PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT RESPONSE TO KPMG OPERATIONAL & PERFORMANCE REVIEW

Department Wide Recommendations

Public Works (PW) appreciates KPMG's commendations for the Department's deep commitment to its mission of serving the critical needs of the community and efficiently maintaining public works infrastructure, facilities and services. Public Works will undertake the following actions

#	Recommendation	Department Response	Fiscal Impact/Challenges/ Opportunities	Implementation Timeframe
1.1	Reestablish quarterly site inspections to enhance control performance and enable more proactive management of safety, accessibility and risk Department-wide.	PW agrees with KPMG's recommendation to reestablish our quarterly site inspections. The safety representatives in each yard complete monthly Illness, Injury, and Prevention Plan (IIPP) Inspection checklists. Additionally, our Public Works Safety Officer assesses all accidents and hazardous situations in order to keep our staff and the public as safe as possible. The quarterly site inspections are a more in- depth assessment of each of our facilities and job sites. Our goal with these assessments is to be on the lookout for hazards and potential hazards that may have been missed in the monthly IIPP inspections and to make sure our sites continue to be compliant with OSHA, Cal OSHA and other regulatory agencies. To closely track the costs of accidents we are hoping to obtain this information from Risk Management on a regular basis in the near future to integrate into our assessments. Training required by OSHA and other regulatory agencies is provided to all staff on a regular basis. Additionally, the safety representatives in each yard are trained on the IIPP Inspection checklists.	This will be accomplished within current budget and programmatic processes. Our challenges in accomplishing this is due to a lack of staff. We have recently filled a vacant position that will be helpful in accomplishing this task. We have also moved some of the safety related administrative tasks to an administrative assistant to take some of the workload off of our Safety Officers.	We anticipate restarting the quarterly site inspections in January of 2024.

1.2	Leverage technology to streamline project progress tracking, track alignment to strategic goals and enhance the flow of information across the Department.	PW agrees with the intent of KPMG's recommendation as it pertains to reporting on project progress tracking, goals and flow of information. The Divisions have started working on pilot programs using smartsheets and other technologies to implement this recommendation. PW Information Technology staff will work to develop solutions that can be applied department-wide to ensure flow of information across the Department. PW will be using technology already acquired (Smartsheet, SharePoint, PowerBI, TreePlotter and ArcGIS) along with future systems (WorkDay, Accela and Enterprise GIS) which will give the Public Works Department a more easily accessible cross divisional view. The new Workday ERP system should address the current data incompatibilities of the financial and human resources data and the Enterprise GIS System will provide information. Future systems will have the ability to roll up this data into dashboard views and visualizations at all levels for internal use and public information. The engagement of the departmental PIO will be considered at all stages of the process.	To be able to fully implement this recommendation would require identification of current staff to lay the groundwork and would also require one additional FTE. Current staffing levels can lay the groundwork for system integrations as the FTE position(s) become realized. This FTE could be combined with the FTE addition for recommendation 1.3. Full realization also depends on the County's implementation of WorkDay and a fully enabled Enterprise GIS system. With all systems in place the Public Works department will achieve the desired state as well be positioned for future needs.	Pilot projects will be implemented and tested in the first six months of 2024. Refinement and expansion to larger user groups will take place over 12-24 months.
1.3	Assess department-wide technology needs and develop a technology modernization plan to enhance process automation, reduce paper process, and	PW agrees with the intent of KPMG's recommendation as it pertains to conducting a technology needs assessment and related modernization plan to achieve the goals stated in the recommendation. PW Information Technology staff will work with Divisions to implement these in concert with Division resources.	To be able to fully implement this recommendation will require implementation of the recommendations and goals of 1.2. This recommendation would also use the additional FTE resource requested. Fiscal impacts may limit implementation in the near term.	A preliminary plan will be developed over 6-12 months. Implementation will follow the plan and be an ongoing process after that.

enhance communication.	Many of the needs have been identified and we are already in progress on designing a modernization plan.		

Transportation, Roads, and Facility Management			
PW appreciates KPMG's commendations for the Department's initiatives to improve the areas of Transportation, Roads, and Facility Management and will undertake the following actions:			
#	**Recommendation**	**Department Response**	**Fiscal Impact/Challenges/ Opportunities**
2.1	Enhance processes to track available data related to road usage service requests, risk management, staffing, and pavement quality to inform maintenance prioritization.	PW agrees with the intent of KPMG's recommendation as it pertains to a collective effort on data collection and assessment. Currently, multiple teams collect and manage data for their focused asset on various independent platforms. These platforms require manual data collection and input that consumes staff time. ZWorld, our main asset platform, does not allow real-time updates to data while in the field. Data takes constant maintenance to avoid growing stale. Also, there are not adequate resources to perform constant maintenance, particularly during disasters and other events where people are focused on getting the work done and do not have time to also update databases. As a result, PW cannot reliably use these tools for data-driven decision-making for all assets. In addition, tracking traffic service requests and risk management activities are using ad-hoc processes. Other service requests are tracked on platforms that do not interface with GIS systems and databases. A centralized data management system with enhanced streamlining capabilities (task assignment, risk management, maintenance prioritization) operated and maintained by a single person in the	Implementing this recommendation would require one FTE to absorb the additional data efforts. This new FTE would also cover tasks necessary to implement 2.4. The Department consulted experts and other agencies on asset management and GIS data management services and most similar agencies with successful programs have 2-6+ people dedicated to GIS, asset management, and outward-facing communication tools. However, leveraging resources across the Department and the County ITD department, Transportation would seek to complete these tasks with one FTE. Department will adopt an additional set of data points to enhance prioritization of maintenance activities as outlined in our report.	**Implementation Timeframe** PW would begin implementation of this recommendation as soon as possible as this position would boost the department's operation in many areas such as planning, prioritization, data-driven decision-making, and public outreach.

		Division is a crucial business need. (more information in 2.4 Maintenance Requests). Emergency response - real-time information for public response.		
2.2	Establish an internal prioritization model to support the implementation of the Active Transportation Plan and better leverage available funding sources.	PW can establish an internal prioritization model.

One potential downside of prioritization is that often times different projects are a better fit for competition in different grant pools. Always applying for the top priorities overall may decrease the chances of being awarded funding for projects that may be more competitive but are not ranked as high on priorities. There are also geographic equity issues that would need to be addressed. | Prioritizing projects does not present a fiscal issue. The ATP gives the County opportunities to position itself for grant funding.
Applying for, and managing, grants is a resource-intensive process. Currently there are no full-time staff dedicated to this task. Instead, subject matter experts work in teams to apply for grants, which detracts from their other tasks and limits the County's ability to apply for multiple or highly complex and time-consuming grants. Adding an FTE dedicated to grants and grant management could increase the department's ability to obtain and manage grants. | PW could implement this recommendation (establishing internal prioritization model) in the next 6 months. |
| 2.3 | Enhance collaboration with SBCAG and conduct an assessment of current Measure A distribution formulas to better align funding with community service area need. | PW agrees with the intent of KPMG's recommendation as it pertains to the redistribution of Measure A formulas and will collaborate with SBCAG to highlight important factors such as the gap between funding and need.

For reference, the County received 25% of the total Measure A funding but our County has 49% of the lane miles and 31% of the County's population. Considering the disproportionate funding distribution, an alternative proportion could be explored. | PW analyzed need-based distributions like those adopted for County roads, which weighted lane miles more heavily. These formulas would result in city funding being shifted to the County, and it was determined the change would likely be politically infeasible at the SBCAG Board. | PW anticipates this to be an on-going conversation with SBCAG. |

		County Roads are critical for interconnecting the Cities and State highway system and is necessary to bring produce and goods to market, as well as providing multimodal connections.		
2.4	Utilize available activity data to develop key performance indicators and utilization targets for maintenance teams to allow for enhanced data-driven decision-making surrounding resource allocation and task assignment.	PW agrees with the intent of KPMG's recommendation. Currently, Maintenance tracks 26 different activity codes, based on those most used (>10% of hours charged). However, a system relating activities to service requests and data management that includes dashboards or public-facing information related to this work are not employed currently. Maintenance Requests from the public trigger maintenance activities. The current tracking platform is not a user-friendly platform and doesn't capture requests made by phone. It also is not conducive to creating communication and decision-making tools. It would be advantageous to transition to a platform that more efficiently captures all requests with streamlined task assignment & tracking capabilities. Maintenance Activities are currently stored in a local excel file, not accessible to department-wide, and only represent a snapshot of the ongoing operation. The Department would like to use the proposed data platform to leverage live data visualization of maintenance activities to facilitate resource management, planning, and prioritization. In addition, reducing the number of activity codes will allow for better data tracking and reduce staff time.	To be able to fully implement this recommendation would require one FTE to absorb the additional data management efforts. This data management position would develop or implement and maintain a new data system that can leverage more streamlined input & output capabilities. As mentioned earlier, this new FTE will be able to cover tasks necessary to implement 2.1. The fiscal impact of adding 1 FTE would be identified at the time those options were presented to the Board of Supervisors. This position would be funded using existing Transportation funding and would lead to cost savings in efficiencies. The Transportation Division will align the adoption of any new system for time tracking with a performance management framework. The framework will identify key baseline performance targets for staff to achieve and will be supported by regular staff engagement with supervisory staff where baseline targets are not being achieved.	Implementing a new system would likely take 12-18 months. PW would begin implementation of this recommendation as soon as a position was in place and data management solutions were vetted and procured. This would help the department with more efficient maintenance operations, better data quality, data-driven decision making, performance metric tracking, and better communication and reporting tools.
2.5	Conduct a cost-benefit analysis and skills gap analysis to evaluate the effectiveness of	PW agrees with the KPMG's recommendation. The department analyzed activities currently performed by consultants and identified key tasks and sectors that could be performed more efficiently and at a	This recommendation would require 1 FTE to implement. This position is for technical work as a result of our skills gap analysis.	PW would like to implement this recommendation as soon as possible.

the Division's approach to recruiting outside consultants.	lower cost if there were added in-house resources. The Department also identified specialty areas of work that are more efficient to have performed by consultants, or to use a combination of consultants and in-house resources. The Division sees benefits in utilizing consultants/contractors in various areas such as: - Specialized Expertise such as the construction of bridges or complex slope stabilizations, design of bridges, freeway interchanges, and roundabouts. - Seasonal/temporary operations, such as disaster response, or when there is more work to do than the Department has staff to cover. In-house resources are more efficient and effective when feasible for the following reasons: • Design Consultants (surveying, drafting, technical engineering, contract procurement, grant application, etc.) are calculated to cost 2.3 times more than inhouse work. • Construction Consultant work (i.e. lab testing, QA/QC, inspection and construction management, etc.) are calculated to cost 2.2 times more than inhouse work. • In-house operations can perform similar tasks as contractors in many areas such as paving, sidewalk repairs, curb ramp installations, and tree trimming/removal. Contract costs in generally are roughly 1.5 times higher than expenses when similar tasks are performed by County staff. There are many areas where having additional in-house resources would produce cost-savings. The Department analyzed various operations to	Additional cost reductions could be achieved in other areas such as design work, grant implementation, and maintenance. However, the Department recommends starting with one position focused on the most pressing area at this time. The fiscal impact of adding 1 FTE would be identified at the time those options were presented to the Board of Supervisors. Hiring one FTE to focus on survey work and monument preservation would help reduce this backlog and reduce costs to perform this work. This person will also be cross-trained to be available for construction, permits and engineering design work. This position would be funded through the Road Maintenance Annual Plan budget and would reduce the cost for projects, as these services are currently largely consulted out at a large cost and require time-consuming review and contract management on top of the field and mapping work.	

		determine where the best efficiencies could be gained while minimizing adding positions. These areas are in survey work, construction inspection, and asset management tasks. Survey work, particularly monument preservation, costs the County several hundred thousand dollars per years. And there is a growing backlog of need for this work.		

Surveyor
PW appreciates KPMG's commendations for the Department's initiatives to improve the Surveyor management and will undertake the following action:

#	Recommendation	Department Response	Fiscal Impact/Challenges/ Opportunities	Implementation Timeframe
3.1	Conduct an activity-based workload analysis and establish additional performance measures to inform decision-making on staffing mix, resource allocation, and task assignment.	The Surveyor's Office agrees with the recommendation to enhance our current performance measures, which will track staff time spent on specific project types and create benchmarks for improved performance measures.	The Surveyor staff is small. Although efforts are made to mix the staff when assigning tasks, the decision-making on resource allocation and task assignments is highly correlated with staff experience, skills, and specialization in certain types of projects. Staff mixing is always utilized when there are evenly experienced staff.	By the end of FY 23/24, enhance the existing Performance Measures Menu in the Land Records Database. Specifically, focus on (Personnel Performance Project Review Queries), add tracking staff time dedicated to projects, and establishing a baseline. Additionally, set a target number of hours for each project type, aligning with the State-required review turnaround. Once the targets are established, monitor and assess staff performance against these set benchmarks for each project type.

Water Resources Division
PW appreciates KPMG's commendations for the Water Resources Division and will undertake the following actions:

#	Recommendation	Department Response	Fiscal Impact/Challenges/ Opportunities	Implementation Timeframe
4.1	Consider implementing an asset management database for County-managed flood	The Water Resources Division agrees with the intent of KPMG's recommendation as it pertains to Asset Management databases.	The Water Resources Division has budgeted for two Asset Management Positions, one Engineering Technician Specialist and one Civil Engineer.	The Water Resources Division has hired an Engineer Technician Specialist for Asset Management whose primary function is focused on GIS and shared database forms.

	control infrastructure to improve risk visibility.			Expansion of Asset Management goals and hiring of the second asset manager position is pending progress made.
4.2	Identify a core set of additional performance metrics to enhance visibility of performance and progress toward operational goals.	The Water Resources Division agrees in general with the intent of KPMG's recommendation as it pertains to performance metrics and tracking. Some of the examples and recommendations given may not be feasible or beneficial to implement but Action 1- developing an internal work group is a good place to start.	The fiscal impact of implementing these recommendations may be small amounts of additional staff administration time.	The development of an internal work group to define additional performance metrics will be completed in the next 12 months.
4.3	Expand cross-training efforts between Water Resources and Transportation Maintenance Teams across locations to enhance skill sets, increase resiliency, and assist with resource challenges.	The Water Resources Division agrees with the intent of KPMG's recommendation as it pertains to cross-training.	The fiscal impact of implementing these recommendations will require additional staff time and funding logistics.	Planned for Q1 2024 Enviro staff from each division to resume quarterly meetings and cross-training. Cross-training discussions between Maintenance sections is ongoing. Beginning Q3 2023 and ongoing, Flood Control field crew and Roads crew have been training staff to operate the other division's heavy equipment. Crews are coordinating to share heavy equipment between divisions. Flood and Roads Divisions have set up timesheet codes for cross-training work.
4.4	Customize Accela workflows to help ensure that workflows consistently align to staff activities allowing the Division to enhance the tracking of case volumes, cycle times, and staff productivity.	The Water Resources Division agrees with the intent of KPMG's recommendation as it pertains to Accela workflow improvements.	The Water Resources Division appreciates the opportunity to refine our Accela workflow to improve efficiency and consistency of the work performed by the Development Review section. The Division has budgeted funds to hire an Accela consultant to help realize the report recommendations. Ultimate implementation of the report's recommendations should reduce overall costs.	An Accela consultant, Grey Quarter, has been hired by the division to improve Accela functionality. Work with Grey Quarter has not yet begun, estimated time frame for completion is one year.

| 4.5 | Expand cross-departmental outreach on Water Agency program offerings and increase cross-departmental collaboration in identifying key grant funding opportunities. | The Water Resources Division agrees with the intent of KPMG's recommendation as it pertains to expanding water agency outreach. | The fiscal impact of implementing these recommendations may be small amounts of additional staff administration time. | Ongoing, Water Agency staff will work with Sustainability division staff to add a standing agenda item on water conservation and grant opportunities to County Sustainability Committee meetings. |