

Recreation and Park

Maintenance Standards and Evaluation

Controller's Office

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Park Maintenance Standards

The City Services Auditor Charter amendment (Nov. 2003 Prop. C) requires:

- Quantifiable, measurable, objective standards for park maintenance;
- An annual audit of the City's performance to those standards, with geographic detail;
- Regular schedules for park maintenance to be established, tested, and made available to the public.

Development Process

Research and
Benchmarking

Rec/Park
Management

Park Supervisors
Working Group

Public Discussion
and Comment

Controller
& Rec/Park
Field Test 55 sites

Parameters

Standards and documents should:

- Fit San Francisco's resources and environment;
- Be specific;
- Be comprehensive;
- Be clear and readable for the non-expert in plain language;
- Be flexible for varying sizes and types of parks and facilities;
- Data-gathering effort appropriate to the value of the information;
- Use systems already in place at Rec/Park;
- Use best practices and City expertise.

Public Discussion and Outreach

Board City Services Committee	January 6
Mailing to 500+ Groups & Citizens	January 19
Rec/Park Commission	January 20
Park/Rec/Open Space Adv. Comm.	February 1
Public Comment end date	February 11
SFStat Discussion	March 1

Public Comment

Main Topics	Examples of comments	Quantity* (%)
Cleanliness	Standards are too tolerant. Examples of litter should include cigarette butts and human/pet waste.	34 (20%)
Dog Play Areas	Drainage/flooded area and turf maintenance standards should be included.	19 (11%)
Inspection Process	Questions regarding monitoring systems & follow-up. Frequency: annual park inspection is insufficient.	17 (10%)
Holes	Holes of 1 ft. in diameter or depth seem too big.	15 (9%)
Other elements	Natural areas should have standards. (7 or 4%) Irrigation systems have to be evaluated. Aesthetic principles of landscape design should be addressed.	14 (8%)

* Number and percent of comments submitted. Over 30 individuals and/or organizations submitted over 170 comments about park standards as of February 25, 2005.

Public Comment Results

Main Changes	Examples of changes	
More stringent	100% drainage/flooded free in turf athletic fields vs. 90%. Feces included in all cleanliness standards.	
Less stringent	80% lawns edged vs. 100%. Exclude leaves from lawns.	
New	95% of stairways are free of weeds; Vines in trees; Cleanliness, flooded areas, height/mowed in dog play areas.	
Deleted	Lighting and irrigation systems	
Other Clarifications	Name changes, I.e., waste & recycling receptacles. Consistency across elements – cleanliness standards. Holes for lawns include holes and mounds caused by animals. "Noticeable" means from a ten foot distance.	

Results

Standards Manual and Evaluation Form

- Three categories with 14 features in total;
- Each feature measured with between 4 and 8 elements;
- Standards are designed with Yes/No answers;
- Some standards are scaled (ie 90% = yes);
- Evaluation for easy walking around the parks; and
- Tracks to Rec & Park's property database (TMA).

Park Standards: Features

A. Landscaped and Hardscaped Areas

1. Lawns
2. Ornamental Gardens, Ground Covers & Shrubs
3. Trees
4. Hardscapes and Trails
5. Open Space

B. Recreational Areas

6. Turf Athletic Fields (Soccer pitches)
7. Outdoor Athletic Courts (Tennis/Basketball courts)
8. Children's Play Areas
9. Dog Play Areas

C. Amenities and Structures

10. Restrooms
11. Parking Lots & Roads
12. Waste and Recycling Receptacles
13. Benches, Tables, and Grills
14. Amenities & Structures

Park Standards: Elements

Category	Park feature	Elements examined under each park feature	
A. Landscaping			
1.	Lawns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Cleanliness ● Color ● Density and spots ● Drainage/ flooded area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Edged ● Height/ mowed ● Holes

Park Standards

Field Test Examples

1. Lawns Evaluation

What is inspected: Surface condition of landscaped areas, particularly lawns. Lawns that are mowed by hand or by mower trucks are inspected.

<i>1. Lawns</i>			Meet standards?		
No.	Measured element		Yes	No	N/A
1.1	Cleanliness	1.1.a			
		1.1.b			
1.2	Color				
1.3	Density and spots				
1.4	Drainage/ flooded area				
1.5	Edged				
1.6	Height/ mowed				
1.7	Holes				

1. Lawns: Pass



1. Lawns: Fail



4. Hardscapes and Trails Evaluation

<i>4. Hardscapes and Trails</i>							
					Meet standards?		
No.	Measured element				Yes	No	N/A
4.1	Cleanliness						
4.2	Drainage/ flooded area						
4.3	Graffiti						
4.4	Surface quality						
4.5	Weediness						

4. Hardscapes and Trails: Pass



4. Hardscapes and Trails: Fail



9. Dog Play Areas Evaluation

What is inspected: Any designated off-leash areas.

9. Dog Play Areas				
If this park feature is not applicable, mark here ____		Meet standards?		
No.	Measured element	Yes	No	N/A
9.1	Bag Dispenser			
9.2	Cleanliness			
9.3	Drainage/flooded area			
9.4	Height/mowed			
9.5	Signage			
9.6	Surface Quality			
9.7	Waste Receptacle			

9. Dog Play Areas: Pass



9. Dog Play Areas: Fail



10. Restrooms Evaluation

<i>10. Restrooms</i>		Restroom __ of __		
Were the restrooms open? Yes ___ No ___		Meet standards?		
No.	Measured element	Yes	No	N/A
10.1	Cleanliness			
10.2	Graffiti			
10.3	Functionality of structures			
10.4	Lighting			
10.5	Odor			
10.6	Painting			
10.7	Signage			
10.8	Supply inventory			
10.9	Waste receptacles			

10. Restrooms: Pass



10. Restrooms: Fail



12. Waste & Recycling Receptacles: Pass



12. Waste & Recycling Receptacles: Fail



Field Tests

- February 11, 2005
- 19 Teams of Controller's Office and Rec & Park Supervisors
- Visited 55 parks citywide
 - 3 regional parks
 - 3 civic plazas or squares
 - 36 neighborhood parks
 - 13 mini parks
- Entered Controller's Office results into database

Field Test Results

Percentage of park standards met, by supervisorial district and type of park

District	District Average	Mini Park	Civic Plaza or Square	Neighborhood Park or Playground	Regional Park
5	96	100	--	93	--
1	93	--	--	94	91
3	85	74	83	92	--
4	83	--	--	83	81
9	80	85	--	78	--
6	78	75	87	76	--
2	76	--	--	76	--
8	75	51	--	77	89
11	72	72	--	--	--
7	68	67	--	68	--
10	67	--	--	67	--
Citywide	81	76	84	77	87

These are results of draft park standards that were tested in the field by the department and the Controller's Office in February 2005. Results above are from Controller's Office evaluation only and should not be used as a baseline for future analysis.

Eighty-one percent of park features citywide met standards, with Districts 5 and 1 meeting the highest percentage of standards, and Districts 7 and 10 the least. On average, mini parks met the fewest standards.

Source: Controller's Office

Field Test Results

Percentage of park standards met, by park feature

Park Feature	% standards met
Waste Management	92
Parking Areas and Roads	90
Trees	90
Restrooms	82
Childrens Play Areas	81
Turf Athletic Fields	80
Buildings and Structures	79
Outdoor Athletic Courts	79
Dog Play Areas	78
Paths, Sidewalks, and Trails	77
Benches, Tables, and Grills	76
Open Space (not Natural Areas)	75
Lawns	74
Ground Covers and Shrubs	70
All features	81

Waste Management, Parking Areas & Roads, and Trees met park standards at least 90% of the time. Park features categorized as Ground Covers and Shrubs, which includes all planted areas, met standards 70% of the time.

Source: Controller's Office

Next Steps

- Resolve technology issues
- Controller's Office first annual report
- FY05-06 Department Implementation
 - Parks will be evaluated twice a year starting in June 2005.
 - Park section supervisors and assistant superintendents will evaluate 50% of the parks on a quarterly basis.
- FY05-06 Controller's Office Audit

Wrap up & Thanks

Many thanks to:

- Rec/Park staff and managers, especially the area and park section supervisors;
- Neighborhood and parks organizations for informed feedback;
- Many citizens for thoughtful comments and interest.

