

Performance Audit

Department of Public Works
BUREAU OF OPERATIONS
PARKS MAINTENANCE DIVISION

Report by the
Office of City Controller

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MICHAEL E. LAMB

CITY CONTROLLER

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November 25, 2015

To the Honorables: Mayor William Peduto and
Members of Pittsburgh City Council:

The Office of City Controller is pleased to present this performance audit of the *Department of Public Works Parks Maintenance* conducted pursuant to the Controller's powers under Section 404(c) of the Pittsburgh Home Rule Charter.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Department of Public Works (DPW), Bureau of Operations, Parks Maintenance Division is responsible for ensuring that all City parks are functional, safe and attractive.

The City has over 2,882 acres of park land including five (5) regional parks: Frick, Schenley, Highland, Riverview and Emerald View. Additionally, 171 non-regional parks which include: 275 various courts consisting of: basketball, tennis, volleyball, street hockey, horseshoe, bocce, and multipurpose courts; 117 fields including baseball, softball, football, soccer, rugby and lacrosse fields; 128 playgrounds; 28 shelters that require permits and 26 shelters that do not.

To maintain all of these parks, DPW parks maintenance is organized into 7 divisions: Eastern (which includes Frick Park), Northeast (which includes Highland Park), Northern (which includes Riverview Park), Schenley (which includes Schenley Park), Southern (which includes part of Emerald View Park), Western (which includes part of Emerald View Park) and State. The State division maintains Commonwealth of Pennsylvania owned Point State Park and various centrally located City owned parks such as Allegheny Commons Park and Market Square Park.

Findings and Recommendations

DPW Parks Maintenance Website

DPW's website provides the public with information of all City parks and park facilities. The website states, "The goals of the Parks Maintenance Divisions are to maintain the beauty, safety and usability of City of Pittsburgh parks".

Finding: Having the parks listed by direction (north, south, east and west) with addresses and what is available at each facility is a good resource for the public to locate parks and park facilities near their homes.

Finding: Some of the checked legend markings for the parks on the website are wrong.

DPW Park Lists

Finding: A comparison of park facility names that DPW management provided the auditors and the Parks Maintenance Divisions list on the webpage contain many discrepancies.

Finding: No definitions exist to explain the difference between the terms “Parklet”, “Playground”, “Field”, and “Park”.

Recommendation: DPW should be consistent in all its lists and make sure the facility name is accurate in all their documents and webpages. All the names should be the same and correctly spelled. Parks that have been eliminated should be removed. A definition should be established to differentiate the various types of park facilities and these definitions added to any park lists or documentation.

Park Divisions/Facilities

DPW Park Maintenance is organized into 7 divisions and is responsible for maintaining lawns and green spaces, play equipment, fields, shelters etc. for parks, parklets, playgrounds, senior centers and certain schools.

Finding: The auditors determined that there are 174 Park facilities, five more than what is on the DPW webpage. However 4 parks are listed individually but are within another park.

Parks Maintenance Standards and Procedures

The *Standards and Procedures: Parks Facility Maintenance Programs (S&P) Manual*, referred to in the 2009 audit, is still used as a standard for practice for court, turf, field, park, playground, shelter and trail maintenance. It explains in detail how to maintain these areas, how to fix areas that are not meeting the guidelines, how long tasks should take to complete, the frequency in which tasks should be completed and when certain areas are closed/open for the season. This manual was last updated in January of 2004 and revisions could be made as necessary.

Finding: The Auditors were told that no revisions were made after 2004 to *The Standards and Procedures: Parks Facility Maintenance Programs Manual*.

Finding: The *S&P Manual* has not been updated to reflect actual practices and procedures.

Recommendation: The *S&P Manual* needs updated to reflect actual practices and procedures as well as to include new added maintenance tasks and to ensure repairs are made to the manufactures latest standards. Since procedures and maintenance materials change overtime, it is important that the staff have a centralized and accurate resource for consultation for current and future employees.

Finding: There are no standards and procedures for dealing with cracks for the various court surfaces.

Recommendation: DPW Parks Administration needs to add the care and maintenance of cracks in court surfaces to the *S&P Manual*. If the procedure consists of merely contacting the city contractor for inspection, that should be include in the *S & P Manual*.

Daily Divisional Documentation

A written driver's log is used by employees to document their daily assignments, the equipment used and the time each assignment was completed.

Finding: Completing parks maintenance division daily paper work is cumbersome and time consuming. Additionally, troubleshooting procedures of the software program are not being performed regularly, decreasing its efficiency.

Recommendation: DPW park administration should contact the Innovation and Performance Department (I&P) to update the software program. The use of laptops and iPads would be more convenient. Today's technology provides software where speech is translated into the written word. Such a system should be explored for all parks maintenance staff. (It should be noted that DPW has already implemented this recommendation.)

Allegheny Regional Asset District (ARAD) Funding

ARAD gives the City money for two kinds of funding: capital and operational. Over the last 5 years, ARAD has given the City's regional parks between \$810,113 and \$920,144 in capital funding. The capital spending over the last 5 years has gone to: resurfacing, wall repair, step repair, fence repair, sidewalk repair, road repair, field repair, playground renovations, turf equipment and park equipment. The funding amount has increased every year over the last 5 years that were reviewed.

Evaluating and Rating Park Facilities

The auditors developed a checklist and a rating scale to evaluate park facilities in a sample of 32 parks. Evaluated were: playground equipment, safety surface, park accessibility, court conditions (basketball, tennis/multi and hockey), field conditions (baseball, football and soccer), graffiti, shelter conditions and other park conditions. Other park conditions include seating, drinking fountains, lighting, trash receptacles, fencing, restrooms/port-a-johns, litter and

outdoor furniture, and park aesthetics. The rating scale was “1” for good; “2” for fair and “3” for poor.

The audit discusses conditions of several of the facilities visited. Some of the park evaluation highlights from the sample include:

- Frick Park Braddock Playground’s safety surface was in poor condition;
- Frick Park Blue Slide Playground’s basketball courts were in poor condition;
- 57th Street Park had the worst playground;
- Jefferson Playground’s safety surface was old/worn with holes/mold and needed replaced;
- Gardner Field was overgrown;
- Brighton Heights Park’s safety surface was in poor condition;
- Riverview Park’s playground equipment was in poor condition;
- Fairywood Playground was missing major playground equipment;
- Stratmore Parklet’s safety surface was in poor condition;
- Armstrong Playground’s safety surface and field were in poor condition;
- McBride Park’s field and shelter were in poor condition;
- Quarry Field’s safety surface was in poor condition;
- Burgwin Playground had poor field, tennis/basketball courts and play area conditions;
- Martin Luther King Field was the worst field in the sample;
- Allegheny Commons East had poor playground equipment and safety surfaces;
- Allegheny Commons West had poor tennis courts, and
- West Penn Park had graffiti everywhere and a walking and jogging track was in need of repair. Money and equipment availability to repair the track were at issue.

Recommendation: DPW parks administration should look into renting the necessary equipment to restore the West Penn Park track or investigate if the County has the necessary equipment to do the job and borrow it. This way the investment would be minimal to improve the track for the neighborhood.

Safety Surfaces

There are three different safety surfaces used throughout City parks: wood chips (engineered wood fiber), rubberized sheet on foam, poured-in-place, and rubber tiles. Research showed that of all the safety services wood chips proved the most ineffective.

Recommendation: Due to the many concerns with wood chips, parks in our sample that contain them should be replaced immediately. All other parks outside of our sample should be evaluated and safety surfaces should be replaced if they contain wood chips.

Recommendation: DPW parks maintenance should continue monitoring safety service flooring at all playgrounds and complete any repair immediately after it is observed. The flooring manufacturer should be consulted for their latest repair technologies.

Recommendation: Rubber tiles should be routinely cleaned according to the protocol provided by the manufacture to avoid mold and bacteria growth. They should also be routinely evaluated and maintained to preserve the life of the floor.

Recommendation: DPW park maintenance administration should look into whether the different safety surface manufactures offer a warranty and follow up on that warranty when there is a problem with their product. Manufactures guidelines to fix and maintain the surfaces should be followed.

Recommendation: DPW park maintenance administration needs to repair the playground safety surfaces with large gaps, shrinkage, or cracking material. The play surfaces that were rated “poor” by the auditors due to inadequate depth/worn surfaces, insufficient safety surfaces, should be replaced.

Finding: DPW has investigated and researched the various types of safety surfaces for accessibility, durability, safety level and cost. DPW parks administration has found that rubber tile surfaces are the most durable, safest and cost effective.

Park Accessibility

Curb cuts, walkways and driveways are needed to help individuals with wheelchairs or strollers access specific areas of a park. Without these, access to the parks can be exceptionally difficult.

Finding: Some parks do not have curb cuts and/or walkways/driveways for wheelchairs and strollers’ to access specific areas of the park. Additionally, some parks are blocked by some type of barricade.

Recommendation: DPW parks maintenance management should reevaluate all park entrances and exits to make all parks accessible to everyone. Any park without a wheelchair or stroller friendly entrance or exit should have one created. All parks should be in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Court Pavement Conditions

Finding: According to on line research the cost to resurface a court, whether asphalt or concrete, can be up to \$25,000.

Recommendation: Park maintenance must perform routine maintenance on all courts according to the manufacturers’ recommendations and when needed should be resurfaced. Asphalt courts can last 10-12 years and if well maintained, concrete (hard courts) could last even longer.

Field and Shelter Conditions

Of the fields and shelters the auditors visited, 2, Martin Luther King Field located in the Hill District and McBride Park Shelter in Lincoln Place, are in the worst condition. Both the field and shelter are in secluded areas.

The City installed a new large section of fencing at MLK Field even though the field is not used. This newly installed fence is not locked and allows for misuse of this facility.

Recommendation: DPW parks maintenance administration should assess and prioritize the park facilities that require maintenance work. Money should not be invested in a fence in a field that is not being used.

Finding: Secluded fields and shelters in parks are problems for the dumping of trash and large debris and/or illegal activity.

Recommendation: DPW parks maintenance should have all trash and debris removed from MLK Field and McBride Shelter. Some kind of barrier should be placed at the entrance of MLK Field, and near McBride Shelter preventing motor vehicles from gaining access to dump debris and trash or have dog fights. The fence installed at MLK field should be locked when not in use to prevent unauthorized activities. Additionally, numerous “no dumping” signs should be placed in both locations. (Note: McBride shelter has been closed since 2014 due to fire damage. It is unknown if the shelter will ever be re-opened.)

Recommendation: DPW parks maintenance administration should try and get more local groups to ‘adopt’ courts, fields, playground etc. in their neighborhoods. These public/private partnerships can work with the City to clean their area(s) and keep division maintenance staff informed about an areas condition. The group can even help raise money to maintain the court, field, playground, etc., to facilitate improvements.

Graffiti

Graffiti was found in approximately one third of the sample parks. Offensive, vulgar graffiti was mostly spray painted on play equipment or buildings.

Recommendation: DPW parks maintenance administration should find a way to remove the graffiti rather than painting or spraying over top of the existing graffiti. It will increase the aesthetics of the park and make it less obvious that graffiti had been on the structure.

Recommendation: DPW parks maintenance administration needs to explore other options for graffiti removal. Products should be tested to see if they provide a more efficient means of removing graffiti.

The City of Pittsburgh has a Graffiti Trust Fund (GTF) that is administered through the Public Safety Department. During the audit scope years, 2013 and 2014, the trust fund had no expenditures. As of July 30, 2015 the current GTF balance is \$18,801.60 with no withdrawals from the account.

Recommendation: City administrators should allow DPW administration to utilize the Graffiti Trust Fund monies for graffiti prevention and removal.

Drinking Fountains

The auditors found several fountains that were broken, not working or overflowing.

Recommendation: Each DPW parks maintenance division should regularly check the drinking fountains and notify DPW's Facilities Division of the malfunctioning ones immediately. Water is one of the most precious natural resources and necessary for all life. Fixing fountains should be a top priority for the health and welfare of the public and flooding should be prevented to help with water conservation.

Litter

Finding: Manchester Park in the auditors' sample did not have any trash receptacles.

Recommendation: DPW parks administration should make sure that every park facility has at least two trash receptacles. In larger and/or busier parks, and parks with multiple fields and/or courts, a trash receptacle and a recycling bin should be within walking distance or along the path of the entrance/exit.

Furniture

Concerns with the furniture included: graffiti, broken pieces, damage, and/or deterioration as well as several benches and tables needing repainted.

Recommendation: DPW parks management should conduct an evaluation of all park benches and tables at the end of the season. All necessary repairs and painting should be done yearly during the off season. Any furniture that can't be repaired should be removed and recycled.

Division Assignments

McBride Park is unique because of its isolated location, in the southern part of the City's Lincoln Place neighborhood.

Finding: McBride Park, currently maintained by the Southern Division is located closer to the Schenley Division.

Recommendation: DPW parks administration should reassign McBride Park to the Schenley Division. Schenley Division is closer to McBride Park than the Southern Division. The closer proximity of the Schenley Division will make it more convenient, saving travel time, to maintain this park.

Overall Park Ratings

Finding: Of the parks and corresponding facilities that the auditors visited, 7 or 17.5% received a poor rating, 30 or 75% received a fair rating, and 3 or 7.5% received a good rating; thirty-three (33) out of 40 or 82.5% of the park facilities were in good or fair condition.

Regional Park Conditions

In 2014 over 6 million dollars was given to the City in ARAD money for regional parks. This dedicated money to the regional parks makes a quantifiable difference.

Finding: The ARAD money given the City makes the regional parks among the best kept parks in the City yet the auditors did find some areas of concern in each regional park's infrastructure.

An overall concern for all the regional parks was that there was not enough informational signage showing the location of the playgrounds, trails, shelters, swimming pool, fields, courts and egresses/ingresses. The audit also lists other specific concerns for individual regional parks.

Recommendation: DPW parks maintenance administration should immediately fix the iron guard rail that lines the Grandview overlook. It needs to be repaired or replaced in several sections. Also no bathroom facilities are available nearby. Carson St on the City's South Side currently has pay toilets in the street. DPW administration should explore adding something similar for Grandview overlook in Mt. Washington. A map of both the overlook and scenic view would be helpful to people unfamiliar with the area and aid in understanding where to go and what they are seeing.

Overall Park Ratings without Regional Parks

Finding: Without the regional parks in the overall ratings, the City of Pittsburgh Park Ratings changed; the Poor Condition Ratings increased to 27%; Fair Ratings fell to 69%, and Good Ratings fell to 4%.

Recommendation: DPW parks maintenance management should meet with City administrators and discuss alternative means for funding parks; perhaps utilizing public/private partnerships with neighborhood groups (as previously suggested). The condition of the regional parks proves that when money is available the City can keep and maintain its parks in better overall condition.

311 Non-Emergency Response System

City residents can report any non-emergency concern, complaint or comment by phone or submit a form online on the City's website. The auditors requested a 311 log of all the park-related complaints for the years 2013 and 2014.

Finding: The information log provided by 311 was incomplete.

Finding: The 311 online complaint system does not have a "parks concern/comments" option in the drop down list or an area where a park name could be entered. This makes it difficult for the 311 staff to filter parks complaints for the purpose of analysis.

Recommendation: DPW parks maintenance should contact the Innovation and Performance Department (I&P) and request that they design a more detailed 311 complaint form so that parks complaints and response time can be analyzed.

Response Test

The auditors reported two separate park maintenance complaints at different times of the year through the online 311 Submission Form.

Finding: The parks maintenance divisions seemed to respond quickly to a simple complaint e.g. graffiti. However the more complicated complaint (new safety surface) was not resolved and no response was ever received from parks maintenance.

Recommendation: DPW parks maintenance should require every division foreman to always respond back to any complaint, even if the answer to the complaint is that "the City can't do this at this time" or "it is not needed". If a citizen feels strongly enough to engage with local government, an acknowledgement and/or resolution from the appropriate division should be made.

We are pleased that the Department of Public Works Parks Maintenance agrees with our recommendations and have begun the process of implementing them.

Sincerely,



Michael E. Lamb
City Controller

INTRODUCTION

This performance audit of the Department of Public Works (DPW) Parks Maintenance Division was conducted pursuant to Section 404(c) of the Pittsburgh Home Rule Charter. Previous performance audits of parks maintenance were released in 2009 and 2003. This audit focuses on the current conditions of City-wide parks and park facilities such as: shelters, playgrounds, ball fields and ball courts, compliance with *Parks Maintenance Standards and Procedures Manual*, and compliance with previous audit recommendations.

OVERVIEW

The Department of Public Works (DPW), Bureau of Operations, Parks Maintenance Division is responsible for ensuring that all City parks are functional, safe and attractive.

The City has over 2,882 acres of park land including five (5) regional parks: Frick, Schenley, Highland, Riverview and Emerald View, along with various sized parks. The regional parks cover a total of 1,805 acres.

DPW is responsible for the maintenance of 171 parks which include: 275 various courts consisting of: basketball, tennis, volleyball, street hockey, horseshoe, bocce, and multipurpose courts; 117 fields including baseball, softball, football, soccer, rugby and lacrosse fields; 128 playgrounds; 28 shelters that require permits and 26 shelters that do not.

A departmental reorganization occurred in 1992 that transferred all City park maintenance responsibilities from the Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) to the Department of Public Works (DPW). DPW is responsible for maintaining all City outdoor park facilities and all senior center buildings, including snow and ice removal, grass cutting and garbage removal. DPR remains responsible for administering all of the many City-wide recreational programs and the senior programs at each senior center.

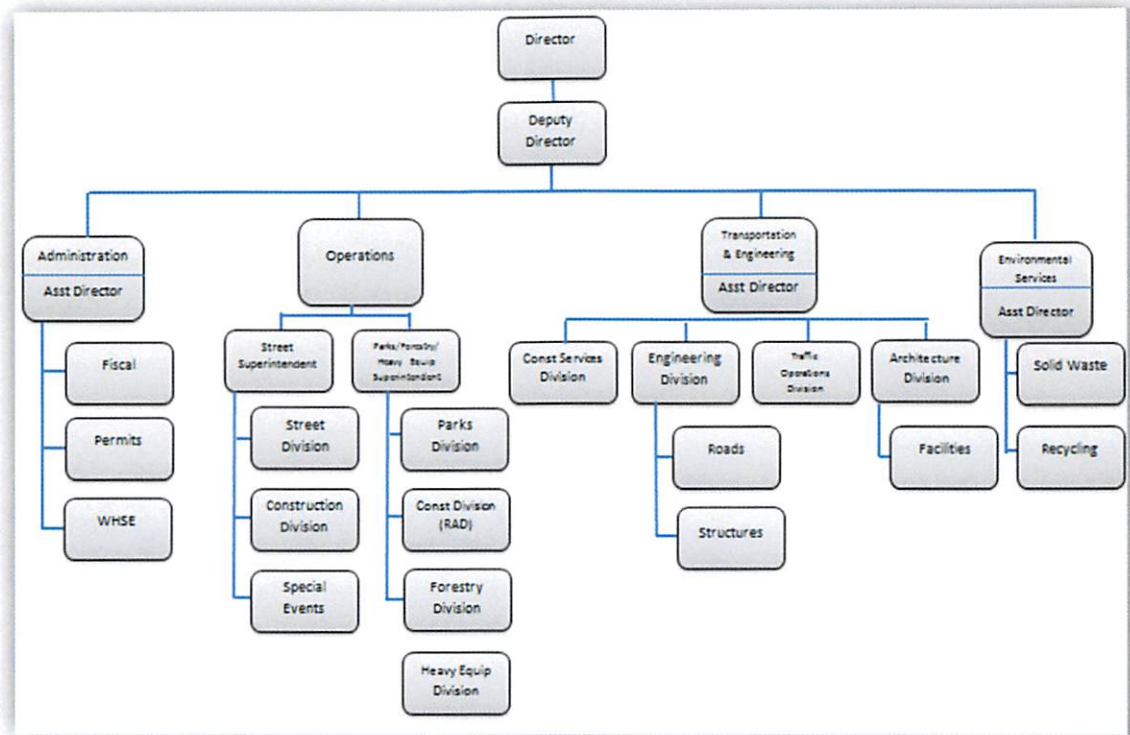
DPW Parks Maintenance

Staffing

The organization flow chart below shows that the Director and Deputy Director oversee: Administration, Operation, Transportation & Engineering and Environmental Services. The Parks Maintenance division is in Operations under Parks/Forestry/Heavy Equipment Superintendent.

Parks Maintenance employs: 7 Foremen, 1 Construction Foreman, 1 Heavy Equipment Operator, 1 General Laborer, 83 Laborers, 7 Laborers- A.N. (As Needed - Seasonal), 6 Skilled Laborers, 1 Cement Finisher, 1 Carpenter, 1 Brick Layer, 1 Stationary Engineer, 13 Tractor Operators, 1 Truck Driver.

Parks Maintenance Operational Flowchart



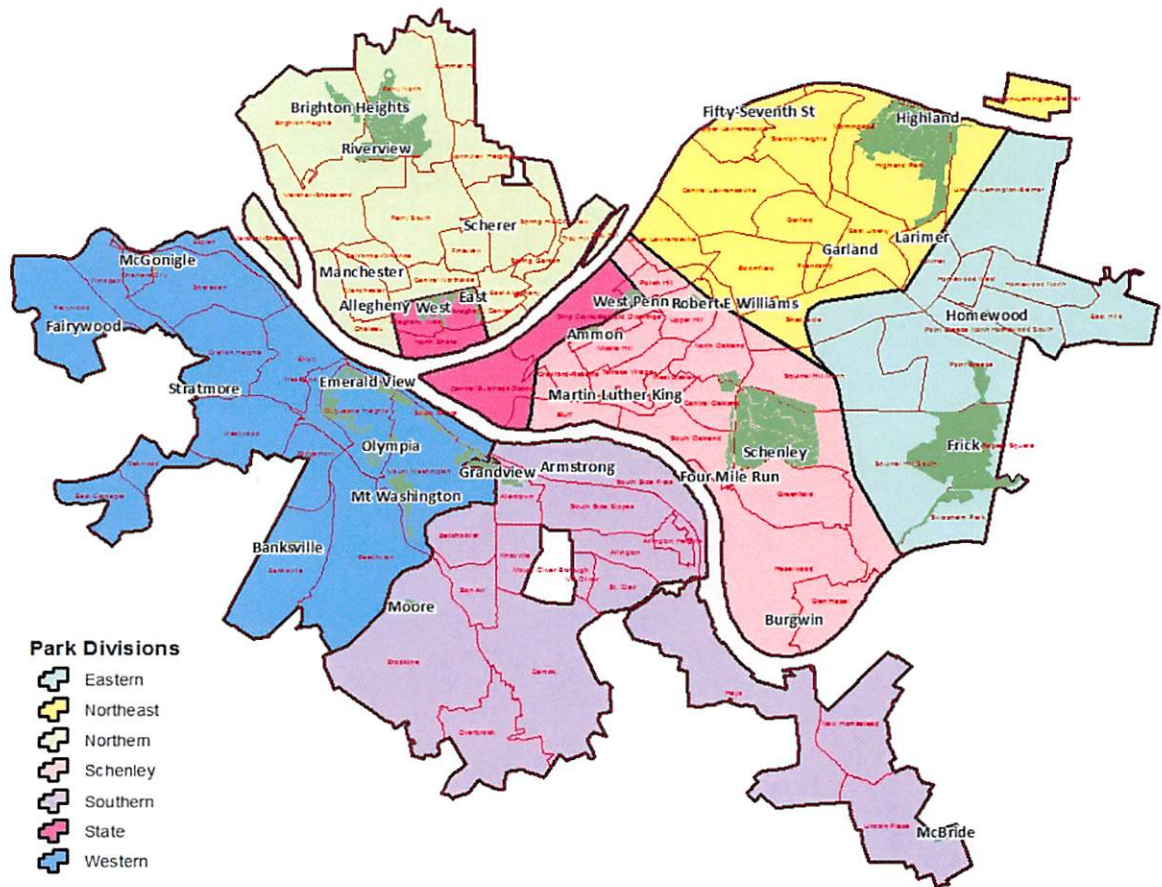
Maintenance Divisions

DPW parks maintenance is organized into 7 divisions: Eastern (which includes Frick Park), Northeast (which includes Highland Park), Northern (which includes Riverview Park), Schenley (which includes Schenley Park), Southern (which includes part of Emerald View Park), Western (which includes part of Emerald View Park) and State. The State division maintains Commonwealth of Pennsylvania owned Point State Park and various centrally located City owned parks such as Allegheny Commons Park and Market Square Park.

According to DPW administration, the City maintains the State owned Point State Park as part of a 1974 agreement that has since been amended. The City does receive money from the State for maintaining Point State Park. According to the DPW Superintendent the City receives an estimated \$272,000 a year from the State.

DPW parks maintenance divisions are responsible for the following: 18 Eastern Division facilities, 22 Northeast Division, 29 Northern, 34 Western, 30 Southern, 25 Schenley and 13 in the State Division.

The following map shows the 7 park maintenance divisions and the territory for which they are responsible. Some of the parks that the auditors visited are presented in the larger bold font.



Funding Sources

Parks Maintenance, as part of DPW, does not have a separate budget. The entire budget for DPW in 2014 was \$19,253,029; of that, salaries and wages were \$15,515,218.

Allegheny Regional Asset District (ARAD) Money

The Pennsylvania Legislature passed an act on December 22, 1993 that provided Allegheny Regional Asset District (ARAD) grants from ½ of the proceeds of the 1% Allegheny County Sales and Use Tax. ARAD grants are distributed to parks and sports facilities, libraries and civil, cultural and recreational entities. (The other ½ of the proceeds are distributed between the County and other municipal governments based on a distressed community formula. These municipal funds are distributed by the State.)

Over the last 21 years, Allegheny County residents and visitors have contributed to a nearly \$3.2 billion investment in the Pittsburgh region. Only regional parks are eligible for ARAD funding.

OBJECTIVES

1. To identify the accuracy of the park website and information provided to the public.
2. To assess the maintenance conditions of City-wide park facilities based on an observation rubric.
3. To identify the park facilities that have safety issues and concerns.
4. To assess the five regional parks and ARAD funding.
5. To evaluate response time to park complaints via the City's 311 System.
6. To make recommendations for improvement.

SCOPE

The scope of this performance audit is City-wide Park maintenance inspections for playgrounds, courts, shelters and fields during the months of September through November 2014. Two complaints filed by the Auditors through the City's 311 System on September 24, 2014 and February 27, 2015 were analyzed.

METHODOLOGY

The auditors met with the DPW Director, Assistant Director of Administration and Superintendent of Parks to discuss current parks maintenance procedures and programs.

The auditors reviewed the City Controller's 2009 Department of Public Works Parks Maintenance Performance Audit, DPW's *Standards and Procedures: Park Facility Maintenance Programs* and the *Task and Frequency Schedule* provided by DPW's administration.

The 2014 & 2015 City's Operating Budget for Parks Maintenance was reviewed along with the DPW's Parks website. Internet research was conducted for audit informational tools and guides. Safety surface research came from a combination of websites including: *The United States Access Board*, *The National Center on Disability* and *EcoGreen Environmental, LLC*.

A list of parks and recreational facilities with addresses was obtained from DPW's Parks website. This was a list of 169 facilities which were divided by geographic location within the City: North, South, East and West. A random 20% sample was selected that yielded 33 facilities to visit and evaluate. In addition, because of their high usage, all 5 regional parks were added to the sample for a total of 38.

Two parks were divided; one because it had very different conditions between its east and west sections and the second because of the different conditions between its playgrounds. As a result Allegheny Commons Park was separated into West and East sections in the State Division and Frick Park separated into Blue Slide Playground and Braddock Playground in the Eastern Division, increasing the sample size from 38 to 40.

It should be noted that as a result of this audit DPW Parks Maintenance reassessed the number of park and recreation facilities and provided a new list on March 27, 2015. This list increased the number of parks by 2 for a total of 171.

A checklist and a rating scale were developed to evaluate the following: playground equipment, safety surface, park accessibility, court conditions, field conditions, graffiti, drinking fountains, lighting, restrooms/porta johns, trash/litter and outdoor furniture. Photos of each facility were taken to document conditions. A rating system of good, fair and poor were used for the overall conditions in each of the major areas.

The auditors interviewed the foremen in each division to discuss the division's territories, procedures, work duties/employees, concerns and problems. One of the foremen could not meet in person and a telephone interview was conducted for information about his division.

A test of the efficiency and effectiveness of Parks Maintenance response to complaints made through the City of Pittsburgh's 311 System was performed on September 24, 2014 and February 27, 2015. Two separate complaints about park issues were traced to determine response and resolution times.

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

DPW Parks Maintenance Website

DPW's website provides the public with information of all City parks and park facilities. The website states, "The goals of the Parks Maintenance Divisions are to maintain the beauty, safety and usability of City of Pittsburgh parks". There are 7 divisions responsible for parks maintenance: Northeast, Northern, Southern, Eastern, Schenley, Western and State.

The website includes a Parks and Recreational Facilities List which lists the location of the parks and recreational facilities by direction; north, south, east or west. It also contains each park's address, and a legend with a checklist that shows what is available at each park and park facility. The legend is: RC - Recreation/Senior Center, PA - Play Area, SP - Swimming Pool, TC - Tennis Court, BC - Basketball Court, BF - Ballfield, and HC - Hockey Court.

Finding: Having the parks listed by direction (north, south, east and west) with addresses and what is available at each facility is a good resource for the public to locate parks and park facilities near their homes.

Finding: Some of the checked legend markings for the parks on the website are inconsistent.

One example showing discrepancies is Bigbee Field. On the website Bigbee Field is checked as a ball field. It is not being utilized as a ball field but rather a green space used as an unofficial dog park. It is not being used for organized sports.

DPW Parks Lists

The auditors requested a complete list of all parks and park facilities that the divisions maintain in order to select a parks sample for auditor inspection. The first list DPW Park Maintenance Management provided did not contain the park addresses, only the name of the park facility and its division. The auditors found addresses to the parks on the DPW webpage. Both lists contained 169 entries. Later the auditors were provided an updated list of parks with a total of 174 entries.

A comparison of the most recent list provided by management (3/27/15) and the list found on the webpage are very different (4/27/15). The webpage list contains 3 parks/fields that no longer exist and 3 parks that are closed. The webpage list is missing 14 parks found on the management's current list and 7 parks on the webpage's list could not be found on management's list.

Some parks not listed on the webpage are: Faison School, Morrow Triangle Park, Obama High School formally Peabody High School, Brighton Heights Senior Center and Garvin Field. Crescent School, Flynn Parklet, Kings Estate, Quarry Field and Revenue Parklet are parks listed on the webpage but not on the DPW management's list.

Finding: A comparison of park facility names that DPW management provided and the Parks Maintenance Divisions list on the webpage contain many discrepancies.

Additional Problems

DPW Parks Maintenance website as well as the list issued to the auditors seem to use the terms “Parklet”, “Playground”, “Field”, and “Park” interchangeably. The webpage lists Homewood Playground, but the list provided to the auditors has Homewood Park; the webpage has Blair, Bloomfield and Dinan as playgrounds and the auditor’s list has them all as parks. Joe Natoli Field on the webpage is Joe Natoli Park on the auditor’s list. In one instance Beechview Monument on the webpage is listed as Beechview Senior Center on the auditor’s list.

Conversations with division foreman did not explain the difference between the terms “parklet”, “playground”, and “park.” To the Auditors, a parklet is a small area with only a swing set; a park should be larger area with swing sets, trails, tennis courts etc. With facility names being used interchangeably it is difficult to determine if both lists contain the same facility and what recreational uses are offered at each facility.

Finding: No definitions exist to explain the difference between the terms “Parklet”, “Playground”, “Field”, and “Park”.

Another problem exists when parks names are changed or inconsistent. Shaler Parklet is now known as Eileen McCoy Playground and McGonigle Park is spelled differently on each list; it should be McGunnege Park as the park was named after George McGunnege. Revenue Parklet’s name has been changed to Rockland Ridge Park and it has not been reflected on one of the lists.

RECOMMENDATION NO. 1

DPW should be consistent in all its lists and make sure the facility name is accurate in all their documents and webpages. All the names should be the same and correctly spelled. Parks that have been eliminated should be removed. A definition should be established to differentiate the various types of park facilities and these definitions added to any park lists or documentation.

Park Divisions

DPW Park Maintenance has 7 divisions and is responsible for maintaining lawns and green spaces, play equipment, fields, shelters etc. for parks, parklets, playgrounds, senior centers and certain schools. Table 1 contains all DPW Park Divisions and what facilities each division maintains from the last list the auditors received from DPW administration which contained 174 facilities.

In compiling Table 1 the Auditors confirmed that every park selected in their sample to visit was on managements list.

Finding: Table 1 contains 174 Park facilities, five more than what is on the DPW webpage. However, 4 parks are listed individually but are within another park. These parks are marked with an asterisk (*).

In Table 1 the 7 parks that make up Emerald View Park (EVP) are listed individually under the division responsible for its maintenance. Two (2) divisions share the responsibility of maintaining Emerald View Park.

TABLE 1
Facilities Maintained by DPW Park Maintenance by Division

Eastern Division	Northeast Division	Northern Division	Western Division	Southern Division	Schenley Division	State Division
Baxter Park	Arsenal Park	Alpine Park	Able Long Park	Arlington Gym	Albert "Turk" Graham Park	Alcoa Park
Chadwick Park	Bloomfield Park	Brighton Heights Park	Alton Park	Arlington Park	Ammon Park	Allegheny Commons Park
Dallas Park	Dinan Park	Brighton Hts Senior Ctr.	Banksville Park	Armstrong Park	Blair St Park	Allegheny Landing Park
Davis Park	Duncan Park	Catalano Park	Banksville School Park	Bon Air Park	Boundary St Park	Allegheny Riverfront Park
East Hills Park	East Liberty Park	Cowley Park	Beechwood Senior Center	Brookline Memorial Field	Bud Hammer Park	Buhl Community Pk at Allegheny Sq.
Faison School Park	Enright Park	Cross & Strauss Park	Chartiers Park	Carmalt School	Burgwin Park	Denny Park
Frick Park	Fifty-Seventh Street Park	Fineview Park	Crafton Heights Park	Carrick Farmers Market	Cliffside Park	Frank Curto Park
Homewood North Park	Fort Pitt Park	Fowler Park	Dunbar Park	Cobden Street Park	Four Mile Run Park	Market Square Park
Homewood Park	Friendship Park	Gardner Park	East Carnegie Park	Devlin Park	Frazier Park	Mellon Square Park
Homewood Senior Citizens Ctr	Garland Park	Garvin Field	Emerald View Park (EVP) - Mccoy Park	Eleanor Street	Gladstone Park	Northshore Riverfront Park
Liberty School	Heths Park	Horace Mann School Field	EVP- Grandview Overlook	Emerald View Park- Bigbee Field	Granville Park	Point State Park
Linden School	Highland Park	Jefferson Pk	EVP- Mt Washington Park	EVP- Grandview Park	Hazelwood Senior Center	Thomas Park
Mellon Park	Flynn Parklet* (Highland Park)	Legion Memorial Pk	EVP- Olympia Park	Hays Park	Herron Hill Tennis Courts	West Penn Park

TABLE 1 (continued)
Facilities Maintained by DPW Park Maintenance by Division

Eastern Division	Northeast Division	Northern Division	Western Division	Southern Division	Schenley Division	State Division
Paulson Park	Kings Estate * (Highland Park)	Leister St Park	EVP- Ream Park	Leolyn Park	Kennard Park	
Sterrett School	Joe Natoli Park	Lookout Street Park	Esplen Park	Lincoln Place Park	Lewis Park	
Swisshelm Park	Leslie Park	Manchester Park	Fairywood Park	McBride Park	Magee Park	
Westinghouse Park	Kite Hill Park	Manchester School Park	Herschel Park	McKinley Park	Lawn & Ophelia Park	
Wightman Park	Larimer Park	Marmaduke Park	Lodge Pontenza Sen Center	Monongahela Park	Martin Luther King Park	
	McCandless Park	Marshall-California Pk	McGunnegle Park	Moore Park	Niagara Park	
	Morrow Park	McKnight Park	Mutual Park	Ormsby Park	Robert E Williams Park	
	Nelson Mandela Peace Park	Riverview Park	Oakwood Park	Phillip Murray Park	Saline St Park	
	Osceola Park	Scherer Park	Pauline Park	Phillips Park	Schenley Park	
	Obama School	Spring Garden Park	Sheradan Park	Roland Lockridge Park	Shalane's Play Yard Park	
	Sullivan Park	Spring Garden Sch	Sheradan Sen Center	Southside Park	Tustin Park	
		Spring Hill Park	Shiloh Street Park	Bandi Schaum Field* (Southside Park)	Vincennes Park	
		Troy Hill Citizen's Park	Stratmore Park	Quarry Field* (Southside Park)		
		Washburn Square Park	Townsend Park	Southside Market House		
		Woods Run Park	Tropical Park	Southside Riverfront Park		
		Young Park	Tuxedo Street Skate Park	Volunteers Park		
			Vanucci Park	Warrington Park		
			Wabash Park	Winters Park		
			West End Park			
			West End-Elliot Overlook Pk			
			Westwood School			

Source: DPW Parks Maintenance Webpage and DPW Administration

Parks Maintenance Staffing

Each parks maintenance division foreman assigns staff according to the priority of daily tasks. According to the division foremen, examples of priority tasks are playground equipment safety needs, grass cutting/leaf removal and trash pick-up. Shelter rentals and special park events also play an important role in assigning staff because these activities generate revenue for the City. All division foremen complete internal daily reports for tracking personnel time and equipment usage that are then forwarded to division clerks for various data reporting purposes.

Staff Tasks

DPW's *Standards and Procedures: Park Facility Maintenance Programs (S&P) Manual* requires monthly inspections of playgrounds to be performed by all Divisions. This includes checking playground surfaces, equipment safety, court conditions, field conditions and shelter conditions. Other concerns such as graffiti, lighting problems and furniture quality are also evaluated. Also the City's 311 system reports problems or issues to division foremen that need to be addressed and resolved.

During the seasonal months, baseball fields are dragged weekly and trash is picked up daily or as needed. Picnic shelters are also maintained according to the seasonal rental schedules with trash pick-up a priority. May through October weekends are when most picnic shelters are rented. Grass cutting and/or leaf removal is performed as needed to keep parks groomed and appealing.

Parks Maintenance Standards and Procedures

The *Standards and Procedures: Parks Facility Maintenance Programs (S&P) Manual*, referred to in the 2009 audit, is still used as a standard for practice for court, turf, field, park, playground, shelter and trail maintenance. It explains in detail how to maintain these areas, how to fix areas that are not meeting the guidelines, how long tasks should take to complete, the frequency in which tasks should be completed and when certain areas are closed/open for the season. This manual was last updated in January of 2004 and revisions could be made as necessary.

Finding: The Auditors were told that no revisions were made after 2004 to *The Standards and Procedures: Parks Facility Maintenance Programs Manual*.

The following is an example from the *S&P Manual* showing the specificity of the document. This example concerns lighting.

Lights should be energized on or about April 15th of each year (effective date of permits) and turned off November 30th. If permits end before November 30th, lights are to be shut off. When the lights are shut down for the season, an inventory

of problems should be documented and submitted to the electrical contractor under contract with the City of Pittsburgh. The contractor can work on the problems over the winter, weather permitting, so the fields are fully functional when the permits begin in April. Other repairs through the season can be accomplished as long as necessary funds are available.

DPW's *S&P Manual* is used as a reference for completing maintenance tasks. It is expected that Foremen thoroughly understand the ways to complete tasks that are most efficient. They then must pass down these standardized practices to their staff. Priorities can be situational; as work depends on situational factors such as weather, park usage and/or staffing. However, the Foremen are trained to have their staff complete tasks in an order that is most productive.

The *S&P Manual* also includes maintenance plans for weed control, snow and ice control and trail and turf. The document lists "desired output" for completing each maintenance task. For example, it should take 5 minutes for every 1000 sq. ft. to blow leaves with a hand blower and 30 minutes to clean one restroom. However, several of the Foremen interviewed agreed that this time is flexible.

Many foremen agree that the *S&P* is outdated because specifics listed in the guide conflict with current practices due to policy and procedure changes. In 2009 the *City Controller's Parks Maintenance Audit* recommended that the *S&P* be updated.

Finding: The *S&P Manual* has not been updated to reflect actual practices and procedures.

RECOMMENDATION NO. 2:

The *S&P Manual* needs updated to reflect actual practices and procedures as well as to include new added maintenance tasks and to ensure repairs are made to the manufactures latest standards. Since procedures and maintenance materials change overtime, it is important that the staff have a centralized and accurate resource for consultation for current and future employees.

Missing Information

The auditors discovered that information was missing in the *S&P Manual* for certain tasks.

Finding: There are no standards and procedures for dealing with cracks for the various court surfaces.

RECOMMENDATION NO. 3:

DPW Parks Administration needs to add the care and maintenance of cracks in court surfaces to the *S&P Manual*. If the procedure consists of merely contacting the city contractor for inspection, that should be include in the *S & P Manual*.

Divisional Daily Documentation

A written driver's log is used by employees to document their daily assignments, the equipment used and the time each assignment was completed. At the end of each day their hand written log is submitted to their respective foreman who transfers this information into the Asset Management System (AMS or Foreman System). Some foremen have a secretary assigned to perform this task.

According to divisional staff, the daily paper work requires a lot of time to complete in DPW's software. Issues with the various codes prevent accurate and timely completion. For example, one park has 7 play areas that get cleaned daily, but the software is only coded for 6. On average, it is estimated that each foreman spends two hours a day on paperwork. Some foremen forward the paperwork to the division secretary, but others have to enter the information themselves.

Finding: Completing parks maintenance division daily paper work is cumbersome and time consuming. Additionally, troubleshooting procedures of the software program are not being performed regularly, decreasing its efficiency.

RECOMMENDATION NO. 4:

DPW park administration should contact the Innovation and Performance Department (I&P) to update the software program. The use of laptops and iPads would be more convenient. Today's technology provides software where speech is translated into the written word. Such a system should be explored for all parks maintenance staff. (It should be noted that DPW has already implemented this recommendation.)

Regional Parks

Regional parks are larger in size. Frick Park, the largest regional park, encompass' 565 acres through the East End neighborhoods of Point Breeze, Squirrel Hill, Regent Square and Swisshelm Park. Frick Park was a gift from Henry Clay Frick in 1919 and is also the only City Park with an endowment Trust Fund for its upkeep. The Great Race is held in Frick Park. The Eastern Division maintains Frick Park.

Schenley Park is the second largest regional park with 456 acres in the Squirrel Hill-Oakland area and is maintained by its own Division also called Schenley. It was donated by

Mary Schenley in 1889 and is one of the most widely used parks in the City. It hosts a number of yearly events including The Vintage Grand Prix and Race for the Cure

Highland Park is the third largest regional park with 410 acres and was established by an ordinance in 1889. In 1897, Christopher L. Magee provided funding for a zoo in the park's northwest quadrant that became Pittsburgh's municipal zoo. Since 1994, the City no longer manages zoo operations. The Zoological Society of Pittsburgh is responsible for the zoo and aquarium operations. Highland Park is in the Northeast Division.

Created in 2010, Emerald View Park (EVP) spans 257 acres and was designated a regional park to preserve Mt. Washington's steep hillsides and views while improving the surrounding land. Encompassing the neighborhoods of Mt. Washington, Duquesne Heights and Allentown, it connects the following: Grandview Park, Grandview Overlook, Mt. Washington Park, Olympia Park, Ream Park, Eileen McCoy Park and Bigbee Field. All these parks/facilities are part of Emerald View Park; however, DPW park maintenance service responsibilities are divided between the Southern and Western Divisions.

Riverview Park is the smallest regional park with 251 acres and is in the Northern Division. It was created in 1894 by the City of Allegheny and became part of the City of Pittsburgh in 1907 when the City of Allegheny was annexed into the City of Pittsburgh.

Allegheny Regional Asset District (ARAD) Funding

Regional parks are the only City parks eligible for funding through the Allegheny Regional Asset District (ARAD). Specific to Allegheny County, ARAD is a special purpose unit of government that distributes grants to civic, cultural and recreational entities, libraries, parks and sports facilities. ARAD is governed by a seven-member Board of Directors appointed as follows: 4 by the Allegheny County Executive, 2 by the Mayor of Pittsburgh and 1 (one) elected by the appointees.

ARAD gives the City money for two kinds of funding: capital and operational. Over the last 5 years, ARAD has given the City's regional parks between \$810,113 and \$920,144 in capital funding. The capital spending over the last 5 years has gone to: resurfacing, wall repair, step repair, fence repair, sidewalk repair, road repair, field repair, playground renovations, turf equipment and park equipment. The funding amount has increased every year over the last 5 years that were reviewed.

Operational funding from ARAD over the last 5 years had been between \$4.7 million to a little over \$5.2 million. The capital amount has gradually increased over the last 5 years as well. Operational funding can be used towards things such as: employee salaries, fuel, insurance, maintenance and utilities. Table 2 shows how much money was received each year in capital and operational funding.

TABLE 2
ARAD Capital and Operational Funding Amounts 2010-2014

Funding Year	Capital Funding	Funding Difference	Funding Diff. in %	Operational Funding	Funding Difference	Funding Diff. in %
2010	\$ 810,113.00			\$4,702,000		
2011	\$ 836,565.00	↑ \$26,452	3.3%	\$4,843,000	↑ \$141,000	3.0%
2012	\$ 874,436.00	↑ \$37,871	4.5%	\$4,964,100	↑ \$121,100	2.5%
2013	\$ 884,810.00	↑ \$10,374	1.2%	\$5,113,000	↑ \$148,900	3.0%
2014	\$ 920,144.00	↑ \$35,334		\$5,215,300	↑ \$102,300	2.0%

According to the ARAD website, ARAD provided the regional parks \$5,215,300 for operating costs and \$920,144.00 for capital spending in 2014. Some of the specific projects for which the money was used were:

- Emerald Park signage, ADA (American Disabilities Act) parking lot construction, benches, tree planting and fencing totaling \$100,000
- All other parks resurfacing totaling \$220,000; sidewalks, wall and fence replacement and repair totaling \$290,000; parks equipment totaling \$150,000 and storm water management totaling \$110,000.

ARAD Funded Employees

ARAD funding for the regional parks can be allocated in several different ways. Most parks use ARAD money for employee salaries. The concern with ARAD funded employees is that they are not permitted to work in other parks. For most divisions an ARAD park may be just a small portion of that division's work. An example is the Northern Division. Out of 15 workers, 11 are ARAD funded. It is difficult for the remaining 4 employees to take care of the numerous other parks found within the maintenance division.

Table 3 shows the breakdown of each of the 7 park maintenance divisions' staffing by the total number of ARAD and non-ARAD employees each Foreman supervises.

TABLE 3
ARAD Employee vs Non-ARAD Employees

DIVISION NAME	TOTAL # EMPLOYEES	# ARAD EMPLOYEES	% OF ARAD EMPLOYEES
Eastern	18	13	73%
Northeast	18	14	78%
Northern	15	11	74%
Western	13	0	0%
Southern	15	0	0%
Schenley	24	17	71%
State*	9	0	0%
Construction	22	10	46%

*State is the only division that does not have a regional park

Source: DPW management

Evaluating and Rating Park Facilities

A checklist and a rating scale were developed to evaluate each park facility in our sample in the major areas of: playground equipment, safety surface, park accessibility, court conditions (basketball, tennis/multi and hockey), field conditions (baseball, football and soccer), graffiti, shelter conditions and other park conditions. Other park conditions include seating, drinking fountains, lighting, trash receptacles, fencing, restrooms/porta johns, litter and outdoor furniture, and park aesthetics. Numerous photos of each facility were taken to document each park's condition.

The auditors used the following criteria to assign a rating system of good, fair or poor:

TABLE 4
Parks Observations Rubric

	GOOD	FAIR	POOR
Playground Equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sturdy (e.g. bolts and individual structural pieces firmly in place and no signs of cracks or breakage) Plastic or rubber covered pieces are generally free of exposed metal parts None of the structural pieces are barricaded or missing Generally free of noticeable vandalism (e.g. graffiti, burned areas, etc.) No equipment pieces are rusted or corroded 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Questionable (i.e. bolts and/or individual structure pieces show signs of cracking) Metal parts of a plastic or rubber pieces may be minimally exposed in multiple areas A structural piece may be barricaded, but other structural pieces are minimally affected. Some noticeable vandalism (i.e. graffiti, burned areas, etc.) Some of the equipment shows discoloration but is not rusted or corroded 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unstable (i.e. loose bolts and/or cracked or broken seat(s)) Metal parts of a plastic or rubber covered piece are extensively exposed A structural piece is barricaded, and other structural pieces are affected Vandalism is widespread (i.e. graffiti, burned areas, etc.) The equipment appears to be rusted or corroded
Safety Surface	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No cracking, ripping, or tearing Generally free of noticeable vandalism (i.e. graffiti, burned areas, etc.) Generally free of weeds. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some cracking, ripping, or tearing Some noticeable vandalism (i.e. graffiti, burned areas, etc.) Some compaction or weeds present 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extreme cracking, ripping or tearing Subsurface exposed or trenched Vandalism is widespread (i.e. graffiti, burned areas, etc.) Weeds are widespread
Park Accessibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Park is easy to enter with no lock or barricade. There is a curb cut and sidewalk present at the entrance. There is a parking lot and/or street parking at the park 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least one entrance to the park was locked or barricaded. There is a sidewalk but no curb cut at the entrance of the park. There is no parking lot but an acceptable amount of street parking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All entrances to the park were locked or barricaded. There is no sidewalk or curb cut at the entrance of the park There is no parking and/or none/limited street parking

TABLE 4
Parks Observations Rubric--continued

	GOOD	FAIR	POOR
Court Conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No cracking of the court floor Court is free of weeds and brush Court lines are visible All hardware (i.e.: nets, goals, backboards, etc.) is present 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some cracking of the court floor Court has some weeds and/or brush Some court lines are visible Most of the hardware is present 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extreme cracking of the court floor Court has widespread weeds and/or brush Court lines are not visible Most of the hard-ware is missing
Field Conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No footprints, rocks, sticks or safety hazards on field Field lines are visible No holes, missing pieces or rust 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some foot prints, rocks, sticks or other safety hazards on the field Some of the field lines are visible Some holes, missing pieces or rust exists 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most of the field contains foot prints, rocks, stick and other safety hazards Field lines are not visible Majority of fence is in poor condition
Shelter Conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shelter is clean and the trash bins are present and empty The shelter is free of graffiti The furniture (includes benches, tables, fountains or grills) in the shelter is aesthetically pleasing and free of splinters, cracks or broken pieces The structure of the shelter is sound and poses no safety threats 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The shelter has not been cleaned or the trash bins have not been emptied The shelter has some graffiti The furniture in the shelter is has minor cracks, splinters or broken pieces and/or needs painted or cleaned There are minor issues with the structure but doesn't not pose imminent danger 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Neither the shelter has been cleaned nor the trash bins emptied. The shelter has a lot of graffiti Most of the furniture in the shelter is broken and/or needs painted or cleaned The structure of the shelter is unsafe and the shelter should not be used until fixed
Other Park Conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Free of Graffiti Park has lighting on the majority of walkways, in play areas, on courts and on fields Park has a restroom/Porta John and it is clean and in working order The trash bins in the park have been emptied The furniture (includes benches, tables, fountains or grills) in the park is aesthetically pleasing and free of splinters, cracks or broken pieces Sidewalk & railings in good condition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has some graffiti Park has some lighting on either walkways, play areas, courts or fields Park has a restroom, needs to be cleaned and/or is not in working order The trash bins in the park are full but not overflowing The furniture in the park is has minor cracks, splinters or broken pieces and/or needs painted or cleaned Some sidewalk & railing issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has a lot of graffiti Entire park has no lighting Park does not have a restroom or the restroom is locked The trash bins in the park are full and overflowing Most of the furniture in the park is broken and/or needs painted or cleaned Many sidewalk & railing issues

The auditors reviewed the checklist, photos and criteria to rate each facility. A total of 40 park facilities were visited and inspected throughout the City. Each facility was assigned a good, fair or poor rating for each category according to the observations rubric. This rating system was translated into an Excel spreadsheet for analysis as follows:

- A “good” rating received a “3” in that category
- A “fair” rating received a “2” in that category
- A “poor” rating received a “1” in that category

An average overall rating was calculated from the individual categories for all of the park facilities in our sample. The auditors established the following scale to determine overall facility maintenance conditions:

- Those facilities that have an overall rating between 1 – 1.99 are considered in poor condition and need major repairs and immediate maintenance attention
- Those facilities that have an overall rating between 2 – 2.99 are considered in fair condition and need some maintenance attention and/or repairs
- Those facilities that received an overall rating of 3 are in good condition and need no maintenance attention or repairs to individual categories that the auditors evaluated

The results of these facility ratings are displayed by division in Table 5A through 5G below.

**TABLE 5-A
EASTERN DIVISION
DPW Parks Maintenance Individual Park Ratings by Division**

	Play-ground Equip-ment	Safety Surface	Access-ibility	Basket -ball Court	Tennis/ Multi Court	Hoc-key	Field (Base-ball, Football, Soccer)	Shelter	Other Conditions	Total	Overall Rating
Eastern Division											
Frick Park -- Blue Slide Playground*	3	3	3	1			3		3	16	2.67
Frick Park – Braddock Playground*	2	1	3		3		3	3	3	18	2.57
Homewood Field			2				2			4	2.00

*These parks were separated to properly capture the variances in park conditions.

Frick Park Braddock Playground did not receive an overall poor rating; however, the safety surface was in poor condition.

Frick Park Blue Slide Playground did not receive an overall poor rating; however, the basketball courts were in poor condition.

**TABLE 5-B
DPW PARKS MAINTENANCE -- NORTHEAST DIVISION**

	Play-ground Equip-ment	Safety Surface	Access-ibility	Basketball Court	Tennis/ Multi Court	Hockey	Field	Shelter	Other Conditions	Total	Overall Rating
Northeast Division											
57th Street Playground	1	1	2	2			2		1	9	1.50
Garland Parklet	3	2	3	3	2				2	15	2.50
Highland Park	3	3	3		3		3	3	3	21	3.00
Larimer Playground	3	3	3	3			2		2	16	2.67

The worst playground in our sample was 57th Street in the Northeast Division with an overall park rating of **1.5**. The playground equipment was in poor condition and missing several pieces. The jungle gym did not have a slide and was boarded off. The tunnel portion was removed due to a homeless person sleeping in it. According to the foreman, the slide is on order, but the tunnel will not be replaced to deter this from occurring again. The tunnel feature has also been discontinued for that model. Other conditions such as graffiti were widespread and the fencing had several holes.

**TABLE 5-C
DPW PARKS MAINTENANCE -- NORTHERN DIVISION**

	Play-ground Equip-ment	Safety Surface	Access-ibility	Basketball Court	Tennis/ Multi Court	Hockey	Field	Shelter	Other Conditions	Total	Overall Rating
Northern Division											
Brighton Heights Park	2	1	2	3			3	1.	2	13	2.17
Gardner Field				1			2		2	5	1.67
Jefferson Playground	2	1	2	2					2	9	1.80
Manchester Park	3	3	3	3	3				2	17	2.83
Riverview Park	1	2	3	3				3	3	15	2.50
Scherer Field							3			3	3.00

Jefferson Playground in the Northern Division was rated a **1.80** because the safety surface was old, worn with holes, had cracks, mold and needed replaced. Litter and graffiti was also present. The benches were weathered and needed to be repainted. A crack was found in the middle of the basketball court with weeds growing out of it.

Gardner Field in the Northern Division received a rating of **1.67** because the field is overgrown and is not being used for organized sports according to DPW personnel. The basketball court was unusable because it was missing backboards, hoops and nets. The condition of the court floor was also poor. It should be noted that an adjacent auto mechanic business is parking vehicles, including a large towing truck, on this City property.

Brighton Heights Park did not receive an overall poor rating; however, the safety surface was in poor condition.

Riverview Park did not receive an overall poor rating; however, the playground equipment is in poor condition.

**TABLE 5-D
DPW PARKS MAINTENANCE -- WESTERN DIVISION**

	Play-ground Equip-ment	Safety Surface	Access-ibility	Basketball Court	Tennis/ Multi Court	Hockey	Field	Shelter	Other Conditions	Total	Overall Rating
Western Division											
Banksville Park	3	3	3	2	2	3	3	3	3	25	2.78
Eme. View* Eileen McCoy Playground	3	3	3			2			3	14	2.80
Eme. View* Grandview Overlook			3						2	5	2.50
Eme. View* Mt. Washington		3			3	3		3	3	12	3.00
Eme. View* Olympia Park	2	2	2	3		3	3	3	2	20	2.50
Eme. View* Ream Park	3	3	3						2	11	2.75
Fairywood Playground	1	2	2	2	2				2	11	1.83
McGunnegle Park	3	3	3	2			3		2	16	2.67
Stratmore Parklet	3	1	3	2	2				2	13	2.17

*Note: Eme. View means this location is part of Emerald View Park.

Fairywood Playground in the Western Division was rated **1.83** because of missing major playground equipment to its jungle gym, graffiti was present and walkways were in need of repair. Fencing had missing sections, rust and a large hole in the swimming pool fence (pool is closed, not being used). Lots of cracks were present in the basketball court surface. The overall aesthetics were not very appealing.

Stratmore Parklet did not receive an overall poor rating; however, the safety surface was in poor condition.

**TABLE 5-E
DPW PARKS MAINTENANCE -- SOUTHERN DIVISION**

	Play-ground Equip-ment	Safety Surface	Access-ibility	Basketball Court	Tennis/ Multi Court	Hockey	Field	Shelter	Other Conditions	Total	Overall Rating
Southern Division											
Armstrong Playground	3	1	3	2		2	1		2	14	2.33
Cobden St. Basketball Court			2			2			2	6	2.00
Eme. View* Bigbee Field			2				3		2	7	2.33
Eme. View* Grandview Park	3	3	3	2					2	13	2.60
McBride Park	3	2	3	2	2	2	1	1	2	18	2.00
Moore Park	3	3	3	3			3		2	17	2.83
Quarry Field	2	1	3	3			3		2	14	2.33
Tropical Parklet	3	2	3	3		3			2	16	2.67

*Note: Eme. View means this location is part of Emerald View Park.

Armstrong Playground did not receive an overall poor rating; however, the safety surface and field were in poor condition.

McBride Park did not receive an overall poor rating; however, the field and shelter were in poor condition.

Quarry Field did not receive an overall poor rating; however, the safety surface was in poor condition.

**TABLE 5-F
DPW PARKS MAINTENANCE -- SCHENLEY DIVISION**

	Play-ground Equip-ment	Safety Surface	Access-ibility	Basketball Court	Tennis/ Multi Court	Hockey	Field	Shelter	Other Conditions	Total	Overall Rating
Schenley Division											
Ammon Playground	2	3	3	3	2		3		2	18	2.57
Burgwin Playground	2	1	3	1	1	2	2		2	14	1.75
Four Mile Run Playground	3	3	3	3		2			3	17	2.83
Martin Luther King Field							1		1	2	1.00
Robert E Williams Park	3	2	3	2					2	12	2.40
Schenley Park	3	2	3		2		3	3	3	19	2.71

Burgwin Playground in the Schenley Division received a poor rating of **1.75** because of the field, tennis courts, basketball courts and play area conditions. The field is overgrown and is evidently not being used for organized sports. Lines painted on the grass resembled a practice soccer field. At one time, the field may have been used for football or baseball. The tennis courts have several cracks and were missing the hardware and nets necessary for use. The basketball courts have a hoop, but were missing nets. The safety surface in the play area was very old, thin and had cracking throughout the jungle gym and swing area.

The overall park rating system determined the worst field in our sample was Martin Luther King Field in the Schenley Division. It received a poor rating of **1.00** because the field surface was poor and large amounts of garbage and debris were found. According to the foreman, the field is not being used for any organized sports.

**TABLE 5-G
DPW PARKS MAINTENANCE -- STATE DIVISION**

	Play-ground Equipment	Safety Surface	Access-ibility	Basketball Court	Tennis/ Multi Court	Hockey	Field	Shelter	Other Conditions	Total	Overall Rating
State Division											
Allegh Com Park West *	3	3	3	2	1		3		2	17	2.43
Allegh Com Park East*	1	1	3	1	2		3		2	13	1.86
West Penn Park	2	3	2	3	2		3		2	17	2.83

*These parks were separated to properly capture the variances in park conditions.

Allegheny Commons East in the State Division received a **1.86** because both the playground equipment and safety surfaces were poor. There was no safety surface present on two of the playground areas. One of the basketball courts had no back boards or nets. The tennis courts needed surface repairs and some nets replaced. Several benches and picnic tables are broken and need replaced. Near Allegheny Traditional Academy, exposed wiring is present in one of the light poles.

Allegheny Commons West in the State Division did not receive an overall poor rating; however, the tennis courts were in poor condition.

West Penn Park in the State Division received a fair condition rating of **2.83** despite graffiti everywhere. However there was evidence of a walking and jogging track that was not included in the auditors' evaluation. Conversations with a resident indicated that the trail has not been maintained for several years and has steadily deteriorated. When asked about the care of the track, the division foreman stated that he is aware of the problem but the City lacks the proper equipment and money to restore the track. The equipment needed is the kind that makes bike trails.

RECOMMENDATION NO. 5:

DPW parks administration should look into renting the necessary equipment to restore the West Penn Park track or investigate if the County has the necessary equipment to do the job and borrow it. This way the investment would be minimal to improve the track for the neighborhood.

Individual Categories

Playground Equipment

As Tables 5A-5G Parks Maintenance Individual Park Ratings show, 26 out of 32 parks or 82% of playground equipment was fair or good. The parks with missing/broken equipment had that equipment closed off or removed for safety purposes. The foreman in those parks were either aware of the issue and/or were in the process of having it replaced. An issue that arises in all divisions is that park equipment is often discontinued before a new piece is needed. When that occurs, whole parts of the play structure need to be removed and replaced. This delays the play equipment from getting fixed. Monetary constraints also factor into replacing equipment in a timely manner.

Safety Surfaces

There are three different safety surfaces used throughout City parks: wood chips (engineered wood fiber), rubberized sheet on foam, poured-in-place, and rubber tiles. As Tables 5A-5G Parks Maintenance Individual Park Ratings shows, 23 out of 33 parks or 70% of safety surfaces were rated fair or good.

The research below came from a combination of websites including: *The United States Access Board*, *The National Center on Disability and EcoGreen Environmental, LLC*.

Wood Chips (engineered wood fiber)

Wood chips can be organic or an engineered wood fiber. Both types are an inferior use for playground safety as they are easily scattered throughout the park. Wood chips can be blown by the wind and washed out by rain, causing them to deteriorate rapidly. They are also reported to cause splinters and attract insects and vermin. Lastly, the fall height protection and head impact levels are comparatively poor. Wood chips do not last very long and need to be replaced every two years. They are approved by the ADA as being accessible by wheelchair. Additionally, they are quite inexpensive to install.

The 3 parks in our sample that contain wood chips were: Frick- Forbes/Braddock, Highland Park and Allegheny Commons Park.

RECOMMENDATION NO. 6:

Due to the many concerns with wood chips, parks in our sample that contain them should be replaced immediately. All other parks outside of our sample should be evaluated and safety surfaces should be replaced if they contain wood chips.

Poured-in-Place

Poured-in-Place (PIP) is a two layer rubber surface and binder that is poured onto park surface areas using binder guide rods and trowels. This flooring option allows for large surface area coverage and is ADA accessible. Issues with PIP can include: cracking, fading and/or peeling with the top surface. Holes in the top layer also form where the rubber granules have been worn away. It is also prone to bacterial infestation because moisture, air and heat collect in the material. This surface lasts up to 10 years but begins to wear, crack and fade at around 3 years. This flooring is quite expensive to install and the longer one waits to fix cracking and wear, the more expensive it is to repair.

Finding: It was clear from site visits that the PIP surfaces generate major gaps from shrinkage of the material over time and worn away tendencies from usage. These safety concerns can cause injuries from tripping or falling.

RECOMMENDATION NO. 7:

DPW parks maintenance should continue monitoring safety service flooring at all playgrounds. Any repair should be completed immediately after it is observed. The flooring manufacturer should be consulted for their latest repair technologies.

Rubber Tiles

Rubber tiles are typically made from recycled tires and are modular, interlocking and easy to install. They are also ADA accessible and provide some of the highest levels of fall protection out of the 4 surfaces used. Unfortunately, they can amass mold and debris underneath them, which causes them to lift and deteriorate quicker and can be easily stolen if not anchored down. Finally, they are quite expensive to install.

Finding: Rubber tiles are the most expensive safety surface out of the three types of flooring DPW uses.

Finding: The rubber tiles in our sample were pristine. They appeared more durable and in the best condition out of all of the floors examined in our sample.

RECOMMENDATION NO. 8:

Rubber tiles should be routinely cleaned according to the protocol provided by the manufacture to avoid mold and bacteria growth. They should also be routinely evaluated and maintained to preserve the life of the floor.

The following picture shows an example of rubber tiles under a swing set at Schenley Park.



Picture 1: Schenley Park example of rubber tiled safety surface in good condition

National Center Study

A longitudinal study of playground surface performed by the National Center on Accessibility found that there is no perfect playground surface. Each type of surface analyzed in their study had some type of issue that was affecting the performance and safety of the flooring.

Safety Surfaces Survey Results

Of the 40 park facilities the auditors visited 32 had at least one playground with some type of safety surface. As Tables 5A-5G Parks Maintenance Individual Park Ratings show, 9 out of 33 or 28% of the safety surfaces inspected were rated poor.

RECOMMENDATION NO. 9:

DPW park maintenance administration should look into whether the different safety surface manufactures offer a warranty and follow up on that warranty when there is a problem with their product. Manufactures guidelines to fix and maintain the surfaces should be followed.

RECOMMENDATION NO. 10:

DPW park maintenance administration needs to repair the playground safety surfaces with large gaps, shrinkage, or cracking material. The play surfaces that were rated “poor” by the auditors due to inadequate depth/worn surfaces, insufficient safety surfaces, should be replaced.



Picture 2: Fairywood Park example of PIP safety floor with shrinkage but in fair condition

Finding: DPW has investigated and researched the various types of safety surfaces for accessibility, durability, safety level and cost. DPW parks administration has found that rubber tile surfaces are the most durable, safest and cost effective.

Park Accessibility

Curb cuts, walkways and driveways are needed to help individuals with wheelchairs or strollers access specific areas of a park. Without these, access to the parks can be exceptionally difficult.

Elm Shelter (Highland Park), Lake Point Shelter (Highland Park), Rhododendron Shelter (Highland Park), Anderson Shelter (Schenley Park), West Penn Park (playground), Brighton Heights Park (playground), Cobden Basket Ball Courts and Bigbee Field are examples of parks visited that did not have a curb cut and/or walkways/driveways or a blocked walkway/driveway leading into the recreational area.

Finding: Some parks do not have curb cuts and/or walkways/driveways for wheelchairs and strollers' to access specific areas of the park. Additionally, some parks are blocked by some type of barricade.

RECOMMENDATION NO. 11:

DPW parks maintenance management should reevaluate all park entrances and exits to make all parks accessible to everyone. Any park without a wheelchair or stroller friendly entrance or exit should have one created. All parks should be in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Court Pavement Conditions

Pavement Cracking

The auditors found widespread cracks in many court floors. Some cracks were minor and others were significantly wider and longer. It was obvious many cracks had been there for an extended period of time and had weeds growing out of them. Some appeared to have a type of sealant on it that had reopened. The auditors were told by DPW management that this sealant was ineffective in curtailing cracking. It is no longer being used.

Pavement Crack Repair

Court cracking is inevitable and falls into different types, indicative of different problems and conditions. Different cracks require different forms of repair. The two common types of court surface are asphalt and concrete (hard courts). Cracks generally fall into two categories: surface cracks (minor) and pavement and structural cracks (serious).

Asphalt courts unavoidably crack as the pavement ages and become brittle. Unlike roads, courts only get foot traffic and lack the constant weight of vehicle traffic which keeps asphalt compacted which delays the formation of cracks. These cracks are typically surface cracks

(minor). Regardless of cracking, a typical asphalt court can last 10-12 years before it needs to be repaired or maintained.

Concrete courts are harder and far less likely to crack. However, when it does crack the cracks are structural (major) and require immediate attention. Concrete cracks are wider and cause much more damage to the integrity of the surface than asphalt cracks. Concrete is also much more expensive; up to double in price to install.

It is important that cracks are evaluated by a professional and that DPW staff is vigilant about checking the surfaces. Do-it-yourself approaches are not recommended and could do more harm than good. Advances in court repair products have provided a variety of products and treatment options for the different types of cracks on the different types of surfaces.

If a court is not cleaned, properly maintained, or resurfaced on a regular basis, the cost to repair/resurface is much higher. Improper maintenance may result in mold, moss or fungus buildup and removal can be quite costly, requiring extra time, equipment and chemicals.

Finding: According to on line research the cost to resurface a court, whether asphalt or concrete, can be up to \$25,000.

DPW has a contract with a local contractor that specializes in the maintenance of court services. They are notified by divisional foremen when courts need resurfacing.

RECOMMENDATION NO 12:

Park maintenance must perform routine maintenance on all courts according to the manufacturers' recommendations and when needed should be resurfaced. Asphalt courts can last 10-12 years and if well maintained, concrete (hard courts) could last even longer.

Field and Shelter Conditions

Of the fields and shelters the auditors visited, 2, Martin Luther King Field located in the Hill District and McBride Park Shelter in Lincoln Place, are in the worst condition. Both the field and shelter are in secluded areas. Martin Luther King (MLK) Field is not used by organized sports. Both have become dumping grounds for all kinds of debris causing hazardous conditions in the neighborhood.

The City installed a new large section of fencing at MLK Field even though the field is not used. This newly installed fence is not locked and allows for misuse of this facility.

According to parks maintenance staff, dog fighting has occurred at MLK Field because they have removed dead dogs from this location in the past.



Picture 3: MLK Field Fencing Example



Picture 4: MLK Field dumping example

RECOMMENDATION NO. 13:

DPW parks maintenance administration should assess and prioritize the park facilities that require maintenance work. Money should not be invested in a fence in a field that is not being used.

McBride Shelter at McBride Park in Lincoln Place has the same problem with dumping; 5 TVs and 12 tires along with building products (such as bricks and roofing materials) were found by the shelter.

Finding: Secluded fields and shelters in parks are problems for the dumping of trash and large debris and/or illegal activity.



Picture 5: McBride Shelter dumping example

RECOMMENDATION NO. 14:

DPW parks maintenance should have all trash and debris removed from MLK Field and McBride Shelter. Some kind of barrier should be placed at the entrance of MLK Field, and near McBride Shelter preventing motor vehicles from gaining access to dump debris and trash or have dog fights. The fence installed at MLK field should be locked when not in use to prevent unauthorized activities. Additionally, numerous “no dumping” signs should be placed in both locations. (Note: McBride shelter has been closed since 2014 due to fire damage. It is unknown if the shelter will ever be re-opened.)

Utilizing Community Groups

Some local neighborhood groups take care of the parks or facilities close to their neighborhood. They work with the divisions to improve conditions. A good example of this is the tennis courts in Highland Park. The neighborhood group keeps the area clean and helps schedule playing times.

RECOMMENDATION NO. 15:

DPW parks maintenance administration should try and get more local groups to ‘adopt’ courts, fields, playground etc. in their neighborhoods. These public/private partnerships can work with the City to clean their area(s) and keep division maintenance staff informed about an areas condition. The group can even help raise money to maintain the court, field, playground, etc., to facilitate improvements.

Other Park Conditions/Concerns

Graffiti

In the auditors sample there were limited cosmetic concerns with park aesthetics. However, graffiti was found in approximately one third of the sample parks. Offensive, vulgar graffiti was mostly spray painted on play equipment or buildings.

The division’s solution to the problem is to paint over the graffiti with mismatched paint. This is because it is hard to find paint that covers the surfaces where the graffiti is placed (plastic, metal, brick, concrete) and match the colors of the equipment. The result is not aesthetically pleasing.



Picture 7: Banksville Park graffiti covering example

RECOMMENDATION NO. 16:

DPW parks maintenance administration should find a way to remove the graffiti rather than painting or spraying over top of the existing graffiti. It will increase the aesthetics of the park and make it less obvious that graffiti had been on the structure.

Other Solutions

Auditor research found several graffiti removal products on the market for all types of surfaces as well as products for graffiti prevention. Products exist for graffiti cleaning on different types of materials used in playgrounds; i.e. plastic, concrete, wood, metal etc.

Anti-graffiti coatings are used for preventive efforts. The coatings can be rubbed on playground equipment areas most susceptible to graffiti, preventing the absorption of the graffiti paint. If graffiti occurs on a surface covered with anti-graffiti coating, the graffiti can be wiped off.

RECOMMENDATION NO. 17:

DPW parks maintenance administration needs to explore other options for graffiti removal. Products should be tested to see if they provide a more efficient means of removing graffiti.

Graffiti Trust Fund

The City of Pittsburgh has a Graffiti Trust Fund (GTF) that is administered through the Public Safety Department. During the audit scope years, 2013 and 2014, the trust fund had no expenditures. As of July 30, 2015 the current GTF balance is \$18,801.60 with no withdrawals from the account.

RECOMMENDATION NO. 18:

City administrators should allow DPW administration to utilize the Graffiti Trust Fund monies for Graffiti prevention and removal.

Drinking Fountains

According to division foremen the responsibility for turning off and on the drinking fountains in all City parks at the beginning of the season in April and at the end of the season in October is the DPW's Facilities Division. This division also repairs the fountains. The Facilities Division was formally known as the General Services Department.

The auditors found several fountains that were broken, not working or overflowing. For example, three fountains in Emerald View-Mt. Washington Park were not working properly or at all. One fountain in Schenley Park and another fountain in Brighton Heights Park were overflowing making puddles on the ground. It should be noted the auditors' site visits occurred early in October so the possibility exists that these were long term problems that were not corrected.



Picture 8: Brighton Heights Park fountain overflowing example

RECOMMENDATION NO. 19:

Each DPW parks maintenance division should regularly check the drinking fountains and notify DPW's Facilities Division of the malfunctioning ones immediately. Water is one of the most precious natural resources and necessary for all life. Fixing fountains should be a top priority for the health and welfare of the public and flooding should be prevented to help with water conservation.

Litter

There are many causes of litter including the lack of trash cans, a wind storm and carelessness.

Finding: Manchester Park in the auditors' sample did not have any trash receptacles.

RECOMMENDATION NO. 20:

DPW parks administration should make sure that every park facility has at least two trash receptacles. In larger and/or busier parks, and parks with multiple fields and/or courts, a trash receptacle and a recycling bin should be within walking distance or along the path of the entrance/exit.

This recommendation was determined after an extensive review of the Keep America Beautiful research study performed by Action Research on littering. A few findings in the study include:

- “At the level of content, the availability and distance of trash receptacles was strongly predictive of littering behavior.”
- “Littering was reported more frequently in instances when the person was in a hurry, no trash can was nearby, the item was biodegradable, there was a sense that someone else would pick it up, and when the item was not recyclable.”

(Littering Behavior in America, 2009)

Furniture

All City parks are furnished with various types of benches and tables. Some concerns with the furniture included: graffiti, broken pieces, damage, and/or deterioration. However, several benches and tables just needed to be repainted.

RECOMMENDATION NO. 21:

DPW parks management should conduct an evaluation of all park benches and tables at the end of the season. All necessary repairs and painting should be done yearly during the off season. Any furniture that can't be repaired should be removed and recycled.

Division Assignments

McBride Park is unique because of its isolated location, in the southern part of the City's Lincoln Place neighborhood. McBride Park is currently maintained by the Southern Division. According to Google Maps, the Southern Division is 7.7 miles away, with at least a 20 minute commute to the park. The Schenley Division is half the distance, at 3.5 miles away with a 10 minute commute.

Finding: McBride Park, currently maintained by the Southern Division is located closer to the Schenley Division.

RECOMMENDATION NO. 22

DPW parks administration should reassign McBride Park to the Schenley Division. Schenley Division is closer to McBride Park than the Southern Division. The closer proximity of the Schenley Division will make it more convenient, saving travel time, to maintain this park.

Overall Park Ratings

The following table is a synopsis of the auditor’s research on Parks Maintenance.

TABLE 6
2014 PARK RATING
TOTALS AND PERCENTAGES BY DIVISION

Division	Poor	%	Fair	%	Good	%	Grand Total
Eastern	0	0%	3	100%	0	0%	3
Northeast	1	25%	2	50%	1	25%	4
Northern	2	33%	3	50%	1	33%	6
Western	1	11%	7	78%	1	11%	9
Southern	0	0%	9	100%	0	0%	9
Schenley	2	33%	4	67%	0	0%	6
State	1	33%	2	67%	0	0%	3
Grand Total	7	17.5%	30	75%	3	7.5%	40

Finding: Of the parks and corresponding facilities that the auditors visited, 7 or 17.5% received a poor rating, 30 or 75% received a fair rating, and 3 or 7.5% received a good rating; thirty-three (33) out of 40 or 82.5% of the park facilities were in good or fair condition.

Regional Parks Conditions

All 5 of the City’s regional parks, fields, courts, playgrounds, shelters, etc. were visited and evaluated by the auditors. The auditors found each regional park to be in the best condition of the parks in the sample. This means the park and park facilities were well maintained, with no major safety issues or concerns. Therefore each regional park received an overall park rating between 2.50 and 3.00.

In 2014 over 6 million dollars was given to the City in ARAD money for regional parks. This dedicated money to the regional parks makes a quantifiable difference.

Finding: The ARAD money given the City makes the regional parks among the best kept parks in the City.

However, the auditors found a few areas of concern in each regional park’s infrastructure. These concerns are listed below:

All Regional Parks: There are not enough informational signage showing the location of the playgrounds, trails, shelters, swimming pool, fields, courts and egresses/ingresses.

Highland Park: Sidewalks need repaired or replaced throughout the park; one set of Reservoir steps need to be repaired.

Riverview Park: There are no designated sidewalks throughout the park for pedestrians. The road, which is full of potholes and needs re-surfaced, are highly traveled by motor vehicles and can cause a safety concern for pedestrians/walkers.

Schenley Park: The Westinghouse Memorial fountain was drained in 2009 and still is not repaired. Overgrown weeds and grass exists over the entire structure. A complete restoration of the Memorial and landscape is needed. However, a lack of funding is delaying this restoration. This is an historical landmark and attraction to Schenley Park and its many special events. The neighborhood group has been working to raise money for the fountain's repair but raising money has been slow. Also, a small section of the roof on the Vietnam Veteran's Pavilion needs to be repaired.

Frick Park: The parklet at Forbes & Braddock needs a new safety surface to replace the old wood chips.

Emerald View Park: Drinking fountains need to be repaired and parts of the iron railing at the Grandview overlook needs to be restored.

Mt. Washington: Mt Washington's incline is one of the attractions in Emerald View Park. According to TripAdvisor.com, Mt Washington is #3 on the top 231 things to do in Pittsburgh. It is no surprise that over 4,000 people a day visit Mt. Washington in the summer; that is 120,000 people a month.

It should be noted that The Mt. Washington Community Development Corporation was the recipient of one of the spring 2015 Love Your Block Grants. They plan to use this money to clean up the Shaler Street lot in preparation for a step reconstruction in the upcoming months. This lot sits beside one of the parks in our sample, Eileen McCoy formerly Shaler Park.

RECOMMENDATION NO. 23:

DPW parks maintenance administration should immediately fix the iron guard rail that lines the Grandview overlook. It needs to be repaired or replaced in several sections. Also no bathroom facilities are available nearby. Carson St on the City's South Side currently has pay toilets in the street. DPW administration should explore adding something similar for Grandview overlook in Mt. Washington. A map of both the overlook and scenic view would be helpful to people unfamiliar with the area and aid in understanding where to go and what they are seeing.

It is important that money be allocated to the items mentioned above and focus on areas around the Overlook that need improved.

Overall Park Ratings without Regional Parks

Table 7 is a synopsis of the auditor’s research on parks maintenance minus the rating analysis of the regional parks. Every division contains a regional park with the exception of the State Division.

Finding: Without the regional parks in the overall ratings, the City of Pittsburgh Park Ratings changed; the Poor Condition Ratings increased to 27%; Fair Ratings fell to 69%, and Good Ratings fell to 4%.

**TABLE 7
2014 PARK RATING
TOTALS AND PERCENTAGES BY DIVISION
WITHOUT REGIONAL PARKS**

Division	Poor	%	Fair	%	Good	%	Grand Total
Eastern	0	0%	1	100%	0	0%	1
Northeast	1	33.30%	2	66.60%	0	0%	3
Northern	2	40%	2	40%	1	20%	5
Western	1	33.30%	2	66.60%	0	0%	3
Southern	0	0%	6	100%	0	0%	6
Schenley	2	40%	3	60%	0	0%	5
State*	1	33%	2	67%	0	0%	3
Grand Total	7	27%	18	69%	1	4%	26

*The State Division does not have a regional park to maintain.

RECOMMENDATION NO. 24:

DPW parks maintenance management should meet with City administrators and discuss alternative means for funding parks; perhaps utilizing public/private partnerships with neighborhood groups (as suggested in Recommendation 17). The condition of the regional parks proves that when money is available the City can keep and maintain its parks in better overall condition.

311 Non-Emergency Response System

The City of Pittsburgh has a response system in place to report any non-emergency concern, complaint or comment. City residents can report by phone or submit a form online on the City’s website. The hours of the Response Center is 7am-4:30pm Monday thru Friday and can be contacted by dialing 3-1-1. (In 2015 the 311 Response Center expanded its hours to 7am-7pm Monday thru Friday.) A text or voice mail message may also be left at any time of the

day using the phone number (412) 573-9736. Outside of the City, residents can call (412) 255-2621.

The auditors requested a 311 log of all the park-related complaints for the years 2013 and 2014. The total number of complaints received by 311 for parks/fields/courts was 646 in 2013 and 392 in 2014. All of the complaints had a STATUS marked; the majority were marked “completed” but some were marked “sent to Department” “acknowledged” or “rejected”.

Finding: The information log provided by 311 was incomplete.

The log occasionally identified the park name, sometimes a street address, but mostly listed an intersection presumably close to the problem park. This made pinpointing the problem park difficult. Additionally the specific complaint was not always listed. Most of the 311 entries just said park/field or park/court. Occasionally it would list park/litter.

Consequently, an analysis of the efficiency of parks maintenance resolving issues was unable to be performed. Instead, the auditors tested the 311 process from complaint to resolution by initiating 2 complaints over the internet.

Finding: The 311 online complaint system does not have a “parks concern/comments” option in the drop down list or an area where a park name could be entered. This makes it difficult for the 311 staff to filter parks complaints for the purpose of analysis.

RECOMMENDATION NO. 25:

DPW parks maintenance should contact the Innovation and Performance Department (I&P) and request that they design a more detailed 311 complaint form so that parks complaints and response time can be analyzed.

The electronic complaint form should include: Park/facility name and address of the park and the specific complaint. An option for parks concerns/comments and a location where the park name can be entered should be added to the 311 system reporting ability. This will allow the proper parks maintenance division to be notified to resolve the problem.

Response Test

The auditors reported two separate park maintenance complaints at different times of the year through the online 311 Submission Form. The response times and whether or not the issues were resolved are documented below.

September 24, 2014: On this Wednesday, a complaint was filed in regards to some vulgar graffiti located in one of the playgrounds in the sample. Completing the complaint was quite easy and an e-mail confirmation receipt was received immediately after. The next business

day an update by email stated that the graffiti would be removed. Auditors went back to the park that following Monday and the graffiti had been removed.

February 27, 2015: A complaint was made about a high traffic playground expressing concerns on the safety of the old wood chip flooring in the play area. A receipt was received shortly after the ticket was filed. However, to date, no response has been received. Auditors revisited the playground two weeks later and its condition remained the same. A follow-up visit occurred one month later and the wood chips have not been replaced.

Finding: The parks maintenance divisions seemed to respond quickly to a simple complaint e.g. graffiti. However the more complicated complaint (new safety surface) was not resolved and no response was ever received from parks maintenance.

RECOMMENDATION NO. 26:

DPW parks maintenance should require every division foreman to always respond back to any complaint, even if the answer to the complaint is that “the City can’t do this at this time” or “it is not needed”. If a citizen feels strongly enough to engage with local government, an acknowledgement and/or resolution from the appropriate division should be made.

Conclusion: The City’s 5 regional parks are in good overall condition with each park needing only some repair(s). Several of the non-regional parks’ playgrounds have issues with: safety surfaces, park equipment, park accessibility, court cracking, field and shelter conditions, dumping/litter and graffiti that need cleaned, repaired or replaced. Special attention should be given to the parks that rated poor in the sample. DPW park lists and website should be updated to reflect current and accurate information. Additionally, the maintenance standards and procedures should be re-evaluated to reflect current practices. Finally, the 311 System should be tested further as only 1 out of 2 issues submitted, was addressed.

APPENDIX

EASTERN DIVISION



Frick Park - Blue Slide Playground – Rated Good

NORTHEASTERN DIVISION



57th Street Playground - Missing Equipment – Rated Poor



57th Street Playground - Damaged and Inaccessible Entry Way – Rated Poor



Highland Park - Playground at Rhododendron Shelter – Rated Good



Highland Park - Tennis Courts – Rated Good

NORTHERN DIVISION



Brighton Heights Park - Broken/Missing Playground Equipment – Rated Poor



Brighton Heights Park - Broken and Vandalized Furniture – Rated Fair



Riverview Park - No sidewalks for pedestrians – Not Rated



Riverview Park - Locust Groove Shelter/Furniture – Rated Good

WESTERN DIVISION



Olympia Park - Basketball Courts – Rated Good



Olympia Park - Baseball Field – Rated Good



Emerald View Park - Grandview Overlook Fence Damage – Rated Fair

SOUTHERN DIVISION



Emerald View - Bigbee Field Has No Field Just Green Space – Rated Good



Eme. View- Bigbee Field Inaccessible to Wheel Chairs/Strollers (Barricade)– Rated Fair



Armstrong Park - Very Old and Thin Safety Surface – Rated Poor



McBride Park - Major Cracking on Basketball Courts – Rated Fair



Quarry Field - Playground with Dumping and Vandalism – Rated Fair

SCHENLEY DIVISION



Schenley Park - Westinghouse Fountain Overgrown – Not Rated

STATE DIVISION



Allegheny Commons East - Playground with No Safety Surface – Rated Poor



CITY OF PITTSBURGH

Department of Public Works

William Peduto, Mayor

Michael Gable, Director

November 4, 2015

Mr. Michael Lamb
City Controller
City of Pittsburgh
Pittsburgh, PA 15219

Dear Controller Lamb:

We have reviewed the performance audit of the Department of Public Works (DPW) Parks Maintenance Division. Our changes to the draft audit were made with the Microsoft Word track changes feature and sent electronically to your staff who met with Superintendent Paulin and myself to review. The final audit reflects the changes and information we discussed with your staff and we agree with the content. Although not noted in the audit we had also previously commented on the twenty-nine (29) recommendations. Thank you for working collaboratively for the benefit of the residents of the City of Pittsburgh. If you need to discuss this further please email me or call me at 412-255-2726.

Sincerely,

Michael Gable, CPRP
Director

MG:kah

C: ~~Greg~~ Costa, Chief of Operations/Mayor's Office
Tom Paulin, Superintendent

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