



Highlights

Why OCA Did This Study

In accordance with the Office of the City Auditor's Fiscal Year 2017 Audit Work Plan, we conducted a performance audit of the City of San Diego's Park and Recreation Department (PRD). Specifically, we evaluated the efficiency and effectiveness of PRD's grounds maintenance efforts. To achieve this objective, we:

- Assessed whether PRD met its Park Maintenance Standards for work orders created in FY 2016; and
- Evaluated park maintenance operations by assessing PRD's mechanisms for staff deployment of Grounds Maintenance Workers in the Community Parks Divisions and by shadowing park maintenance crews at several park sites.

What OCA Recommends

- PRD should develop and refine maintenance standards for all Citywide park maintenance functions so that they can be tracked in the work order system.
- PRD should continue to regularly assess CMT's performance by analyzing data from its work order system.
- PRD should improve its assessment and monitoring of grounds maintenance outcomes by developing and/or reinstituting additional systematic evaluations that solicit public feedback on park maintenance.
- PRD should incorporate public feedback in its staff deployment decisions within the Community Parks Divisions.

Management agreed to implement all recommendations.

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City of San Diego, Office of the
City Auditor

Performance Audit of the Park and Recreation Department

Instituting a More Systematic and Data-Driven Approach to Assessing Work Order Completion and Staff Deployment Would Strengthen Maintenance Operations



What OCA Found

The City's park and recreation system plays a key role in the quality of life for residents and visitors, supports San Diego's tourism industry, and enhances the City's ability to attract and retain businesses. As the nation's second-largest municipal park system by acreage, it is essential that the Park and Recreation Department (PRD) institute a systematic approach to maintenance operations and staff deployment.

As discussed in [Finding 1](#), we found that PRD does not currently use data from its work order system to comprehensively assess the performance of all of its Citywide Maintenance Team's functions. We also found other areas where potential changes to the system could improve the work order process in general. We recommend that PRD develop or refine work order completion time standards—or, when appropriate, response time standards for assessing work orders—for all Citywide maintenance functions so that PRD can track these standards in its work order system and monitor performance.

As discussed in [Finding 2](#), we found that PRD's mechanisms to assess the effectiveness of grounds maintenance outcomes—which included park maintenance inspections and a customer satisfaction survey—have been discontinued or do not specifically ask survey respondents about the level of satisfaction with park maintenance outcomes. Such feedback can provide guidance on how to more efficiently deploy staff to meet the needs of park users, maintain safe spaces and equipment, and ensure that parks remain aesthetically pleasing. We recommend that PRD develop and/or institute a mechanism to receive structured public feedback and use the results to inform grounds maintenance staffing decisions.

By using a comprehensive, data-driven approach and seeking public feedback, PRD can enhance its ability to identify maintenance trends and evaluate the practicality of its maintenance standards. Moreover, PRD can become better informed on how to best deploy resources—including staff, equipment, and materials—in a way that is more effective.