



STAFF REPORT

To: Parks and Recreation Commission

Date: November 21, 2024

From: Richard Holtz, Parks Superintendent & City Arborist, (650) 558-7333

Subject: Parks Services Level Prioritization

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Commission review the staff report, ask questions, and discuss the goals associated with prioritizing services to our community.

BACKGROUND

In March 2024, Director Glomstad and Manager Acquisti attended a Financial Sustainability certification program for parks and recreation professionals. The certification program was a combination of discussions, exercises and articles to generate conversations and help create ideas to strengthen the financial vision in the parks and recreation departments of those in attendance. The training equipped Director Glomstad and Manager Acquisti with strategies for the department to explore, including the need for intentional planning and the development of financial sustainability guidelines.

Utilizing these strategies, Director Glomstad, Superintendent Holtz, and Manager Acquisti presented Quality Service Through Intentional Planning to the Parks and Rec staff at the annual training in April 2024. The management team concentrated on the difference between the wants, demands, and needs of the Burlingame community. The team discussed options for prioritizing city funds and available resources that benefit the common good vs. special interest groups in the event of reduced funding. Staff ranked items specific to each division in order of priority. Once the rankings were established, the discussion pivoted to the categorization of services within both recreation and parks, focusing on which program areas should receive higher subsidies and which should be self-sustaining. The exercise enabled staff to think about the “big picture” when planning and budgeting for future programming.

On October 17, 2024, Manager Acquisti presented information to help develop financial sustainability guidelines and led a discussion and exercise to solicit feedback from the Commission on where they believe our community receives the greatest benefits. The input will help guide financial sustainability principles developed by the Parks and Recreation Department.

DISCUSSION

As with the Recreation Division, the cost of providing the services is dependent on the general fund and revenue generated by fees. The Parks Division differs because most of the services they provide do not offer the opportunity to charge fees.

When staff demands exceed the available financial resources, decisions need to be made as to the level of services (how often tasks are completed) or which services will no longer be provided (i.e., lining athletic fields). As with the Recreation Division, staff have looked at who receives the benefit of the service and whether the service provides the greatest benefit to the whole community (not special interest groups). In addition, does the service benefit a greater portion of the community with less staff effort, or does the service require greater effort for a smaller number of community members?

Parks staff completed an exercise prioritizing some common services provided in their daily operations. Parks and Recreation Commissioners completed the same exercise with similar results. This exercise aimed to identify those services that should be prioritized for preservation should available resources decline. The results indicated that safety and related safety items such as inspections and restroom maintenance are the highest priorities. General maintenance areas such as irrigation, trees, landscaping, and turf fall in the middle of the prioritization ranking. Areas that are not major parks, ballfield maintenance, and special projects received the lowest priority rating. Utilizing the general assessment of routine service tasks, staff have developed a draft service level prioritization schedule (Exhibit A).

The service level prioritization schedule is intended to be a working document that helps guide decision-making in times of limited resources. Decision makers would be equipped with this document and recorded data from Parks staff task entries into the GIS asset management system to make prudent decisions and prioritize those tasks that provide the greatest benefit to the community. Adjustments will need to be made over time due to the changing legal responsibilities of the City, additional assets gained (i.e., new parks or areas to maintain), cultural trends, and the shifting demographics of our community.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no anticipated fiscal impact from the review of this staff report nor recommendations of the Commission to adjust service level prioritization in accordance with available resources.

Attachments:

- Exhibit A: Draft Service Level Prioritization Schedule

Burlingame Park Division Maintenance Objectives 2024

City staff's goal is to provide high-level service to our community. Parks Division staff strive to protect public health, ensure safety and welfare, provide quality recreational experiences, and maintain aesthetic appearance. Staff bandwidth may be constrained at times due to limited labor, material, or equipment resources or increased responsibilities assigned to staff. During these periods, service levels may need to be adjusted to focus on core priorities.

Below are Parks Division priorities based on the resources allotted. This rating system is adapted from the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) service level mode system. In the Burlingame methodology, Service Level 1 represents complete resources provided in 2024 staffing levels for current assignments. Service Level 3 represents the minimum staff required for core functions. Maintenance objectives identify the minimum acceptability levels of service to be provided.

Adjusting service levels may sometimes be necessary due to temporary restrictions on available resources (labor vacancies/actions, equipment unavailability). At other times, adjustments may need to be made due to increased assigned responsibilities (special events, natural disasters). The following service levels are presented to help define the Park Division's maintenance program and focus on core efforts that help serve the greatest good for our community with limited resources.

Service Level 1 Maintenance Objectives (based on 100% staffing levels in 2024):

1. **Athletic Turf Care**
 - a. Athletic turf mowed once/week
 - b. Aeration six times per year with three aerations being of coring nature
 - c. Reseeding once/year
 - d. Fertilizing occurs three times/year
 - e. Soil amendment at least once/year
 - f. Edging will occur at least twice/month

2. **Non-Athletic Turf Care**
 - a. Non-athletic turf mowed once/week
 - b. Aeration three times/year
 - c. Reseeding of bare areas at least once/year
 - d. Fertilizing occurs three times/year
 - e. Edging will occur at least twice/month

3. **Baseball/Softball Fields**
 - a. Grading twice/year

- b. Drag 3 times/week and on all weekday game day
 - c. Ballfield maintenance- removing debris, filling in low areas, scarifying and grooming, and then wetting in for compaction
 - d. Dugouts will be blown at least once per week, weeds in the infield will be removed when visible, and garbage will be picked up daily
 - e. Grass lining will occur weekly
4. **Weed Abatement-** *Following the Burlingame Integrated Pest Management (IPM) policy.*
- a. Weeds should be addressed monthly
 - b. Abatement methods include mulch application, mowing, whipping, or removing weeds
 - c. Pre- and post-emergent herbicides will be utilized when appropriate to weather and the growing stage of the target weed
 - d. Fuel reduction work shall include mastication and weed abatement 200' from private property
5. **Irrigation-** *Most areas have an irrigation system available. Frequency of use depends on precipitation, evapotranspiration, season, and variety of plant material.*
- a. Inspections of major irrigation systems will occur monthly
 - b. Most irrigation issues reported shall be repaired within one week
 - c. New irrigation or automated valves will be upgraded when time allows to reduce staff workload
6. **Restrooms**
- a. Service once daily or twice if it is a high-use area/time
 - b. Servicing shall ensure an adequate supply of toilet paper and that restrooms are reasonably clean and free from odors
7. **Litter Control**
- a. Policing for litter at least twice/week
 - b. Trash receptacles shall be emptied at least twice/week
 - c. Trash along Rollins Road Soundwall and Broadway overpass will be picked up every other week
8. **Playgrounds**
- a. Inspection -by staff members each time a park facility is serviced and extensively once a month by the Park Division Safety Committee
 - b. Playground surfacing shall be blown at least twice per week
9. **Surfaces**
- a. Blow pavement surfaces twice/week
 - b. Graffiti will be mitigated within two workdays
 - c. Litter receptacles shall be cleaned once/month
 - d. Surfaces will be repaired, repainted, or replaced when they distract from the appearance or present a safety issue
10. **Courts (Tennis, Pickleball, Basketball, Sports)**
- a. Checked twice/week for garbage and leaf debris

- b. Surfaces blown once/week
 - c. Courts washed quarterly
11. **Repairs**
- a. Will be performed whenever safety or function is in question or when appearance has noticeably deteriorated
12. **Pest and Disease Control**
- a. This will be performed when disease or insects are inflicting noticeable damage
 - b. Control will be determined by the Parks IPM program, including insecticide treatment
13. **Projects**
- a. Parks management will prioritize and determine when the projects will occur based on workload, importance, and need
14. **Picnic Areas**
- a. Will be checked twice/week for debris
 - b. Tables will be washed weekly
 - c. Charcoal coal removed twice/week
15. **Landscaped Areas**
- a. All areas with available irrigation shall have vegetative cover
 - b. Replacement of dead/dying vegetation within three months
 - c. Leaves, weeds, and debris will be removed monthly, and water will be applied as needed
 - d. Pruning usually performed at least once per season unless species planted dictate more/less frequent attention
 - e. Small or newly planted trees in park settings will be watered at once/week
16. **Tree Pruning**
- a. 4 Year grid pruning cycle
 - b. Service Request pruning will occur within one month of inspection
 - c. Priority will be based on risk, season, and scheduled activity
17. **Tree Planting**
- a. Planting will occur three times/year
 - b. New planting areas included to further the urban forest for community benefit
 - c. Tree planting should match or exceed the number of trees removed
18. **Other Tree Activities**
- a. Inspections of City and private trees will occur within two weeks
 - b. Watering of newly planted trees will occur twice a month during the dry season
 - c. Fertilizing of designated trees will occur in the spring and fall
 - d. Pest Control will occur annually. Twice/year during heavy infestation

Level 2 Maintenance Objectives (based on less than 70% staffing levels in 2024):

1. **Athletic Turf Care**
 - a. Athletic Turf cut 2-3 times/month
 - b. Aeration 1-2 times/year (coring)
 - c. Reseeding once/year
 - d. Fertilizing occurs twice/year
 - e. Edging will occur at least once per month in high-profile areas

2. **Non-Athletic Turf Care**
 - a. Non-athletic turf cut 1-2 times/month
 - b. Aeration annually
 - c. Reseeding of bare areas at least once/year
 - d. Fertilizing annually
 - e. Edging will occur at least once/month in high-profile areas

3. **Baseball/Softball Fields**
 - a. Ballfields graded once/year
 - b. Ballfields will be dragged once/week
 - c. Ballfield maintenance- removing debris, filling in low areas, scarifying and grooming, and then wetting in for compaction
 - d. Dugouts will be blown monthly, and weeds in the infield will be removed monthly
 - e. Grass lining will occur every other week

4. **Weed Abatement- *Following the Burlingame Integrated Pest Management (IPM) policy.***
 - a. Weeds shall be addressed quarterly. Abatement methods include mowing, whipping, or removing weeds.
 - b. Pre- and post-emergent herbicides will be utilized when appropriate to weather and the growing stage of the target weed
 - c. No mulch applications to occur
 - d. Fuel reduction work will not occur by staff

5. **Irrigation- *Frequency of use depends on precipitation, evapotranspiration, season, and variety of plant material.***
 - a. Inspections of major irrigation systems will occur quarterly
 - b. Most irrigation issues reported shall be repaired within three weeks
 - c. No new irrigation installed

6. **Restrooms**
 - a. Service once daily

- b. Servicing shall ensure an adequate supply of toilet paper and that restrooms are reasonably clean and free from odors
- 7. **Litter Control**
 - a. Policing for litter at least once per week
 - b. Trash receptacles shall be emptied as needed
 - c. Trash along Rollins Road Soundwall and Broadway overpass will be picked up once/month
- 8. **Playgrounds**
 - a. Inspection by staff members each time a park facility is serviced and extensively once a month by the Park Division Safety Committee
 - b. Surfaces shall be blown at least once/week
- 9. **Surfaces**
 - a. Blow pavement surfaces once per month
 - b. Graffiti will be mitigated within a month
 - c. Litter receptacles shall be cleaned once a quarter
 - d. Surfaces will be repaired, repainted, or replaced when they distract from the appearance or present a safety issue
- 10. **Courts**
 - a. Tennis, pickleball, sport, and basketball courts will be checked once/week for garbage and leaf debris
 - b. Leaves will be blown off the court once/week
 - c. Courts washed annually
- 11. **Repairs**
 - a. Will be performed whenever safety or function is in question or when appearance has noticeably deteriorated
- 12. **Pest and Disease Control**
 - a. This will be performed when disease or insects are inflicting noticeable damage
 - b. Control will usually consist of the removal of plant material
- 13. **Projects**
 - a. Parks management will prioritize and determine when the projects will occur based on workload, importance, and need
 - b. Will be reserved for safety-related projects only
- 14. **Picnic Areas**
 - a. Will be checked weekly for debris
 - b. Tables will be washed monthly

- c. Charcoal coal will be removed once/week

15. Landscaped Areas

- a. All areas with available irrigation shall have vegetative cover.
- b. Landscape plantings will receive minimal attention
- c. Replacement of dead/dying plants will not occur
- d. Leaves, weeds, and debris will be removed quarterly
- e. No manual watering will occur
- f. Pruning usually performed a least once/season

16. Tree Pruning

- a. Grid Pruning will only occur in grids A, B, C-1, C-2, and D to achieve a five-year grid rotation to inspect and/or prune trees in these grid areas
- b. Service Request pruning will occur only when public safety is of concern
- c. Priority will be based on risk, season, and scheduled activity

17. Tree Planting

- a. Planting will occur two times/year
- b. No new planting areas
- c. Tree planting should match the number of trees removed

18. Other Tree Activities

- a. Inspections of City and private trees will occur within two months
- b. Watering of newly planted trees will not occur
- c. Fertilizing of designated trees will not occur
- d. Pest Control will occur annually

Level 3 Maintenance Objectives (based on less than 40% staff availability in 2024):

1. Athletic Turf Care

- a. Athletic turf will not be maintained
- b. No aeration
- c. No reseeding
- d. No fertilizing
- e. No edging

2. Non-Athletic Turf Care

- a. Non-athletic turf will not be maintained
- b. No aeration
- c. No reseeding
- d. No fertilizing
- e. No edging

3. **Baseball/Softball Fields**
 - a. City staff will not maintain ballfields
 - b. Partnerships with user groups shall be necessary to ensure safe playing conditions

4. **Weed Abatement- *Following the Burlingame Integrated Pest Management (IPM) policy.***
 - a. Weeds shall be addressed only when a safety issue exists
 - b. Abatement methods include mowing, whipping, or removing weeds
 - c. Post-emergent herbicides will be utilized when appropriate to weather and the growing stage of the target weed
 - d. No mulch or pre-emergent herbicide applications to occur
 - e. Fuel reduction work will not occur

5. **Irrigation- *Frequency of use depends on precipitation, evapotranspiration, season, and variety of plant material.***
 - a. Most irrigation systems will be turned off
 - b. No inspections of irrigation systems will be routine
 - c. Most irrigation issues reported will not be repaired
 - d. No new irrigation installed

6. **Restrooms**
 - a. Service once daily
 - b. Servicing shall ensure an adequate supply of toilet paper and that restrooms are reasonably clean and free from odors

7. **Litter Control**
 - a. Policing for litter at least once a month
 - b. Trash receptacles shall be emptied as needed
 - c. Trash along the Rollins Road Soundwall and Broadway overpass will be picked up semi-annually

8. **Playgrounds**
 - a. Inspection- Visually by staff members each time a park facility is serviced and extensively once a quarter by the Park Division Safety Committee
 - b. Surfaces shall be blown or cleaned when safety is a concern

9. **Surfaces**
 - a. Blow only high-traffic pavement surfaces once per month. And low-traffic surfaces when safety is a concern
 - b. Graffiti will be mitigated only if it is offensive
 - c. Litter receptacles- will not be washed
 - d. Surfaces will be repaired, repainted, or replaced when they present a

safety issue

10. **Courts**
 - a. Tennis, pickleball, sport, and basketball courts will be checked once/week for garbage and leaf debris, but leaves will only be blown off the court once a month.
 - b. Courts will not be washed
11. **Repairs**
 - a. Will be performed whenever only when public safety is of concern
12. **Pest and Disease Control**
 - a. No control will occur
13. **Projects**
 - a. No Projects will occur
14. **Picnic Areas**
 - a. Will be checked weekly for debris
 - b. Tables will be washed quarterly, and charcoal coal will be removed once/month
15. **Landscaped Areas**
 - a. Existing landscapes shall only be maintained when public safety is of concern.
 - b. No new landscape plantings will occur
16. **Tree Pruning**
 - a. Select tree species, sizes, and locations will be identified for preventative maintenance to achieve a five-year grid rotation to inspect and or prune these identified trees
 - b. Service Request pruning will occur only when public safety is of concern
 - c. Priority will be based on risk, season, and scheduled activity
17. **Tree Planting**
 - a. No new tree planting will occur
18. **Other Tree Activities**
 - a. Inspections of City and private trees will occur quarterly
 - b. Watering of newly planted trees will not occur
 - c. Fertilizing of designated trees will not occur
 - d. Pest Control will not occur