



Department: Public Works
Cost Center: 5000
For Agenda of: 1/14/2025
Placement: Business
Estimated Time: 30 Minutes

FROM: Matt Horn, Public Works Director
Prepared By: Greg Cruce, Deputy Director of Public Works – Maintenance Operations

SUBJECT: PRESENT THE 2024 PUBLIC WORKS MAINTENANCE DIVISION STAFFING STUDY

RECOMMENDATION

Receive and file the 2024 Public Works Maintenance Division staffing study final report.

POLICY CONTEXT

During the 2023-25 budget setting process, the City Council set four Major City Goals, which included: 1. Climate Action, Open Space & Sustainable Transportation, 2. Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI), 3. Economic Resiliency, Cultural Vitality and Fiscal Sustainability, and 4. Housing and Homelessness. The scope of services completed by the Public Works Maintenance Division is extensive and plays an integral part of all Major City Goals.

DISCUSSION

Background

The Public Works Department is one of ten departments within the City and has 116 full-time and supplemental staff members. The department has three separate divisions: Engineering, Maintenance Operations, and Mobility Services. The Public Works Maintenance Division (Maintenance Division) is the largest division within the department and consists of 53 staff members. The Maintenance Division is responsible for maintenance and repair of City facilities, fleet assets, parks and landscaped areas, and all City-owned infrastructure within the public right-of-way, which includes streets, streetlights, traffic signals, sidewalks, signs, furnishings, and trees. In addition to regular preventative and reactive maintenance, the division supports a wide array of special events and City emergencies throughout the year on a planned and unplanned basis. The division is also responsible for managing clean ups of encampments and abandoned trash in the public-right-of-way, City parks and City facilities. This work is completed by seven separate operating programs within the division: Facilities Maintenance, Fleet Maintenance, Parks Maintenance, Streets and Sidewalk Maintenance, Signals and Streetlight Maintenance, Swim Center Maintenance, and Urban Forest Services.

Item 7b

Over the past five years, the City has experienced considerable growth in residential and commercial development, resulting in additional infrastructure maintenance needs. For example, new parks are often required as part of a larger residential development, which necessitate added maintenance services to maintain the new parks. Additionally, the passage of Measure G-20 in the 2020 November general election increased the local sales tax revenue in the City by an additional 1% (from 0.5% to 1.5%), enabling the City to deliver a larger capital plan annually, expanding the City's maintenance needs. Lastly, implementation of new technology such as AskSLO, sustainability goals, and addressing homelessness and community expectations are resulting in a higher level of maintenance needs.

As the roles, responsibilities, and expectations of the Maintenance Division have increased in the past five years, department leadership has explored structural changes within the division and evaluated methods of service delivery to meet the changing and dynamic environment. The purpose of this Council discussion is to provide a current overview of the City's different maintenance programs, a recently completed assessment of the Maintenance Division by consulting firm Baker Tilly, and their recommendations on immediate resource augmentation priorities. Staff further invite City Council comments, questions, and general input on the Public Works Maintenance Division.

Attachment A provides the current context for the Maintenance Division in detail and an overview of the Baker Tilly report. This supplemental report includes an overview of the major maintenance functions, historic staffing levels, current challenges and opportunities, as well as immediate and long-term needs.

Attachment B is the resource report provided by Baker Tilly. Their assessment was supported by review of relevant City documents and work order data, interviews of City staff and key stakeholders, and review of peer city data review and maintenance best management practices.

Baker Tilly considered the current context and analyzed all the data to form 24 recommendations. The recommendations fall into five major categories:

- Organizational Structure and Staffing
- Performance Measurement/Management
- Technology and Tools
- Service Level Agreements
- Strategic Communication

Several of their recommendations are minor in cost (staff time primarily), such as evaluating the need for future resources as new assets like parks come online in the future, developing performance measurements, and improving communications and expectations with regard to the online tool Ask SLO.

Other recommendations are more resource heavy. Those come in the form of recommendations for additional staffing. The table below outlines Baker Tilly’s recommendations for immediate staffing additions. (Some of the recommendations have already been implemented).

Baker Tilly Recommended Immediate FTE Needs			
Priority	Program	Request	Annual Cost
1	Fleet	Lead Mechanic* ¹	\$100,447
2	PW Admin	Maintenance Superintendent (2 FTE)**	N/A
3	Parks	Parks Crew Coordinator**	N/A
4	Facilities	Facilities Technician*	\$92,325
5	Fleet	Fleet Specialist (Half Time to Full Time)*	\$41,223
6	PW Admin	Business Analyst	\$119,828
		Total	\$353,823

* Request titles that are appended by an asterisk (*) indicate the request is considered internal services and support work efforts from different departments and programs within the City. These positions result in partial reimbursement to the General Fund for work that is specific to the Parking, Sewer and Water Enterprise funds.

** The addition of two superintendents was recommended to enhance operations, long-range planning, and overall management support. These positions were added at the 2024-25 Supplemental Budget, with one Superintendent managing the Parks Maintenance and Urban Forestry Programs and the other overseeing Streets Maintenance, Signals and Streetlight Programs. The new management layer will also aid with succession planning and opportunities for staff advancement. One Parks Crew Coordinator position was also created in the 2024-25 Supplemental Budget, utilizing existing financial resources to not increase the department’s overall budget.

Previous Council or Advisory Body Action

The City had a third party conduct an organizational assessment of the Public Works Department as a whole in 2011, which included an analysis of the Maintenance Division as part of the work.

Public Engagement

Engagement work for this resources report was focused on City Management, Department Directors and Deputy Directors, and Maintenance Supervisors. External engagement was completed with the Downtown SLO CEO as a frequent stakeholder in maintenance activities and downtown partner.

CONCURRENCE

The staffing study final report has been shared with the Human Resources and Finance Departments.

¹ The Lead Mechanic job description does not currently exist; the anticipated expense was used from similar positions in the City’s salary schedule.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The California Environmental Quality Act does not apply to the recommended action in this report, because the action does not constitute a “Project” under CEQA Guidelines Sec. 15378.

FISCAL IMPACT

Budgeted: No
 Funding Identified: No

Budget Year: 2025-2033

Fiscal Analysis:

Funding Sources	Total Budget Available	Current Funding Request	Remaining Balance	Annual Ongoing Cost
General Fund	\$	\$	\$	\$
State				
Federal				
Fees				
Other:				
Total	\$TBD	\$TBD	\$	\$TBD

The implementation of new positions will have a fiscal impact to the City. The exact impact is unknown at this time as it will vary depending on the number of positions added and hired and the cadence at which they are hired. Included as Attachment C to this report are three different options for phased implementation of the Baker Tilly report’s recommendations as well as ongoing costs. It should be noted that future costs shown in future years will need to be escalated with the appropriate inflationary index.

ALTERNATIVES

Council could decide to not receive and file the staffing study. This action is not recommended by staff as the staffing study provides an updated, comprehensive department analysis and identifies areas for procedural and staffing improvements.

ATTACHMENTS

- A - Maintenance Division Overview
- B - Baker Tilly Resources Report
- C - Phased Resource Implementation Options