

FY 2011-2012 EFFICIENCY PLAN

San Francisco Recreation and Park Department

February 1, 2011

I. Strategic Planning

A. Mission, Vision, Values, Goals

Mission

The San Francisco Recreation and Park Department's mission is to provide enriching recreational activities, maintain beautiful parks and preserve the environment for the well-being of our diverse community.

From 1998 through 2002 the Department undertook an extensive, community-driven planning process that culminated in the Department's strategic plan in early 2003. The mission statement and strategic objectives developed through that process still guide our planning and direction today.

Vision

To build a world class park system that is safe, clean, joyous, and inspirational, and that is built on sustainable financial, environmental, programmatic, administrative, and community foundations.

Values

Accountability, Caring, Communication, Education, Excellence, Facilitation, Health, Innovation, Partnership, Respect, Teamwork, Trust

The Recreation and Park Department (RPD) has developed seven goals to help implement its mission and guide its delivery of services:

- 1.) Improve the quality of parks.
- 2.) Improve healthy recreational choices.
- 3.) Improve financial capacity.
- 4.) Improve environmental stewardship.
- 5.) Improve community loyalty.
- 6.) Improve capital infrastructure.
- 7.) Improve administrative efficiency.

B. Key Policy Considerations in 2011 – 2012

1. Financial Sustainability

The city's financial challenges color every aspect of RPD's strategic, budget and operational planning. As the city has struggled with its structural budget deficit, RPD has experienced significant financial instability. Like other General Funded city departments, RPD has faced annual service reductions, layoffs and general insecurity regarding its budget. To put the

Department on a more sound and consistent financial footing, it has begun to focus on revenue generation as never before.

Following policy direction from the Recreation and Park Commission, RPD has focused on reviewing existing fees, maximizing the value of the Department's property and concessions by entering into new leases and developing new park amenities, pursuing philanthropy and searching for sponsorships and development opportunities. It has implemented non-resident entry fees for attractions including Coit Tower, the Botanical Garden, and the Japanese Tea Garden and it has sought new concessionaires for facilities such as Stow Lake and Coit Tower to improve visitors' park experience and generate additional revenue for the Department. The Department has also begun to investigate the viability of financing mechanisms such as Park Improvement Districts and a parcel tax dedicated to parks and recreation. In the next five years, the Department will continue to focus on finding sources of revenue more stable than the city's General Fund.

2. Capital Investment

RPD faces a deferred maintenance backlog of approximately \$1.7 billion. Irrigation systems, swimming pools, neighborhood recreation buildings, Kezar Pavilion and McLaren Lodge are among a host of RPD facilities needing repair or replacement. To address this need, the Department intends to develop a General Obligation Bond proposal for the 2013 ballot. The proposal will be informed by the facility assessment prepared by RPD and its stakeholders for the 2008 bond and will likely fund the next set of prioritized park sites identified in 2008. The proposal will require approval by the Mayor and the Board of Supervisors in order to be placed on the ballot. Passage of a G.O. bond will help to address the Department's monumental deferred maintenance backlog, however the Department must also identify other sources, including additional city funding, philanthropy and grants, to meet this need.

3. Significant Changes in Operations and Organization

RPD implemented a new recreation service delivery model in 2010 – 2011. The model, which went into effect in September 2010, is based on national best practices and is designed to grow and evolve. Under the new model, all recreation programming falls into one of four core recreation competencies: cultural arts, community services, leisure services and sports and athletics. RPD's service delivery now focuses on providing programming in these competencies at 25 large recreation complexes and nine swimming pools. The Department anticipates that it will take several years to implement the model completely, with programming growing and improving in each recreation competency over time.

In the past year, as RPD has improved recreation program quality and increased program options, program fee revenue has increased. At the same time, the Department has supplemented funding for its scholarship program to ensure that all San Franciscans may participate in recreation programming regardless of ability to pay. The Department has not increased program fees for the past two fiscal years, but plans to commission a fee study in the coming year to review its program fees and cost recovery ratios. The Department intends to use the study to rationalize both its fee structure and the level of subsidy provided to recreation

programming. Ultimately, RPD hopes that in an environment of reduced General Fund support, recreation programming can generate enough revenue to be reinvested in recreation staff and supplies and further strengthen public recreation in San Francisco.

II. Customer Service

As a City department which constantly interacts with the public, RPD has made customer satisfaction a top priority. The Department strives to continually improve the programming, facilities, and services it provides, doing so with a focus on the needs of and feedback from its diverse customers. After all, “Improve Community Loyalty” is one of our goals.

A. Recognizing Our Diverse Customers and Stakeholders

The Department’s customer base is extremely diverse and includes people of all ages, races, and income levels. Many RPD customers and stakeholders are actively involved in the Department’s performance, including those involved in volunteer opportunities, neighborhood and advocacy groups, those participating in commission meetings and public community meetings on various initiatives, and members of advisory committees such as PROSAC. The Department’s customers may also be internal to the Department or City, including department employees, policy makers such as the Recreation and Park Commission, Mayor and Board of Supervisors, employees of other departments, contractors, and jurisdictions with whom the Department works.

B. Paying Attention to Our Customers' Needs

Every two years the Department receives critical input about its customer service from the City Survey administered by the Controller’s Office. This year the Department added new survey questions for a more comprehensive rating of its performance. Results from the latest City Survey will be released in spring 2011 and survey responses will be reported in the Department’s performance measurement system.

In order to create a stronger relationship between the Department and the communities it serves, RPD is about to launch a new initiative known as Community Recreation Councils (CRCs). Each of the Department’s 25 recreation centers and 9 swimming pools will have a CRC. Each CRC will consist of members of the community surrounding the facility and will act to connect the community and the Department, identifying programming needs and helping the Department to plan and deliver programs that are appropriate for the surrounding neighborhood.

As a part of its continuing effort to improve recreation programming, the Department recently standardized its evaluation template for recreation programming users, and implemented the forms across the all recreation facilities and competencies. Program directors distribute the user survey at the end of each program season and use the feedback to improve course offerings.

C. Institutionalizing Customer Service as a Core Value and Practice

In many ways the Department has revamped its service delivery model in order to increase customer satisfaction. As a result of the Department's recent re-organization, customer service has risen to the highest priority and has led to a change in staffing, to a sharper focus on the core value of "Great Customer Service" and to a renewed dedication to improved communication with our various publics.

Initiatives undertaken in recent years, and all of those outlined above for the upcoming year, have elements that recognize the need for the Department to prioritize its customers. Highlights include:

- The Clean and Safe Neighborhood Parks Bond passed on the February 5, 2008 will allow long-overdue attention to be given to deteriorated, unsafe, and neglected parks and facilities. All bond information is available on the Department's website;
- The Class system allows for ease of program registration and the opportunity for the Department to better determine public demand and to tailor its services to satisfy and attract customers;
- The Department has completed a comprehensive renovation of its website, upgrading the functionality and interface of the site to provide a more effective and intuitive user experience;
- RPD has long focused on customer service, ensuring that every new employee receives customer service training. To help supplement this initial training, in the past year the Department has put each of its employees through a course to sharpen communications skills with a focus on customer service; and
- To the extent possible, the Department uses bilingual staff to translate materials, and have bilingual staff present at community meetings to interpret.

III. Performance Measurement and Evaluation

Overall, the Department is very pleased with its performance as measured through a variety of analyses and data sources. Below is a summary of the Department's performance as measured during FY 2009-2010, framed by the Department's seven goals. Please see the Appendix for the complete FY 2009-2010 Performance Measure Report.

A. Improving our Measurement Tools

In 2006, the Recreation and Park Department revised many of its performance measures to align with operational changes in the Department. At the time, the Department made a variety

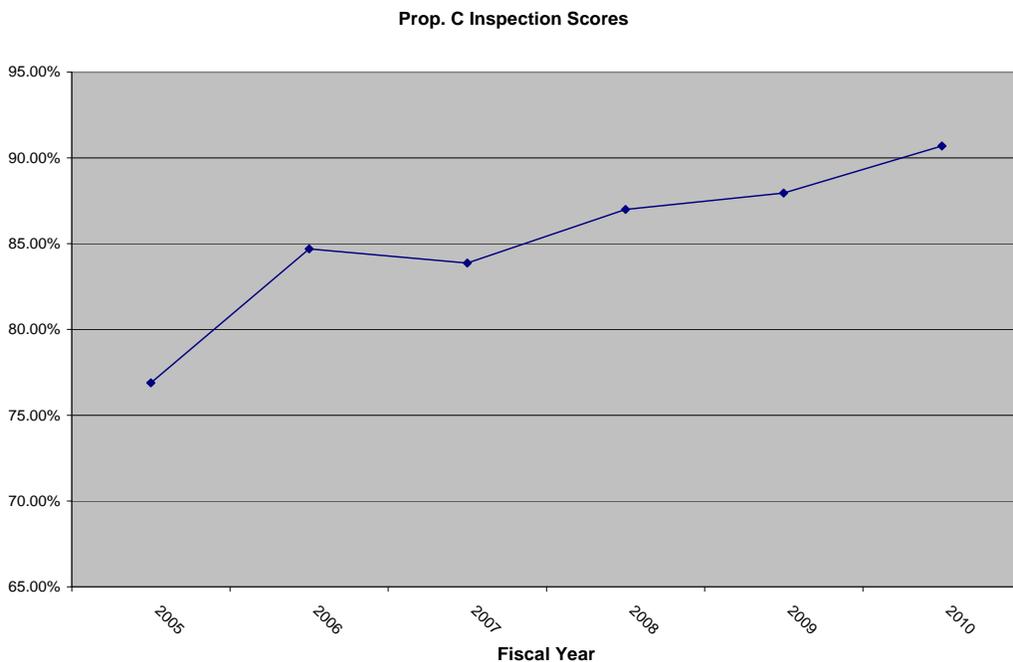
of changes and corrections to the measures to better capture data related to the mission-driven activities of parks maintenance and provision of recreation programming.

This year, the department again undertook extensive review and revisions of its performance measures to more accurately and efficiently measure past progress and plan for future needs. By paring down the number of performance measures to those most critical, the Department is better able to evaluate performance while increasing accessibility of information to external stakeholders. Additionally, the Department updated technical descriptions of the performance measures to ensure accuracy in process.

B. Tracking Goals Through Performance Measures

Improve the Quality of Parks

Since FY 2004 – 2005, RPD has collected condition data for neighborhood and regional parks from quarterly park evaluations. These evaluations are based upon park standards developed as a result of Proposition C, a measure approved by voters in 2003. Prop. C park evaluations continue to provide significant information about the condition of city parks. The Department’s Prop. C park evaluation scores have continuously trended upwards, rising from a score 76.9 in 2004 – 2005 to a score of 91.8 percent in 2010 – 2011. The most recent Controller’s Office Report, released in November 2010, shows an increase in park scores for the fourth consecutive year.

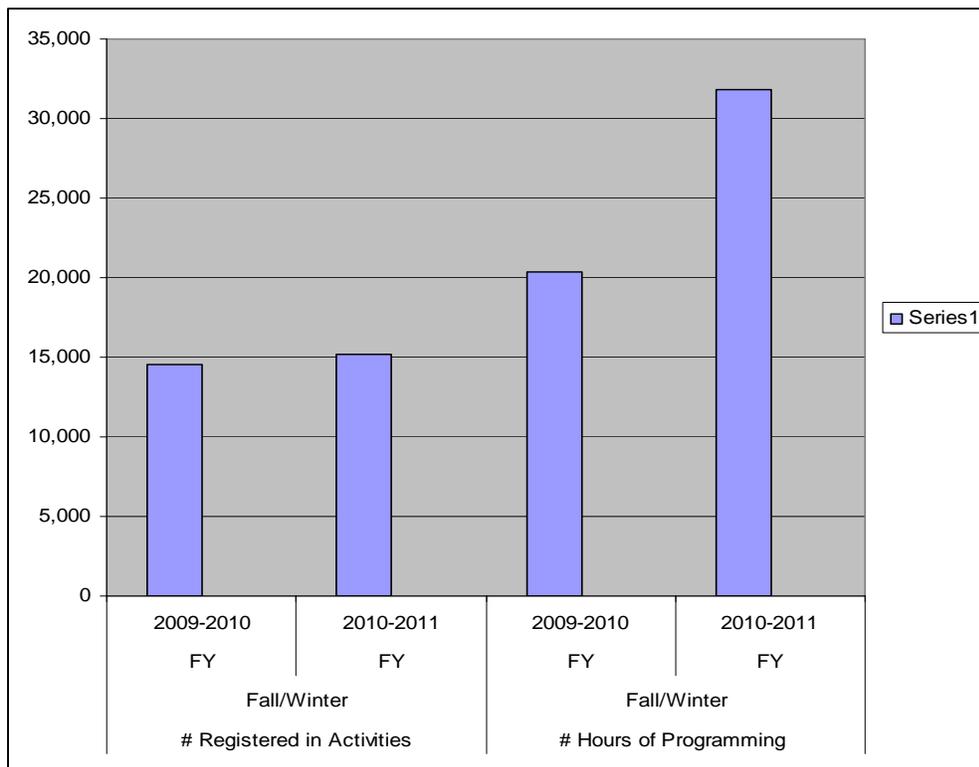


RPD attributes much of its success in improving park maintenance to an infusion of funding for additional gardeners and custodians in 2007 – 2008. As the Prop. C scores demonstrate the Department has put these additional maintenance resources to good use. The Department continues to work to better understand the relationship between its staffing needs and its

ability to deliver clean and safe parks to its customers. In the coming year, RPD intends to apply the same analysis to the Structural Maintenance Yard to better understand staffing at the Yard and to improve the efficiency of its construction trades in completing work orders.

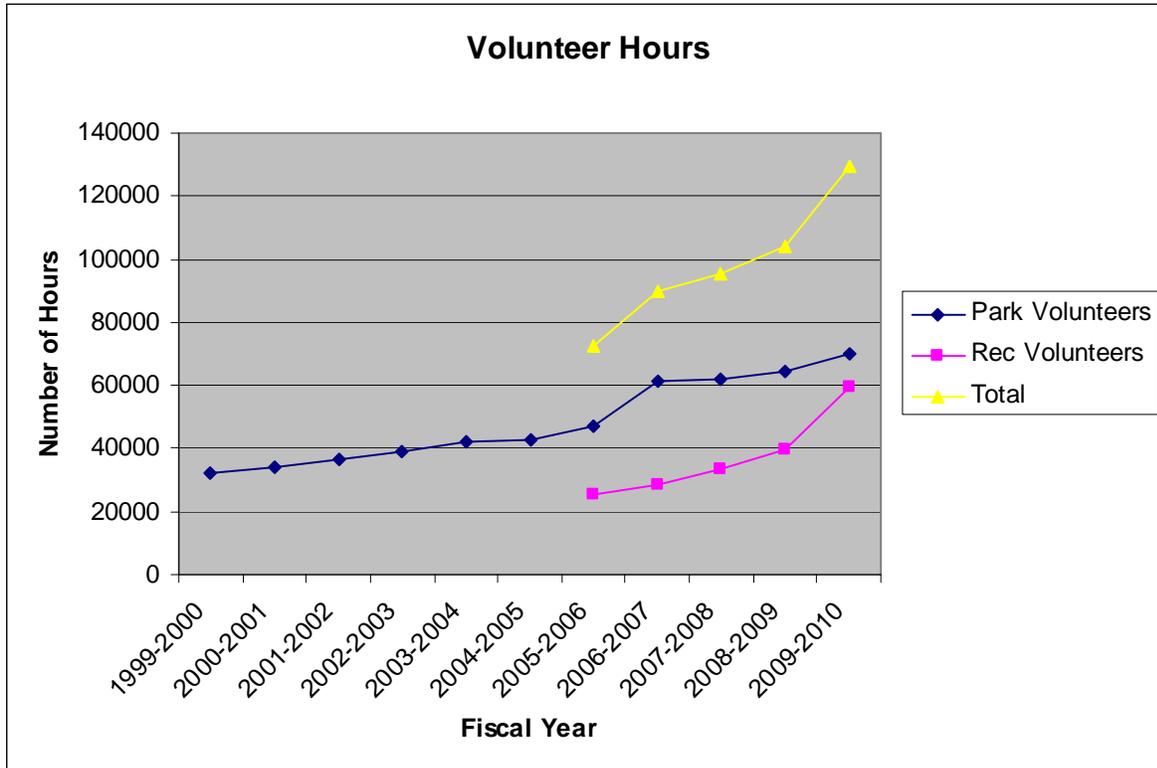
Improve Healthy Recreational Choices

The Department now has recreation programming data available from the Class system. This information has replaced RPD's previous recreation participation measures - hand tallies by recreation staff - which were plagued with issues of completeness and accuracy in reporting. The Department now has baseline data from 2008 - 2009 and 2009 - 2010 to set realistic 2011 - 2012 targets. During these two years, the Department has seen an increase in registrations in programs serving every demographic from tiny tots to seniors. Most dramatically, senior program registrations have tripled from 3,379 in FY 2008-2009 to 9,914 in FY 2009-2010. As the public becomes more aware of RPD's services and the Department moves to compete with the private market, it hopes to see the numbers continue to improve.



Improve Community Loyalty

In these austere economic times, volunteers are more crucial than ever to the Department. Volunteerism increases community loyalty by allowing community members to become personal stewards of their public lands. In 2008 – 2009 the Department tallied 104,119 hours of volunteer service. In 2009 - 2010 the Department benefited from 129,703 hours of volunteer service from graffiti painting to trail building. The Department expects its new website to increase these numbers in the coming fiscal year as signing up for volunteering has become easier than ever.



In another sign of community loyalty, RPD continues to improve its return rate for households who participate in recreation programming with a 2% increase in return rate this year compared to last. With the new recreation model, recreational program quality will continue to improve and increase community support of the department.

Improve Capital Infrastructure

Since 2000, the Capital Division has successfully completed 179 projects totaling \$328.7 million of improvements. This work accounts for projects identified in the 1997 Zoo Bond program and projects within Golden Gate Park funded under the umbrella of Proposition 40 - a state funding source. The figure also accounts for projects from the 2000 Bond Program. With the reopening of the Palace of Fine Arts, all projects in the 2000 Bond have been successfully completed and are open to the public, representing \$110 million of improvement over 55 parks and facilities spanning all 11 supervisorial districts.

The 2008 Clean and Safe Park Bond provides \$185 million for renovation to 12 neighborhood parks across the city; restroom renovation; a park forestry program; a trail reconstruction program; a playfields reconstruction program; and a community opportunity grants program. All of the community processes outlined in the bond report have been completed, except for the Urban Forestry Program, with unanimous votes from the community. The first projects to break ground were McCoppin Square Playground and Chinese Recreation Center in October and November 2010 respectively. To ensure on-time delivery of these projects, the Department has secured independent construction management, scheduling, estimating, and inspection services, and where appropriate, has moved these services in-house. As a measure of success, in FY 2009 – 2010, the Department delivered 88% of capital projects on or under budget, in comparison to 63% in FY 2007 – 2008.

Appendix:
Performance Measure Report,
FY 2009-2010