



M E M O R A N D U M

Date: August 15, 2017

To: Board of Park Commissioners

From: Robert Stowers, Director, Parks and Environment, Seattle Parks and Recreation (SPR)

Subject: Implementation of SPR's Park Inspection Program conducted by Seattle Resident Volunteers

Requested Board Action:

Seattle Parks and Recreation is starting a Parks Inspection Volunteer Program. We last briefed the Board on this program in June of 2016 and are returning now with a program that is almost ready to launch. We feel this program aligns well with our shared goals for a Healthy Environment and strong communities through engaging with community members and empowering them to take a more active role in their parks.

We would like your input on suggestions for successfully recruiting community partners to ensure implementation of the volunteer inspection program is successful and sustainable.

Brief History and Description of Program:

This program is based off the Parks Inspection Program that was implemented in 2001 and utilized until 2009. That program was developed to help SPR meet the City's goals for clean, safe, and well-maintained parks. During this time, SPR staff conducted field work and evaluated the condition of our parks. The current program will be conducted by Seattle resident volunteers, stakeholders and public officials. Parks Field Staff Supervisors will lead the trainings. Field inspection results will be collected, compiled, and prioritized into maintenance and job work orders in the new Asset Management Work Order System (AMWO).

Issues for Discussion: Proposal for the new Park Inspection Volunteer Program (PIVP):

The proposal presented to the Park Board in June of 2016 was well received, however we did not have an implementation plan at that time. SPR staff were still grappling with:

- Creating a program management structure to sustain the Parks Inspection Volunteer Program
- Developing a recruitment plan for Volunteer Inspectors
- Identifying who would be responsible for training the Volunteers, and what specific training would be required

- Creating a system to determine which parks would be selected
- Determining the number of inspections to be completed on a quarterly/yearly basis
- Rewriting the Inspection Guide, to include the current parks and park assets.
- Determining how the inspection information would be collected, stored and used.

Current Program Proposal and Recommendations:

SPR staff will implement the PIVP that was presented to the Seattle Parks Board in 2016. The Implementation Plan will have the following components:

1. A supervisory level position and staff support dedicated to implementing and managing the PIVP
2. A Video Training Program that will be conducted by SPR staff at SPR facilities, and will be accessible from the SPR website
3. A computerized selection program system that randomly identifies which parks will be inspected each month
4. An integrated volunteer recruitment plan and process that will assist parks staff in identifying volunteers
5. A scheduling system that will schedule parks a month in advance
6. Staff support to collect and input the data and work orders into the Asset Management Work Order System

The additional volunteer participation, involvement of SPR management, elected officials, and community-based organizations, will ensure a broader array of assessment tools for evaluating the conditions of Seattle Parks.

Project Goals:

One inspection per month for each district

72 inspections annually, 20% of our parks

2 inspections quarterly with elected officials, Board members, and key partner organization

80 park inspections annually

Rating average between 3.5 and 4, on a scale from 1 - 5

Public Involvement Process:

SPR maintenance staff have worked with the Parks Volunteer Supervisor and Parks Communications Manager to develop a webpage for ongoing recruitment of Seattle residents to volunteer for the program. Also, SPR Urban Forest Manager of the Green Seattle partnership has invited forest stewards to participate as Park Inspectors in the Volunteer Program. Volunteers already registered in SPR's volunteer program have been invited to participate and invitations will be extended to City Council Staff, the Mayor's Office, Seattle Parks Foundation, and our Advisory Councils.

Schedule: Program implementation will begin in September 2017, after peak summer season

Additional Information:

Robert Stowers: Robert.stowers@seattle.gov 684-8012