

AT A GLANCE

Audit of Parks Branch Operations – Phase 2: Supporting Vibrant Parks by Improving Park Asset Management and Repair Processes

WHY THIS AUDIT MATTERS

City parks play a vital role in enhancing the quality of life for people of all ages. Ensuring the ongoing maintenance and repair of park assets and amenities is key to ensuring safe and well functioning public spaces.

BACKGROUND

This audit is the second phase of the operational review of the Parks Branch. It aimed to address whether parks maintenance and non-capital repair needs were being identified, prioritized, and addressed in a timely manner.

Non-capital repairs of park assets and amenities (e.g., leaking water fountains, damaged playground equipment and park benches, graffiti removal) as well as the repair of small engine equipment used by the Parks Branch, are managed and delivered by Parks Branch Technical Services staff.

BY THE NUMBERS

- **44%** of park maintenance inspection repair-related deficiencies we selected for review did not have a related work order created promptly, or at all, or had other issues
- **22%** of deficiencies identified during site visits by AG staff, but not through park maintenance inspections, should be addressed by Technical Services
- **43%** of sampled work orders were not filled out properly
- **Almost 8,200** open work orders created from 2018 to July 2024 – **90%** of recently open work orders we reviewed had been completed but were not closed in SAP

HOW RECOMMENDATIONS WILL BENEFIT THE CITY

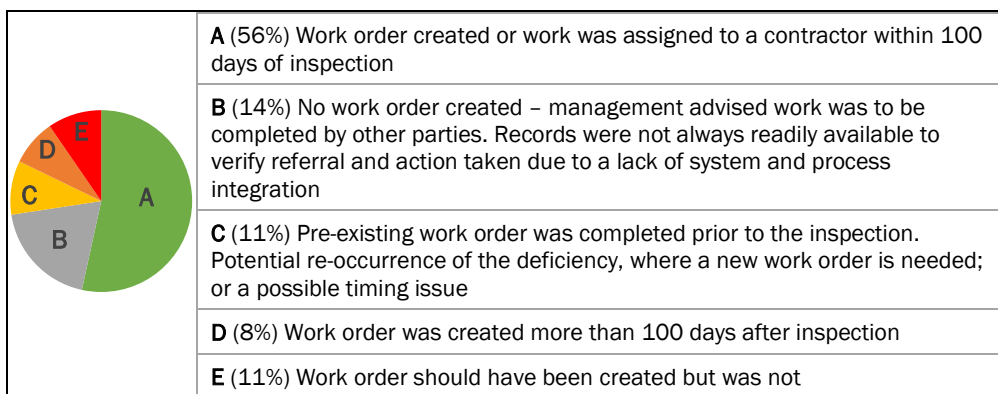
The nine recommendations contained in this report will support vibrant parks by improving park asset management and repair processes.

WHAT WE FOUND

Our audit identified opportunities for improvement in the following areas:

A. Improving Park Maintenance Inspections and Monitoring of the Resolution of Deficiencies

- Work orders were created within 100 days for over half of park maintenance inspection repair-related deficiencies we selected for review. However, for just under half of the deficiencies we reviewed, we found that work orders were not created promptly (D) or at all (B, E), or it was not clear if there was a reoccurrence of the deficiency where a new work order was needed (C).



- Where the responsibility for park repairs is transferred to others (e.g., general parks maintenance, seasonal service, capital repairs), there is no end-to-end tracking from identification to resolution in a single integrated system.
- Some repair-related deficiencies were noted by Auditor General (AG) staff during site visits to 40 parks but were not identified through park maintenance inspections. Variances in the number and nature of deficiencies identified are indicative of inconsistencies in the approach to maintenance inspections performed by Parks staff.
- When repair-related deficiencies are not promptly identified and/or work orders are not promptly created, this can lead to delays in addressing the repair need. Clearer guidance can improve the consistency of the inspection process, ensuring the deficiencies are identified, documented, and addressed in a timely manner. The Parks Branch should also clarify roles and responsibilities for monitoring that follow-up action has occurred.

B. Implementing Consistent Practices for Repair-Related Service Requests and Work Order Tracking

- The current work order system (SAP) is not used effectively to track and monitor work order status and does not fully meet the Parks Branch's needs. Procedures for effective monitoring and follow-up of open work orders are needed.
- Service level standards (e.g., completion timeframes) have not been established and performance measured to ensure repairs are promptly completed.
- The Parks Branch should implement procedures to improve record keeping and accountability for daily activities of Technical Services staff, including using GPS.

C. Establishing a Comprehensive System for Monitoring Public Complaints from Intake to Resolution

- The Parks Branch does not have a centralized system to effectively track, log and manage public complaints, making it difficult to compile and analyze data to identify trends or address the underlying causes of recurring issues.
- The Parks Branch can improve compliance with targets for assessing, acknowledging, and resolving complaints received from Torontonians.