

PUBLIC WORKS AND UTILITIES DIVISION

STRATEGIC PLAN

June 15, 2007

Mission Statement: Efficient delivery of high quality, cost effective, environmentally sound infrastructure *and services*.

Key Customers:

- Citizens and Businesses of the City and the Region
- Mayor
- City Council
- Private Utilities and other Public Service Providers
- Developers/Economic Development Organizations
- Visitors
- Users of the Spokane River, Lake Spokane, the Spokane Aquifer and those who benefit and enjoy the quality environment of the Spokane Community

Definition of Products/Services:

- Operate and maintain the sanitary and stormwater collection and treatment systems and the Riverside Park Water Reclamation Facility 24 hours per day, 365 days per year; collect and treat nearly 40 million gallons of wastewater per day, maintaining 830 miles of sanitary sewer, 300 miles of stormwater, over 14,000 catch basins.
- Operate and maintain the City's water and hydroelectric utility system which consists of 99 water pumps, 5 hydroelectric generators, and 34 reservoirs in the most efficient and effective manner possible to minimize rate costs to the customers.
- Deliver a safe, dependable water supply to our customers for domestic, industrial and fire protection use.
- Maintain over 2,100 lane miles of City streets, 38 vehicular bridges, 316 traffic signals, 2,600 luminaries, 78,000 traffic signs; annually paint 3.5 million linear feet of arterial striping, and sweep and flush 9,200 lane miles; operate traffic signals and ITS systems, and provide Parking Enforcement.
- Provide dependable, efficient collection of garbage, recyclables and yard waste; maintain the Southside and Northside Landfills, and support the City's special events and Neighborhood Council cleanup programs.
- Provide a full range of engineering services including design, environmental review and construction management for all Public Works and Utilities capital infrastructure projects

- Provide private development/land use/right of way permit and plan reviews, facilitation and permit issuance on behalf of the Public Works and Utilities Departments.
- Develop, maintain, and update engineering standards, manuals, policies, and ordinances
- Maintain and operate the Spokane Regional Solid Waste System including the Waste to Energy facility and the Valley and North County Transfer Stations, and administer county-wide waste reduction, reuse and recycling planning and education programs.
- Manage over 1,400 municipal fleet vehicles and other maintenance equipment, fueling locations, parts inventories, a communication system that includes over 4,000 radios, cell phones, pagers, base stations and other installations, and most of the buildings utilized by the City.
- Manage the Six Year Capital Programs for the Street Department and the Water, Wastewater and Stormwater Utilities and identify, obtain and administer grants, loans and other revenue sources for funding capital projects.
- Lead the City's annexation efforts to expand the corporate boundaries, population, tax base and economic development opportunities.
- Provide technical expertise to protect the quality of life and ensure compliance with environmental regulations.
- Provide first class customer service to 160,000 annual City utility customer contacts and efficient and effective credit and collection services for the City's utility departments.
- Manage over 1,000 parcels of City owned real estate.

Strategic Analysis – Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT):

Strengths:

- Experienced, dedicated, professional staff and work force
- Ability to deliver quality core public works and utility infrastructure and services at a competitive cost.
- Fiscally sound Utility Departments which deliver high quality products and services at affordable rates
- Sound management and excellent customer service

Weaknesses:

- General Fund Departments experiencing increased interdepartmental costs.
- Outdated and physically separated maintenance and operational facilities for Streets, Solid Waste, Water, Fleet and Construction Management result in inefficiencies and redundancies.
- Aging Infrastructure, particularly the street system, coupled with shrinking resources from the federal, state and local levels.

- Aging workforce and potential loss of institutional knowledge
- Increasing demands of regulatory agencies on both the Sewer and Water Utilities.

Opportunities

- Review organization and operations using the Matrix recommendations and pursue increased cost recovery for general fund departments and opportunities to increase revenue stream that will benefit investment in the infrastructure.
- Construction of a single, modern Operations Complex would improve productivity and efficiencies and would eliminate the redundancies of maintaining two aged facilities.
- Strategically pursue fiscally sound annexations which expand tax base, population growth and economic development opportunities.
- Invest in employee training and mentoring programs and new employee recruitment; improve organization and access to central files and historical data.

Threats

- Continued loss of experienced employees and institutional knowledge.
- Competition, duplication, and lack of cooperation between neighboring jurisdictions for limited resources.
- Gap between expenses and revenues.
- Additional statewide initiatives and unfunded mandates which further hamper the City's ability to keep up with necessary expenses.

Key Success Factors (KSF):

- Continue a high level of communications and coordination within the Division of Public Works and Utilities
- Continue to search for adequate, reliable funding for the Street Department
- Compliance with TMDL agreement and NPDES Phase II requirements
- Significant progress on design component of Phase II Operations Complex by end of 2007

Goals and Strategies:

GOAL #1: Construct an Operations Complex (Mayor's priority for Customer Service) (SWOT – Opportunity/KSF)

Strategy

- Update Mayor and Council on Status
- Complete Phase II facilities design
- Budget construction monies for General Fund Departments

GOAL #2: Consolidate all engineering design functions within Engineering Services (Mayor's priority for Economic Development) (SWOT – Opportunity)

Strategy:

- Review Utility and Street Departments' operational needs for daily engineering support functions
- Define roles, functions, and duties of engineering services and operation/utility engineering personnel.
- Review and modify as necessary design, developer services, plat/plan review, and building permit review processes in coordination with the Economic Development Division and the Public Works and Utilities departments.
- Prioritize and develop an implementation schedule that considers natural attrition, the capacity of existing facilities, the cost of implementation, and assurances that all functions are clearly accounted for in the reorganization.
- Submit implementation schedule for review and approval (Winter 2007)

GOAL #3: Create Department of Regulatory and Environmental Affairs within the Public Works and Utilities Division (Mayor's priority for Quality of Life) (SWOT – Weakness)

Strategy:

- Develop organizational and staffing needs to meet increasing regulatory and environmental demands.
- Demonstrate need to Mayor and City Council through structured briefing.
- Make necessary budget revisions to accommodate new department.

GOAL #4: Create a Department consolidating all facilities maintenance staff City-wide as part of the Public Works and Utilities Division. (Mayor's priority for Financial Stability) (SWOT – Opportunity)

Strategy:

- Develop organizational and staffing needs to meet needs of all City departments.
- Demonstrate need to Mayor and City Council through structured briefing.
- Make necessary budget revisions to accommodate new department.

GOAL #5: Maximize Automated Garbage Collection (Mayor's priority for Customer Service) (SWOT – Opportunity)

Strategy:

- Automate as many semi-automated routes as practical and
- Re-route all garbage collection to increase the average number of stops per day.

- Implement the use of GPS tracking software to streamline routing, compare production and identify fuel inefficiencies, and investigate the use of specialized equipment for problem collection areas.

GOAL #6: Eliminate sewage collection system overflows during “non-rain event” days to improve water quality of the Spokane River. (Mayor's priority for Quality of Life) (SWOT –KSF)

Strategy:

- Increase inspections after storm events to assure there are no blockages associated with the Combined Collection System. (By 7/07)
- Evaluate after summer 2007 and make changes in inspections, cleaning and monitoring. (By 1/08)
- Increase electronic monitoring of outfalls. (By 9/07)

GOAL #7: Develop a residential water meter replacement program (Mayor's priority for Customer Service) (SWOT – Strength)

Strategy:

- Test a representative number of composite meters to determine accuracy at 10, 15, and 20 year intervals.
- Based on data from (1) above develop targeted meters to replace
- Reorganize existing staff to begin implementation of replacement program.

GOAL #8: Complete Rate Recovery Study (Mayor's priority for Financial Stability) (SWOT – Threats)

Strategy:

- Assist Economic Development Division in defining scope and deliverables for study
- Participate study and analysis
- Implement

GOAL #9: The Street Department should be responsible for both public and private utility cut patching to ensure consistency and effectiveness (Mayor's priority for Customer Service) (SWOT – Opportunity)

Strategy:

- Negotiate contracts with utility providers for patching utility cuts
- Utilize Street Department crews to perform this task

GOAL #10: Establish an accessible, accurate, and dynamic database of property owned by the City of Spokane property (Mayor's priority for Customer Service) (SWOT – Opportunity)

Strategy

- Convert the historic real estate files to universally viewable electronic files
- Provide electronic copies of all current and future documents.

- Link pertinent files to associated properties via database to allow timely and accurate tracking.