rock Park	3.4	3.4
Vieira Park	3.7	3.5
Vieira Park Outlook	3.7	3.8
West Evergreen Park	3.3	3.6
William Lewis Manly Park	5	4.6

Windmill Springs Park	3.1	3.3
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	SAN JOSÉ CITY COUNCIL DISTRICT 8	
Facility	2018 PCA	2019 PCA
Aborn Park	3.4	4.2
Boggini Park	2.6	3.5
Boys and Girls Club	1	1.7
Brigadoon Park	2.8	2.8
Brigadoon Tot Lot	3.3	3.4
Canyon Creek Park	3.3	3.3
Evergreen Library	3.1	3.2
Evergreen Park	3.1	Not rated
Falls Creek Park	3.9	3.7
Fernish Park	2.9	3.7
Fowler Creek Park	3.5	3.5
Groesbeck Hill Park	2.1	3.2
Lake Cunningham Park	3	3.3
Meadowfair Community Center	1.7	3.3
Meadowfair Park	2.2	3.2
Montgomery Hill Park	3.5	3.6
Norwood Creek Park	Not rated	3
Scenic Meadows Park	2.7	Not rated
Silver Creek Linear Park 1 (No Picnic Meadow)	2.9	3.9
Silver Creek Linear Park 2/ Picnic Meadow	2.7	3.8
Village Square Branch Library	3.6	3.9
Welch Park	2.2	3.8

	SAN JOSÉ CITY COUNCIL DISTRICT 9	
Facility	2018 PCA	2019 PCA
Branham Park	3.2	3.4
Butcher Park	2.9	2.6
Cambrian Library	3.6	4.1
Camden Community Center	3.5	3.4
Camden Park	3.5	3.6
Carolyn Norris Park	3.5	3.6
De Anza (Arroyo) Park	3.2	3.5
Doerr Park	2.5	2.7
Erikson Park	3.5	3.7

Houge Park	3.3	3
Kirk Community Center	Not rated	Not rated
Kirk Park	3.3	3.7
Lone Hill Park	2.8	2.7
Paul Moore Park	2.9	3
Pearl Ave Branch Library	3.6	3.4
Richard E. Huerta Park	2.8	3
Russo Park	3.8	3.9
Scottsdale Park	4	4.2
Terrell Park	3.4	3.4
Thousand Oaks Park	3.2	3.1
William H. Cilker Park	3.9	4

	SAN JOSÉ CITY COUNCIL DISTRICT 10	
Facility	2018 PCA	2019 PCA
Almaden Lake	3.3	3
Almaden Library & Comm. Center	3.2	3.4
Almaden Meadows Park	3.1	2.8
Almaden Winery	3.1	3.4
Cahalan Park	3.4	3.5
Carrabelle Park	3.2	3.4
Cathedral Oaks Park	3	3.7
Chris Hotts Park	3.1	3.3
Comanche Park	3.6	3.8
Foothill Park	3.3	3
Glenview Park	2.8	3.2
Greystone Park	3.4	3.6
Guadalupe Oak Grove Park (and Vargas Property)	3.8	4.1
Jeffrey Fontana (Golden Oak) Park East	2.9	3.1
Meadows Park	2.8	2.8
Parkview Park I	2.7	2.6
Parkview Park II	2.7	2.6
Parkview Park III	2.9	3.2
Parma Park	2.9	2.9
Patty O'Malley Steinbeck Sports Field	3.8	3.8
Pfeiffer Park	2.9	3.5
Playa Del Rey Park	3.3	3.5
T J Martin Park I	2.6	2.6

Vineland Library	3.4	3.8
Vista Montana (1 acre)	4.9	4.9
Vista Park	Not rated	3.4
Waterford Park	3.5	3.7

Source: Auditor analysis of PRNS PCA data

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APPENDIX F

Example of San Francisco Park Feature List

FEATURES LIST

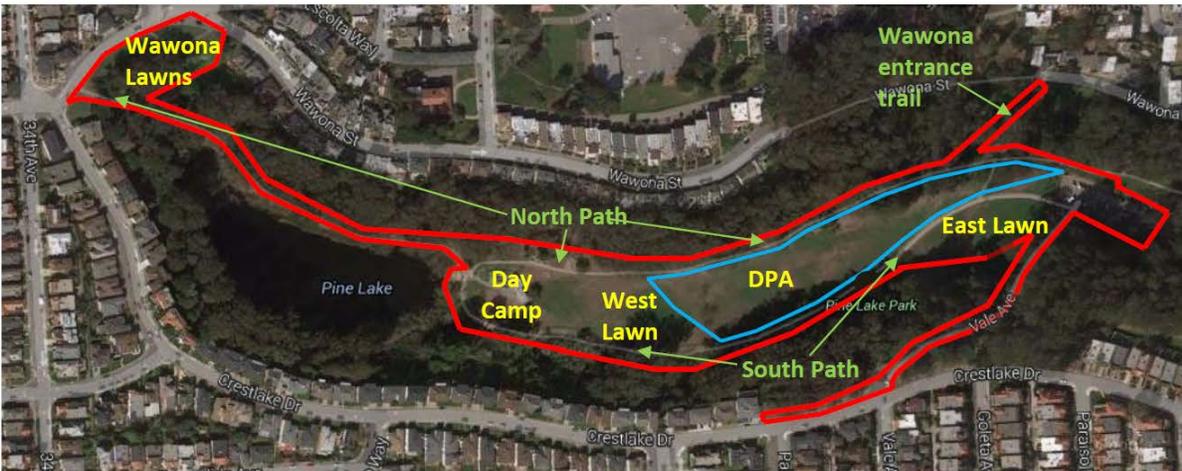
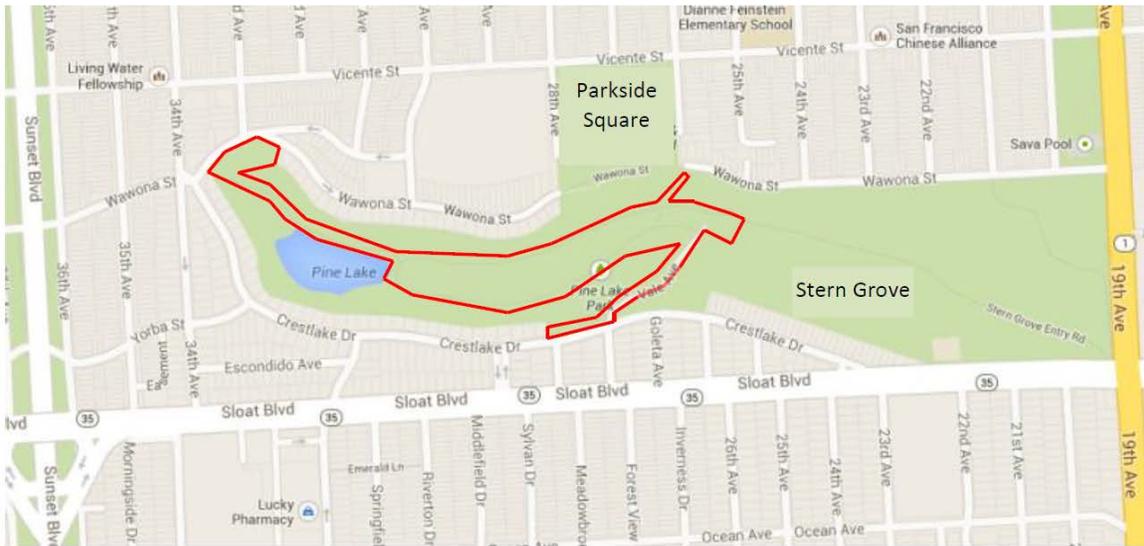
PINE LAKE PARK

Address = 100 Vale Ave, San Francisco, CA 94132

Target Time = 1 hour and 50 minutes

[suggested maintenance schedule times for conducting your evaluation](#)

This evaluated segment encompasses the lawn/picnic areas along Wawona Street at the west, the north and south paths and the DPA, clubhouse and lawns they traverse, the dirt road up to Wawona at the east, Vale Avenue and its parking lot, and the sidewalk along Crestlake Drive. **Areas outside the red boundaries below are Natural Areas or parts of other evaluation sites and should not be evaluated.**



Feature notes are given on the reverse side of this page

Buildings & General Amenities

3 drinking fountains

include the Stern Grove sign that exists at the Vale Avenue entrance

evaluate the fire circles at the Day Camp and above the north path as “free-standing walls”

evaluate the lakeside amphitheater just west of the Day Camp clubhouse

Dog Play Areas - roughly outlined in blue on aerial map on reverse side of this page

evaluate the fencing that divides the DPA from the west lawn here

(synthetic turf n/a)

Greenspace

evaluate the Wawona “entrance trail” (dirt road) here

do not evaluate any other trails at this site (except for Wawona entrance trail)

(signage and stairways n/a)

Hardscape

evaluate the sidewalk where the park comes out to Crestlake Drive

evaluate the sidewalk where the park comes out to Wawona Street (in the vicinity of 34th Avenue)

evaluate all of the Vale Avenue entrance and parking lot

(stairways n/a)

Lawns

Restrooms – 1F/1M at the **Day Camp clubhouse**

Table Seating Areas

- Day Camp Area - 13 tables and 1 grill at the Day Camp clubhouse
- Escotta Area - 1 table at Escotta (Wawona Street) at 33rd Avenue
- North Path Area - 3 tables and 1 grill in a picnic circle off the north path

(turf detailing n/a)

Trees

evaluate vines on trees only on those trees that lie between the north and south paths

evaluate hanging branches and dead trees when within 10 feet of a path or if impacting a activity area

(tree wells n/a)

Source: San Francisco Recreation & Parks Department website

TO: Joe Rois
City Auditor

FROM: Jon Cicirelli

**SUBJECT: RESPONSE TO AUDIT OF
PARK MAINTENANCE:
IMPROVED DATA COLLECTION
AND ANALYSIS WOULD
ENHANCE PARK MAINTENANCE
OPERATIONS**

DATE: August 19, 2020

Approved

/s/ Angel Rios

Date

8/20/2020

The Administration has reviewed the Audit of Park Maintenance: Improved Data Collection and Analysis Would Enhance Park Maintenance Operations and agrees with all the recommendations identified in the report. The Administration's responses to each of the City Auditor's recommendations are provided in this report.

Consistent with other priority-setting processes, the City Council adopted a new framework for the Administration's response to Audit recommendations in May 2015. As with other priority processes, the green, yellow, and red, light system is utilized to convey the Administration's operational readiness to undertake workload demands. Green administration responses represent items that are either in existing work plans or are part of work already underway. Yellow administration responses represent items that would take more than 40 hours including research and policy/ordinance development. Red administration responses indicate that the item is not feasible. The Administration's response to each of the Audit's recommendations is presented below employing the green, yellow, and red, light system consistent with City Council direction in May 2015.

BACKGROUND

Stewardship of a Community Asset

San José's park system is one of the community's greatest assets and makes invaluable contributions to the community's economic, environmental, social, emotional and physical well-being. As people across the globe cope with the spread of COVID-19, the value of parks is as clear now as it has ever been. Parks simply make life better.

The City's park system began taking shape in 1872, with the founding of Alum Rock Park, and has expanded and improved many times since then, including the voter-approved Measure P in 2000. It now encompasses more than 3,500 acres of developed and undeveloped land across more than 200 neighborhood and regional parks, more than 60 miles of trails, dozens of civic grounds, gardens, lakes, sports facilities, a farm and an accredited amusement park and zoo.

Rebuilding or replacing such an immense asset might cost billions in total for land acquisition and development, which makes stewardship vitally important.

The stewardship of the City's park system lies with the Department of Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services. The Department's vision is: *Healthy Communities that Inspire Belonging*. To achieve that vision, the Department has a mission of connecting people to parks, recreation and neighborhood services for an active San José, and guiding principles of Stewardship, Nature, Equity & Access, Identity and Public Life.

The Department's Parks Division maintains and operates the City's park system, which connects people to healthy lifestyles and nature, offers equitable access to public life, and contributes to San José's identity with unique destinations and events. Parks and trails are maintained by park maintenance employees and contractors working seven days per week. Park Rangers protect, preserve and enhance the natural and cultural resources of the City's parks, trails and open spaces, and program staff develop and deliver programs and events in parks to build community through fun. Partners and thousands of passionate volunteers also provide critical support as community stewards.

Business Intelligence Implemented in Response to Challenges Confronting Park Maintenance

The Department's dedicated park maintenance employees face a daunting challenge to maintain the community's assets in the good condition that residents and employees expect. The efficiency and effectiveness of park maintenance is impacted by:

- Aging infrastructure and an increasing deferred infrastructure maintenance backlog of \$382 million, including parks and recreation buildings.
- An aging fleet of vehicles and equipment which has frequent downtime for repairs.
- The impact of unhoused individuals living in parks and along trails diverting resources away from typical maintenance efforts, damage to infrastructure, and theft of City property especially in the core of the City.
- Budget reductions before and especially during the Great Recession, relative to costs that continue to rise, such as water rates.

In recognition of such dynamics, and to improve park conditions, the Department launched a business intelligence strategy in 2013. Using asset management and computerized maintenance management software, the Department began documenting its efforts and assessing results through an annual Park Condition Assessment. These efforts have shaped park maintenance since their introduction, with some notable successes. For example, with continual focus on park conditions, park maintenance employees have diligently reduced the number and acreage of parks with an overall rating below "acceptable" (less than 3.0 on the 1.0 to 5.0 Park Condition Assessment score range); at the same time, the number of higher-rated parks has declined, suggesting that resources are being shifted and consistency is being achieved as ratings have begun to converge at about 3.4, or above "acceptable" but well below "good" (4.0).

ActivateSJ Will Guide Further Process Improvement

The audit concludes that the Department can improve the Park Condition Assessment process and its use of business intelligence to achieve efficiencies in service. These findings validate the aspirations and benchmarks in the Department’s 20-year strategic plan, ActivateSJ.

Improvements in park maintenance will start with institutionalization of standards and procedures. The foundation of ActivateSJ is the guiding principle of stewardship, and the very first benchmark under this guiding principle is “Improve the condition of parks and trails.” To do so, the Department has set on a course to:

- Develop and implement management plans for all grounds, trees, gardens, sport fields, trails, and golf courses that define maintenance standards and methods;
- Develop and implement quality control standards for all parks and trails to ensure maintenance standards are implemented; and
- Evaluate the staffing models in each park district to ensure that all parks are clean and maintained [to established standards].

These foundational actions are the first steps on the path to improve park conditions and are the basis for the Department’s response to the audit of park maintenance. The goal of establishing maintenance and quality control standards is to ensure that all park visitors in San José receive a quality experience regardless of park location. Full implementation of these standards will allow the Department to create a comprehensive long-term plan to address ongoing issues including aging infrastructure, identify staffing requirements and address social issues which impact San José parks and trails. Standards will allow the Department to define success and create a road map of how to ultimately reach the goal and what resources are needed for that.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND ADMINISTRATION’S RESPONSE

Finding 1: PRNS Can Improve the Park Condition Assessment Process to Better Inform Resource Decisions

Recommendation #1: To ensure the Park Condition Assessment is complete, accurate, and useful for monitoring changes in parks, PRNS should:

- a) **Develop a standardized list of parks and park features for measuring and analyzing park condition,**
- b) **Regularly update this list as new parks and features are added or are closed, and**
- c) **Use this standardized list for the annual Park Condition Assessment on an ongoing basis.**

Administration’s Response: The Administration agrees with this recommendation.

Yellow: ActivateSJ, the Department’s 20-year strategic plan, calls for the Department to “Complete comprehensive Geographic Information System mapping and database of all park and building infrastructure.” The Department currently maintains a list of all parks, updates the list regularly, and uses this park list as the basis for the Park Condition Assessment process. Over time, the Department has strived to assess each park annually, and has made strides towards that goal. The Department does not currently have a complete list of all park features for each park; it has been strategically adding more park features into its geographic information system (GIS) each year, such as playgrounds. To develop a standardized list of park features in each park, the Department is implementing a phased approach to continue adding additional park features into GIS—a time intensive process. GIS will become the master list of parks and park features that will be regularly updated and used for the Park Condition Assessment process.

Target Date for Completion: July 2022

Recommendation #2: PRNS should develop policies surrounding use of Park Condition Assessment scores to strategically address low-scoring parks and features, and utilize allocated funding to make improvements in a timely manner.

Administration’s Response: The Administration agrees with this recommendation.

Green: The Department is developing a work plan to address all parks found to have Park Condition Assessment scores below a 3.0 in the summer 2020 assessment process. The work plan will focus on setting top priorities, identifying funding sources, and scheduling corrective repairs. Work plan progress will be shared across operations and capital project teams to monitor project status. As the Department completes park maintenance standards, it will document this annual work plan development process as a step that must be taken for all low-scoring parks.

Target Date for Completion: June 2021

Recommendation #3: To make full use of the Park Condition Assessment scores, PRNS should revise its Park Condition Assessment methodology to tie scoring to established maintenance standards and determine how to categorize park features to more easily identify the type of follow-up needed.

Administration’s Response: The Administration agrees with this recommendation.

Green: The Department plans to finalize park maintenance standards during the fiscal year 2020-2021. Once completed, the Park Condition Assessment methodology will be restructured to evaluate whether the standards are being met. As each feature will be measured in multiple ways, the Department anticipates it will be able to more easily categorize and expedite improvements in each area.

Target Date for Completion: July 2021

Recommendation #4: To ensure appropriate allocation of capital resources for park improvements in Council Districts and help prioritize capital budgeting, PRNS should:

- a) Develop separate maintenance and capital/infrastructure Park Condition Assessment scores, and**
- b) Use the capital/infrastructure Park Condition Assessment scores in the Construction and Conveyance Tax Fund allocation formula.**

Administration's Response: The Administration agrees with this recommendation.

Yellow: The Department is creating a pilot Park Condition Assessment process that would involve two phases: phase 1 will be structured to assess whether maintenance in parks is meeting established standards for each feature, and phase 2 will be structured to evaluate only the condition of capital infrastructure. Evolving to this two-phase process will allow the Department to strategically plan for improvements and upgrades utilizing various funding sources. The pilot Park Condition Assessment process will be tested for the first time this fall, and the Department expects to make iterative changes, as necessary, before taking this to scale. Due to the timing of the budget process, a fully implemented two phase Park Condition Assessment process will be used in the Construction and Conveyance Tax Fund allocation formula no earlier than the 2022-2023 capital budget development process.

Target Date for Completion: August 2022

Finding #2: PRNS Should Reassess Its Data Collection to Better Inform Decision Making

Recommendation #5: To ensure that data collection efforts adequately meet its needs, PRNS should

- a) Refocus data collection priorities, determine short-term and long-term data collection and data analytics goals, and set clear objectives on achieving those goals,**
- b) Reassess the use of Infor EAM to determine if it meets those needs, and**
- c) Develop an ongoing training program for staff to ensure that data entry is consistent and accurate and meets its business goals.**

Administration's Response: The Administration agrees with this recommendation.

Yellow: ActivateSJ calls for the Department to "Improve data collection, management and analytics to measure and optimize operations and programs," which starts with establishing goals and objectives. The Department plans to finalize park maintenance standards this fiscal year. Once standards are established, the Department will evaluate what data are necessary to achieve,

support and maintain these standards. Once these needs are determined, the Department will assess whether Infor EAM is the best tool or whether other software may be a better fit, cognizant of the fact that the software should also support capital infrastructure lifecycle management. The Department will design a comprehensive training program for data collection software including and annual recertification program to ensure correct staff use.

Target Date for Completion: January 2022

Recommendation # 6: To manage performance and analyze workload, PRNS should develop completion goals for corrective work orders and track performance against those goals.

Administration's Response: The Administration agrees with this recommendation.

Green: The Department currently communicates division-wide performance on time standards for Parks Concerns, but does not have an established target for accountability and continual improvement purposes. The Department will implement a 75 percent completion goal for all corrective work orders that are not health and safety related, and retain a 100 percent completion goal for health and safety work orders. These goals will be included in the park maintenance standards. Monthly status reports on progress towards the goal will be sent to relevant staff.

Target Date for Completion: December 2020

Finding 3: Efficiencies in Resource and Staffing Allocation Can Help Better Prioritize Park Maintenance

Recommendation #7: To ensure that staffing is appropriately and equitably distributed across Park Districts, PRNS should review and realign current staffing based on workload, such as type of park, acreage, park conditions, and other factors as appropriate.

Administration's Response: The Administration agrees with this recommendation.

Yellow: The Department recently reorganized the Parks Division, creating a new unit focused on the Parks Division's Destinations, Events and Sports, including core maintenance teams for those facilities. In reorganizing, the Department redrew park district boundaries and redistributed employees across the remaining park districts, to take a first step towards implementing this audit recommendation.

Once park maintenance standards are established, the Parks Division will realign staffing based on what is needed to best achieve the standards in all parks, factoring in the type of park, acreage, usage, park conditions and other relevant elements. This process will also include an examination of the role that specialized needs-based teams, such as the Parks Rehabilitation Strike Team, Pest Management Team and Turf Renovation Team, can play in assisting heavily

impacted districts in meeting targets. Staff is also discussing the establishment of other needs-based special units, such as a Trails Team or a team that focuses on parks in the core of the City that are often impacted; these new teams would require a budget action to be created without drawing away resources from existing services.

Target Date for Completion: December 2021

Recommendation #8: PRNS should work with the City Attorney's Office to formalize an agreement with the Santa Clara County Sheriff's Office governing the Weekend Work Program, Public Service Program, and other similar donated labor arrangements.

Administration's Response: The Administration agrees with this recommendation.

Green: The Department will work with the City Attorney's Office and Santa Clara County Sheriff's Office to develop a formalized agreement.

Target Date for Completion: June 2021

Recommendation #9: PRNS should develop a formal process to track and reconcile its larger equipment and vehicles and improve internal coordination of vehicle purchases and asset management.

Administration's Response: The Administration agrees with this recommendation.

Green: The Department will establish a fleet committee that will include Parks Managers and representatives from other programs within the Department. This committee will meet monthly to track the Department's vehicle inventory and discuss current issues within fleet, including vehicle purchases and asset management, and will develop a multi-year Department-wide vehicle replacement plan, in coordination with the Public Works Department.

Target Date for Completion: May 2021

Recommendation #10: In order to optimize staff time dedicated to maintenance-related activities, PRNS should:

- a) Consider making more storage units within existing Park Districts available to staff.
- b) Review timing, duration, and frequency of team meetings.

Administration's Response: The Administration agrees with this recommendation.

Green: The Department will:

- a. Pilot the use of storage units located at select park locations within the community and/or use of mobile equipment trailers to determine whether offsite availability of equipment can reduce any travel time currently associated with returning to a corporation yard location to pick up equipment during the course of a workday.
- b. Develop a standardized agenda for team meetings to ensure that all park districts cover necessary items in a timely manner, and evaluate the timing, duration and frequency of team meetings.

Target Date for Completion: May 2021

Recommendation #11: To reduce travel time, PRNS should reassess routes with consideration for traffic peak times, park locations, and staffing.

Administration's Response: The Administration agrees with this recommendation.

Green: There is an unavoidable amount of travel time involved in delivering service when providing park maintenance across a City of 181 square miles with limited corporation yards. The Department is currently testing free web-based mapping applications on park maintenance routes. The Department will also explore a fee-based program that can analyze all Parks Division facilities and optimize routes and travel times, which may also help further redraw park district boundaries for optimal efficiency but requires funding for ongoing use. By exploring these options, the Department is looking to reduce travel time and mileage on each route to yield additional direct service hours for maintaining the park system.

Target Date for Completion: March 2021

Recommendation #12: To refocus staff time toward activities directly related to park maintenance, PRNS should review and set realistic goals around time spent performing administrative tasks, such as staff meetings, work order data entry, and travel.

Administration's Response: The Administration agrees with this recommendation.

Green: The Department intends to evaluate each of the classifications in the Parks Division maintenance series and create targets for each classification for direct service and administrative time. For example, a Senior Maintenance Worker may be evaluated to have a 60/40 split (60 percent direct service and 40 percent administrative time) whereas a Maintenance Assistant may be evaluated to have a 75/25 split. These goals will be based on class specifications and job duties as well as required training and supervision time.

Target Date for Completion: February 2021

Finding 4: PRNS Could Improve Language Access at Some Parks

Recommendation #13: PRNS should assess language access needs for parks in areas with higher concentrations of limited English households and provide information and resources in multiple languages in those areas.

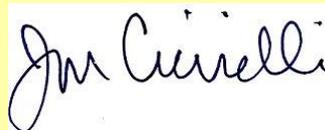
Administration's Response: The Administration agrees with this recommendation.

Yellow: The Department will develop a working group as part of its 2020-2021 work plan to revisit standardized park signage and other communication, such as the Park Concerns hotline. This group will also assess replacing current signage with signage in multiple languages or signage which utilizes iconography, in consultation with the City Attorney's Office, including funding requirements for the project. With a highly diverse community and more than 200 parks, developing and replacing park signs may require a significant investment of resources for full implementation. As funding allows, parks that serve low English-speaking neighborhoods will receive higher priority for replacement.

Target Date for Completion: June 2022

CONCLUSION

The audit report provides recommendations to improve aspects of the City's park maintenance program. By implementing the audit's recommendations, the Department of Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services will be better positioned for long-term success in its stewardship of the City's park system, and a vibrant park system creates opportunities for all residents of San José to live better. The Department would like to extend its gratitude to the City Auditor's Office who dedicated their time to the completion of this audit. It has been a positive experience that yielded opportunities to improve the service the Department provides to the residents of San José.



Jon Cicirelli
Director of Parks,
Recreation and Neighborhood Services

For questions, please contact Avi Yotam, Acting Deputy Director of Parks Division, at (408) 535-3573