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## Restoration Projects and Green Streets: Bureau of Environmental Services continued progress on project monitoring and reporting

News Article



### 2-Year Audit Update

Actualización sobre auditoría de 2 años

Двухлетний Отчёт Аудита

Cập Nhật Kiểm Toán 2-năm

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This is a two-year follow-up to our 2018 report, "Restoration Projects and Green Streets: Planning and evaluation needed to confirm success."

**Published:** December 29, 2020 9:00 am

Our 2018 audit of Bureau of Environmental Services' green streets and restoration projects found that without formal methods to select projects and document outcomes, the City risked not meeting water quality goals. We recommended that the Bureau commit to a date for completion of the stormwater systems plan to ensure that restoration projects and green streets were located in the highest priority places. We also recommended improved monitoring and reporting.

At year two, the Bureau was continuing its progress toward using an asset management approach to selecting green street and restoration projects. It completed risk assessment maps, continued work on an asset register and was developing a new process for selecting priority capital projects across

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the stormwater, sanitary, and natural systems. The Bureau was close to publishing data on restoration project outcomes. It implemented recommendations related to green streets in 2019 and should be able to ensure that they are maintained on schedule and kept in functioning condition.

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#### **Recommendation Status: In Process**

##### **New risk assessment system and asset register in development.**

We recommended that the Bureau commit to an implementation schedule for components of the stormwater system plan, including risk assessments, asset registry, and condition assessment. The Bureau completed a stormwater risk assessment mapping project and used it to support several planning projects. It was also implementing a new process to perform consistent assessments across all systems, which it planned to complete in mid-2021. The Bureau continued to refine its stormwater asset register and expected to define data needs, establish protocols, and prepare a data repository over the next couple of years. The asset register will include data on the condition of assets.

#### **Recommendation Status: In Process**

##### **Use of draft project selection criteria delayed due to COVID-19. New integrated planning process in the works.**

We recommended that the Bureau create a method to use the risks identified in the Stormwater System plan to evaluate capital projects. The Bureau drafted a set of selection criteria for stormwater and restoration projects but use of the criteria has been delayed due to COVID-19. The Bureau is also developing a new integrated planning process that will allow it to prioritize projects across sanitary, stormwater, and natural systems.

#### **Recommendation Status: Implemented**

##### **Bureau created an inventory of restoration projects.**

We recommended that the Bureau develop an inventory of restoration projects and track information, such as cost, location, project goals, and outcomes. The Bureau developed a spreadsheet to inventory projects and track data, including location, cost, goals, and performance metrics. The spreadsheet included a project number that linked back to City financial systems so that the inventory could be checked for completeness.

#### **Recommendation Status: In Process**

**Bureau required monitoring plans with quantifiable targets and was developing a matrix of benchmark targets for restoration projects.**

We recommended that the Bureau ensure that all projects have quantifiable goals that are tied to the Portland Watershed Management Plan or that reduce risks identified in the Stormwater System Plan. The Bureau developed guidelines in 2019 for developing monitoring plans that included quantifiable targets. Since then, staff were required to establish monitoring plans at the start of each restoration project. The Bureau was developing a matrix of benchmarks to assist project teams with setting project objectives and targets.

**Recommendation Status: In Process**

**Reporting on project outcomes to be published in January 2021.**

We recommended that the Bureau regularly report project results to ratepayers in a way that explains the connection between projects and outcomes. The Bureau was working on a web-based map to display data gathered during project monitoring. The timeline for implementation was pushed back due to delays with the City's new website, but the Bureau expected the report to be available in January 2021. The Bureau also updated its Watershed Report Cards so that conditions in 2019 could be compared to conditions in 2015. The report cards are located [online](#).

**Recommendation Status: Implemented**

**Bureau developed quantifiable standards for assessing green street condition.**

We recommended that the Bureau define quantifiable standards to describe functioning condition for green streets. The Bureau modified the number of inspection categories and applied quantitative measurements to report overall condition and to identify assets needing maintenance. This recommendation was implemented in 2019.

**Recommendation Status: Implemented**

**Stormwater Operations and Maintenance Manual updated.**

We recommended that the Bureau update Operation and Maintenance guidelines that support functioning condition for green streets. The Bureau updated the Stormwater Operations and Maintenance Manual. This recommendation was implemented in 2019.

**Recommendation Status: Implemented**

## **Green street operation and maintenance oversight procedures established.**

We recommended that the Bureau create oversight procedures to ensure that staff follow Operation and Maintenance guidelines. The Watershed Revegetation Program created a new report to flag assets that have not been inspected or are due for maintenance. This recommendation was implemented in 2019.

View the [original 2018 audit report and full text of the recommendations](#) and our [1-year follow-up report](#).

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