

Allegheny County



2024 Sunset Review

Office of the County Manager

June 2024

COUNTY OF



ALLEGHENY

SARA INNAMORATO
COUNTY EXECUTIVE

Honorable Sara Innamorato
Allegheny County Executive
Courthouse – Room 101
436 Grant Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15219

Honorable Members of Council
Allegheny County Council
Courthouse – Room 119
436 Grant Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15219

Dear County Executive Innamorato and Members of Allegheny County Council:

In accordance with Article VI and Article VII of the Home Rule Charter and Article XII of the Administrative Code of the County of Allegheny, I respectfully submit the 2024 Sunset Review for your consideration.

This year's reviews encompass the County departments that provide internal support services to other County departments and those that steward the physical assets of County government, including the Departments of Administrative Services, Information Technology, Facilities Management, Parks, Public Works, and Sustainability. The related agencies that have been reviewed as part of this cycle include the Board of Property Assessment Appeals and Review, the Parks Foundation, and the Penn State Cooperative Extension.

It is worth noting as a reminder that the reviews contained herein are neither a fiscal nor performance audit of these agencies; the reviews are intended to affirm whether each agency should continue as a unit of County government, in its current format, to administer the services it provides.

For each department reviewed, the recommendation is to continue.

I extend the deepest gratitude to all members of our government that contributed to this effort.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Stephen Pilarski

Acting County Manager

Table of Contents

Overview of Allegheny County Home Rule and Process of Sunset Review	4
Home Rule	4
Sunset Review Process	4
Elements of the Sunset Review Process	6
Methodology.....	7
Department of Administrative Services.....	8
Board of Property Assessment Appeals and Review (BPAAR)	19
Department of Information Technology.....	22
Department of Facilities Management.....	28
Department of Parks	35
Parks Foundation.....	44
Penn State Cooperative Extension.....	46
Department of Public Works.....	47
Department of Sustainability	53
Appendix A: Sunset Review Schedule.....	57

Overview of Allegheny County Home Rule and Process of Sunset Review

Home Rule

Under the Constitution of the Commonwealth, counties have “no inherent right to self-government beyond what the State Constitution and the General Assembly may grant” unless the citizens of the county opt for “home rule.” Because of this, Allegheny County was governed by the Second Class County Code adopted by the Legislature in 1935 and modified in 1955. The functions delegated to the County under this code included: the administration of elections and the registration of voters; assessment of property for tax purposes; administration of justice; care of prisoners; recording of deeds; execution of wills; construction and maintenance of roads and bridges; care of the aged, dependent, and indigent ill; planning; civil defense; the administration and direction of airports; sewage disposal; and management of parks, recreation, and public health.

While this form of government provided for the services specifically delineated by Second Class County Code, the citizens of the County opted on May 19, 1998, to enact a Home Rule Charter for the county effective in the year 2000. As specified in Chapter 105 of the Code, the County “shall have and may exercise any and all powers and perform any and all functions not specifically denied by the Constitution of the United States of America, the Constitution and laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and the Charter.”

To fulfill this charge, the Commissioner form of government was replaced by a new structure composed of an elected Chief Executive, a fifteen-member (15) County Council, and an appointed County Manager as specified in the Administrative Code of Allegheny County enacted on June 20, 2000. Under this new structure of government, the general duties of county government were retained despite separating legislative and executive functions. As such, authority for county government is vested with 1,250,578 residents (Census 2020) residing within the 130 municipalities in 731 square miles.

While Article II of the Administrative Code entitled “Organization and Structure of County Government” initially designated ten (10) categories of Independently Elected County Officials of Clerk of Courts, County Controller, County Coroner, District Attorney, Jury Commissioners, Prothonotary, Recorder of Deeds, Register of Wills, Sheriff and Treasurer, the voters opted in May of 2005 to consolidate the offices of Coroner, Jury Commission, Prothonotary, Clerk of Courts, Register of Wills, and Recorder of Deeds and transfer these entities to the Executive branch of government. Subsequently in 2006, the “elected County Coroner became an appointed Medical Examiner, and the Jury Commission responsibilities were assumed by the County Courts. On January 1, 2008, the Department of Court Records combined the offices of the Prothonotary, Clerk of Courts, and Register of Wills.”

Sunset Review Process

To ensure the appropriate government review of functions under the “Home Rule” form of government, the Administrative Code includes Article XII entitled “Government Review” that establishes a Sunset Review which evaluates the “need for and function of each County Department” every four years on a staggered schedule and a Government Review Commission which studies the “Charter and County Government, including the organization, practices, and responsibilities of all County Departments and

Agencies every ten (10) years.” Although it is recognized that the Charter clearly delineates the distinct functions of these two oversight processes, there are areas of congruence, as presently designed.

While Sunset Reviews were conducted by previous administrations of Departments and various Authorities, Commissions, and Boards on June 30, 2003, and December 30, 2010, the mandate to implement a staggered process during a four-year cycle was not fulfilled. As such, it was the decision of the administration of County Executive Rich Fitzgerald to adhere to the standard, as established.

To accomplish this, the County Manager conducted a full Sunset Review of twenty (20) Departments and twenty-nine (29) Authorities, Commissions and Boards in June 2014 using a more comprehensive approach. (Refer to: https://www.alleghenycounty.us/files/assets/county/v/1/government/county-manager/sunset-review/sunset_2014.pdf) Within the report, a staggered process for future Sunset Reviews was developed (Note Appendix A) and submitted to Allegheny County Council on June 30, 2014. It should be noted that in embracing a staggered schedule, the cycle of review will address Departments that are congruent in their services for the community. As such, in 2015 the Departments of Economic Development and Minority, Women, and Disadvantaged Business Enterprise that promoted “economic vitality” were reviewed together with Departments that fostered the “quality of life” including the Departments of Health, Human Services and the John J. Kane Regional Centers. (Please refer to: <https://www.alleghenycounty.us/Government/Departments-and-Offices/Department-Directory/County-Manager/Reports>).

The focus in 2016 was on departments delivering services related to “internal and external structural” issues and “land and public spaces” including the Departments of Administrative Services, Facilities Management, Parks and Public Works. The Departments related to public safety and public services involving Emergency Services, Jail, Medical Examiner, Police and Shuman were reviewed in 2017. The departments that address issues of civil liberties, including Court Records, Law, and the Office of the Public Defender, and departments that address organizational efficiencies and effectiveness, including the Departments of Budget and Finance and Human Resources, were reviewed in 2018. The cycle has repeated since then.

Due to the comprehensive review of all Department and Authorities, Boards and Commissions as defined in the Code, in 2014 the decision was rendered to retain nineteen (19) Departments and their corresponding entities. Specifically, the 2014 Sunset Review recommended that due to the interrelationship of functions within the Department of Administrative Services and the Department of Real Estate, the transfer of the functions of the Department of Real Estate to the Department of Administrative Services was appropriately and subsequently approved by County Council. Additional changes to departmental structure have since taken place. The Division of Computer Services was separated from the Department of Administrative Services and became the Department of Information Technology in 2020. In 2021, the Shuman Center closed, and the Department of Children Initiatives was created; in 2022, the Department of Sustainability was created. As a result, there are now twenty (20) departments subject to this review process.

With respect to the Government Review Commission, Allegheny County Council designated five (5) representatives on March 20, 2015, with four (4) additional representatives appointed by the County Executive on March 26, 2016, charged with submitting a report within one year of appointment. On Tuesday, March 29, 2016, the Government Review Commission issued a report and embraced the staggered review process for all subsequent Sunset Reviews. (Please refer to

<https://www.alleghenycounty.us/Government/Departments-and-Offices/Department-Directory/Commissions/Government-Review-Commission>). As such, the Sunset Review process will occur on a staggered schedule. (Please refer to Appendix A).

Elements of the Sunset Review Process

To enhance the understanding of the congruence of Departmental functions and related entities, the Sunset Review crafted for each Department is followed by the Sunset Review of the related agency, authority, commission, or board that enhances the mission of the County. Additionally, as the Code allows the County Manager in the exercise of his best professional judgment to include other issues that would aid in the furtherance of making County government more competitive and performance-oriented, the Sunset Review for Departments also includes a vision and mission statement and lists the major achievements of the department since its last Sunset Review.

The review for Departments will be as follows:

- A. Vision
- B. Mission
- C. Overview
- D. Achievements of department since 2019 (2020 through 2023)
- E. Legal mandate or necessity for the department
- F. Determination of public need for the department's services
- G. Review of the methods used in the implementation of each department's programs and an analysis of alternative methods that may be employed to achieve the department's legal mandates
- H. Evaluation of whether county government is the most effective body to implement the department's programs
- I. Evaluation of whether the absence or reduction of the department or the department's provision of services would significantly harm or endanger the public health, safety or welfare
- J. Analysis showing the costs of compliance for individuals or other entities regulated by the department
- K. Efficiency with which formal public complaints filed with the department have been processed
- L. Recommendation

With respect to Agencies, Authorities, Commissions or Boards, the review will include the following elements as required by the Code:

- A. Legal mandate or necessity for the agency
- B. Determination of public need for the continued existence of the agency and its services
- C. Review of the methods used in the implementation of each agency's functions and an analysis of alternative methods that may be employed to achieve the agency's legal mandates
- D. Evaluation of whether the agency is the most effective body to implement the agency's programs

- E. Evaluation of whether the absence or reduction of the agency or the agency's provision of services would significantly harm or endanger the public health, safety, or welfare
- F. Analysis showing the costs of compliance for individuals or other entities regulated by the agency
- G. Efficiency with which formal public complaints filed with the agency have been processed
- H. In the case of an agency that has received appropriations from the County's operating budget in any of the five years prior to the sunset review, a financial audit of the agency performed by an entity independent of the County
- I. Recommendation

Methodology

To fulfill the mandate of the Administrative Code, as well as, honoring the prerogative of the County Manager to include elements that increase efficiency and effectiveness, the following actions occurred:

- A. Applied the instrument created for the 2014 Sunset Review that adheres to the standards for evaluation delineated in Section 1201 of the Code, as well as the prerogative of the County Manager that included the creation and/or review of the Vision and Mission statements for each Department.
- B. Conducted an analysis of the Departments and related agencies, authorities, commissions and/or boards to determine the appropriate changes from the 2014 report. As the review was done in 2014, minimal changes were identified in some of the departments.
- C. After a review of the County Department, a recommendation was provided to:
 - continue the existence of the department,
 - abolish the department, or
 - reorganize the department subject to evaluation and review.
- D. With respect to the Agencies, Authorities, Commissions and/or Boards, a recommendation was made to:
 - continue the existence of the affected agency, authority, commission or board;
 - abolish the affected entity, if appropriate, or sever the relationship with the entity; or
 - reorganize the entity subject to evaluation and review, if appropriate, or alter the relationship with the entity.

Department of Administrative Services

A. Vision

To provide and sustain high levels of performance for our residents.

B. Mission

To uphold and support all levels of services to the taxpayers of Allegheny County. Although the Department encompasses a vast range of services, the common mission is to enhance Allegheny County operations.

C. Overview

The Department of Administrative Services manages an array of services to enhance County daily operations such as, mailing and printing services, purchasing and document storage. The Department is also responsible for the marketing and coordination of County-sponsored special events, property assessments, the recording of deeds and mortgages and verifying measuring device accuracy at service establishments throughout the county. In addition, the Department oversees the election process to ensure that all government laws and requirements are upheld and provides services and support to military veterans. Below is an outline of the responsibilities of Administrative Services 11 divisions.

1. Administration: Responsible for various centralized functions including management and coordination of departmental budgets, collection of miscellaneous revenues, serving as the executive branch Open Records officer, monitoring paid sick leave in accordance with County legislation, management of vending services and payment processing for the County's travel program.
2. Weights and Measures: Inspects and monitors all weighing and other measuring devices that are utilized for transactions in which a commodity or service is bought or sold. Parking meters must be inspected and tested on a five-year schedule, scales and fuel pumps every 18 months and price verification every 36 months.
3. Records Administration: Offers professional records management services to all Allegheny County offices and departments, provides safe and secure storage for inactive and vital records, and makes timely, accurate information readily available to assist management decision-making.
4. Printing Services: Provides printing and duplication services to all County departments.
5. Mailing Services: Processes and distributes mail to all County facilities.
6. Elections: Administers and manages County voting policies, programs, and resources to an extent that satisfies voter and candidate interests and is consistent with state and federal regulations and mandates. The Elections division staff prepare extensively for all elections to ensure every vote is counted correctly, including training poll workers, transporting voting equipment, and preparing six poll workers to serve at each of more than 1,300 precincts. Shortly after voting closes at each election, Elections computes the returns and reports results to the Secretary of the Commonwealth.

7. Office of Property Assessment: Discovers, lists, and values all property within the county for ad valorem tax purposes and delivers uniform base year assessments for real property. The Office also serves the public and taxing authorities of Allegheny County in the following ways:
 - Maintains accurate property description records on the 576,000 parcels in Allegheny County
 - Maintains ownership and mapping records for all properties in the county
 - Administers abatements and exemptions for real property.
8. Real Estate: Serves as the recorder of deeds, mortgages, plans, and discharge papers. The Division also provides secure and accessible archived land records.
9. Purchasing and Supplies: Manages the procurement of supplies, equipment, and services in the most efficient, cost-effective, and timely manner possible. Additionally, Purchasing and Supplies adds value to the procurement process by promoting competition, reducing costs, creating efficiency, and providing high-quality customer service.
10. Marketing and Special Events: Produces and markets all major Allegheny County events, and provides affordable, enriching, and diverse entertainment options to serve the county's broad demographics. The marketing division promotes these events while also assisting other County offices and departments with their advertising and promotional needs.
11. Veterans Services: Aids all county veterans and their families with obtaining local, State, and Federal benefits. The Division helps them discover the benefits to which they are entitled and assists them with the application process. Additionally, the division advocates for new services and programs for veterans and their families that would enhance their quality of life.

D. Achievements of department since 2019 (2020 through 2023)

Elections

2020 marked a significant year for County Elections with the start of a new paper-based voting system, newly enacted mail-in ballot procedures, and new branch office voting locations. Despite legal challenges and navigating large-scale mail-in ballot processing for the first time during a pandemic, the general election was completed securely with 77% of registered voters participating. A new paper-based voting system was implemented, accompanied by staff trainings and a public educational campaign. During the primaries, new ballot scanners were deployed to 1,323 precincts to scan ballots on-site for the first time. After a successful primary accepted mail-in ballots for the first time, the County pushed to accommodate widespread mail-in and absentee voting. Using the new branch office voting sites to increase mail-in ballot accessibility, the new system facilitated a transfer of 42,000 ballots. The Department ultimately processed a total of 350,000 mail-in ballots for the general election through the mail and branch office sites.

To keep the frontline poll workers safe during the pandemic, the Elections Division contracted with ElectSure to provide online poll worker training sessions in 2021. The platform provides several demonstration videos and short assessments, which help gauge the effectiveness of the training. In 2021, nearly 5,000 poll workers were trained via this system with tremendous positive feedback. ElectSure continues to provide accessible training to approximately 2,500 poll workers each election.

The Elections Division, in conjunction with local college and university leaders, expanded their poll worker recruitment strategies. In 2022, a marketing campaign paired with tabling events at six colleges and universities allowed Elections staff to engage students, extolling the virtues of serving as a poll worker in the community. One hundred and ten student poll workers served during the 2022 General Election and 187 student poll workers served during the 2023 General Election.

The Elections Division conducted four elections during 2023, including two special elections, the primary municipal election, and the general municipal election. During the primary municipal election, 6,215 poll workers opened 1,324 polls where 154,000 residents voted in-person and 80,000 submitted mail-in or absentee ballots. During the return board process, staff researched over 1,200 provisional ballots and tabulated a record number of nearly 70,000 write-in votes. For the general municipal election, County staff pre-canvassed 113,000 mail-in and absentee ballots. All 1,324 precincts opened with a record 6,894 poll workers, including student poll workers.

Marketing and Special Events

In 2020, the Office of Marketing and Special Events (OMSE) overcame pandemic challenges by providing safe and accessible entertainment through the Bringing It Home! Concert series. Focusing on local artists, OMSE created programming alternatives with Parks Unplugged on YouTube and Facebook, as well as broadcasting the Summer Concert Series, A Hartwood Holiday, and Allegheny County Holiday Music Program on Pittsburgh's CW. Other re-imagined events included family, date-night, and Halloween drive-in movies, virtual car cruises, and a new Holiday Laser Show, which raised more than \$70,000 for the Kane Foundation.

The Office of Marketing and Special Events hosted the Annual Holiday Music Program in the Allegheny County Courthouse. In 2021, a total of 27 local choirs, orchestras and bands encompassing approximately 1,000 students participated in the 53rd Annual Holiday Music Program. In addition to broadcasting audio from each performance on Grant Street, the video production team live-streamed each performance. The Holiday Music Program has continued to the present, with similar participation.

The County expanded its concert series in 2022 to include a Fall Concert Series. With a four-concert-line-up, the Fall Concert Series appealed to varied tastes and took place at Boyce Park, Round Hill Park, Harrison Hills Park, and White Oak Park. Between 2021 and 2023, OMSE hosted the already-established Summer Concert series, with attendance ranging from 102,900 to 149,150 annually.

OMSE hosted a variety of employee appreciation events throughout 2023. In honor of National Employee Appreciation Day, OMSE provided treats for all County employees, along with a message of gratitude from the County Executive. From April to September, OMSE hosted 'Food Truck Fridays' in the Courthouse courtyard, which was accompanied by acoustic performances, games, and giveaways.

Purchasing and Supplies

Partnering with the Department of Facilities Management, Purchasing and Supplies awarded bids as part of a vigorous push toward increased sustainability. During 2020, these included recycled trashcan liners, strategically placed recycling bins and stations to replace individual desk trashcans, four new electric vehicles added to the County's fleet, and cleaning products that comply with requirements developed in collaboration with the Green Building Alliance.

Real Estate

Starting in 2021, the Division of Real Estate (DRE) began digitizing documents through back scanning in order to enhance customer service, make the office more environmentally sustainable, reduce expenditures and increase revenues. DRE engaged in three separate back scanning efforts: a large-scale vendor-driven deed back scanning project, an in-house back scanning of the oldest or most fragile deeds, and an in-house effort scanning notary commissions and mortgages. Since this effort provided the public digital access to documents, in-office foot traffic reduced significantly. This resulted in a substantial decrease in the use of paper and toner and empowered DRE to reduce its physical footprint, freeing up the second floor of the County Office Building. Additionally, the rate to print digital copies was higher than the rate for copies made from physical documents, essentially doubling the revenue generated by these documents. Documents from the last 78 years (1946 to present) were digitized and made available for public use through the [US Land Records website](#).

Property Assessments

Spurred by pandemic challenges, the Office of Property Assessment (OPA) shifted to a nearly paperless appeals process. In 2021, OPA successfully scheduled and administered 10,836 annual appeal hearings by telephone. An online document portal was created with assistance from the Department of Information Technology to allow for increased electronic communication with the public. Participating parties benefitted from the ability to upload evidence and view evidence submitted by either a taxing body or the property owner. Alternative methods of emailing or mailing remained in place to accommodate those without computer access. As a result of these enhancements, citizens enjoyed a new level of customer service with quick online responses and the staff benefitted from not only a safer work environment during the ongoing pandemic, but also new efficiencies to improve their work experience.

Veterans Services

The Veterans Services division created VetRec in 2022, bringing veterans and their families together in an active setting to learn the fundamentals of a wide range of sporting activities. Through coached programming, veterans were encouraged to work together, become more active, and connect with their family. The first event, Lacrosse Basics with the organization USA Lacrosse, introduced the sport to a co-ed group of varying ages and skill levels. Other VetRec events at County-owned parks included fishing, golf, softball, and hockey with the Wounded Warrior Hockey Team.

Veterans Services staff received various accolades throughout 2022, including National Veterans Service Officer (VSO) accreditation through the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), clearance to work within the Veterans POD at the Allegheny County Jail, and Wounded Warrior Project Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST) certification. Five staff received VSO accreditation, which means they are entrusted by the VA to uphold good moral character, provide proper representation to veterans and their families, and ensure that claimants have access to appropriate benefits and receive VSO representation on their VA benefits claims. Clearances to work within the Veterans POD at the Allegheny County Jail allowed staff to assist incarcerated veterans with VA benefit claims, identify assistance programs, and prepare transition plans. Staff members that received the Wounded Warrior Project ASIST certification were trained to better identify the warning signs of suicide and the best ways to help.

Beginning in January 2023, Veterans Services staff partnered with other local veteran agencies to host office hours throughout the county. Veterans can access staff for in-person consultations at locations downtown, the South Hills, Moon, Homewood, and Oakland.

Print Services

In 2023, the Print Shop launched an online printing job submission application for internal users which provides better job tracking for both the Print Shop staff and customers. The application provides media personalization, web-to-print portals, marketing automation and allows end-users to select their items, incorporate their own details or stock imagery, receive pricing quotes, and preview final mock-ups.

Weights and Measures

Between 2020 and 2023, compliance rates ranged between 71% and 97% for price verification devices, 94% and 96% for measuring devices, 71% and 93% for timing devices, and 94% and 98% for weighing devices.

E. Legal mandate or necessity for the department

The Department of Administrative Services is authorized to provide both mandated and internal support services to County government under Article XIII, Section 6 – Continuity, of the Home Rule Charter of Allegheny County approved May 19, 1998 (the “Charter”). With respect to the specific functions of the Department, the following mandates are also fulfilled:

- **Records Administration:** The mandate for this service is provided per H.B. 1302 of 1991 which was implemented by Allegheny County Commissioners Board Action 925-93.
- **Elections:** Election functions are provided for under Article X, Section 6 – Board of Elections and Article XIII, Sections 6 (a) and (d) – Continuity, of the Charter and under Article 211 of the Administrative Code of Allegheny County enacted June 20, 2000, as amended (the “Administrative Code”). Article XII of the Charter and Article 1101 of the Administrative Code necessitate the maintenance of an election function to carry out the provisions for voter referendums and charter amendments. The Elections Division carries out its responsibilities pursuant to the Pennsylvania Election Code (25 P.S. §2600 et seq.) which sets forth the laws governing voter registration and the conduct of elections. In addition, the Federal Voting Rights Act 42 (U.S.C.S. §1971 et seq.), the National Voter Registration Act, the Federal Motor Voter Act (42 U.S.C.S. §1973(gag)) and the Help America Vote Act (includes PA Motor Voter Law) (P.L. 107-252) also mandate various election procedures.
- **Property Assessment:** The Second-Class County Assessment Law (72 P.S. §§6562.1-5452.20) and where applicable, the General County Assessment Law (72 P.S. §§5020.101-521), mandate property assessments in Allegheny County. An Office of Property Assessment is necessary to comply with Article X, Section 5 of the Charter and Articles 207, 209 and 210 of the Administrative Code, which require the County to establish and maintain an assessment system that meets accepted assessment standards, ensures access to public records regarding assessments and provides for the appeal of assessed values.

- **Real Estate:** Pursuant to Allegheny County Ordinance 38-04-OR, a referendum was placed on the May 17, 2005 Primary Election Ballot. As a result of the approval of the referendum and subsequent to 38-04-OR Section 3, the Allegheny County Administrative Code was amended to reduce the number of elected row offices. On January 7, 2008, the Department of Real Estate replaced the formerly elected row office of the Recorder of Deeds. The continuation of this function is authorized by Article XIII, Section 6(d) of the Home Rule Charter of Allegheny County.
- **Purchasing:** The functions of the Division of Purchasing and Supplies are mandated by Article VIII – Competitive Procurement, of the Charter and by Article 901 of the Administrative Code. As such, this entity is responsible for contracting for the purchase or lease of all materials, supplies, furnishings, equipment, insurance and surety and fidelity bonds or other personal property and nonprofessional services.
- **Veterans Services:** The Second-Class County Code, 16 P.S. §5123(F) requires the County to have a Director of Veterans Services. Additionally, the division is mandated and governed by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, coordinated with the Adjutant General of Pennsylvania and authorized to provide support and collaboration with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, as appropriate.
- **Weights and Measures:** The County performs certain functions under the Consolidated Weights and Measures Act, 3 Pa. C.S.A. 4101 et seq., as provided for in a Memorandum of Understanding under 3 Pa. C.S.A. 4125 and entered into by the County for the term July 1, 2014, through June 30, 2019, and renewed for the term July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2024.

F. Determination of public need for the department's services

With respect to the core functions related to (1) General Administration (2) Elections (3) Property Assessment (4) Real Estate (5) Purchasing (6) Veterans Services (7) Marketing and Special Events and (8) Weights and Measures, this Department fulfills the public need for:

1. General Administration
 - Maintains historical documents that are preserved in a manner that can be accessed by the public.
 - Retrieves County records and documents, as appropriate.
 - Provides timely and accurate access to information that falls under the “Right to Know” criteria.
 - Assures that all mailed correspondence for the County, Community College of Allegheny County (CCAC) and the City of Pittsburgh is processed in a timely and appropriate manner.
 - Responsible printing, graphic design, and photography services to all County departments.
2. Elections
 - Oversees election management practices that guarantee the right to vote for the approximately 900,000 registered voters in the county.

- Provides consistent standards necessary to accommodate voters at over 1,300 polling locations.
3. Property Assessment
 - Conducts property assessments in an accurate and timely manner that results in fair and reliable values; manages a single integrated system to handle assessments, appeals, tax billing and collections for ease of access by the public; and maintains the current lot and block system for parcel identification.
 - Ensures that notices of changes in assessments are sent to all taxing jurisdictions.
 - Serves as the County's contact with the community, individuals, and taxing bodies for information, policies and practices relative to all assessment matters.
 - Establishes and maintains adequate descriptions of properties to assist in the determination of the value of those properties.
 - Determines whether property shall be exempt from real estate taxation.
 - Ensures the information contained in the report received from the Division of Real Estate of every deed or conveyance of land is properly filed.
 - Processes and schedules all assessment appeals.
 - Prepares and maintains guidelines and manuals consistent with nationally recognized standards to establish an inventory of all properties within the county.
 - Ensures access to public records in accordance with Article X, §5 of the Charter.
 - Administers all abatement programs.
 4. Real Estate
 - Functions as the custodian of the records and indexes related to conveyance of land or the transfer of real property in the county including deeds, mortgages, leases, and subdivision plans.
 - Acts as the collection agent for realty transfer taxes for the state, municipalities, and school districts.
 5. Purchasing
 - Ensures responsible contracting that utilizes protocols for the purchase or lease of all materials, insurance and surety and fidelity bonds or other personal property and non-professional services.
 - Engages in a continuous process improvement such as the modernization of purchasing procedures to include web-based bidding for the purchase of commodities, online purchasing and procurement cards which increase efficiencies and effectiveness of County operations.
 - Maximizes the level of minority, women, disadvantaged and veteran-owned business participation in County contracts by collaborating with the Department of Equity and Inclusion.
 6. Veterans Services
 - Provides access and assists with the acquisition to all benefits entitled to local military residents.
 - Facilitates outreach and collaboration among the many generations of service men and women.
 7. Marketing and Special Events

- Serves as the focal point for County events and cultural programming by providing oversight and/or development of regional events such as the Summer Concert Series.
- Provides logistical and marketing support in collaboration with the County Parks Foundation for foundation events and fundraising efforts.

8. Weights and Measures

- Ensures that the public is charged the correct amount for goods and services that are priced based on a weight (e.g., gasoline, produce and meats, etc.) or timing measure (e.g., parking meters) by testing and certifying that the measurement devices used by retailers and other provider are accurate.

G. Review of the methods used in the implementation of each department's programs and an analysis of alternative methods that may be employed to achieve the department's legal mandates

In 2014 the Department of Administrative Services was reconfigured to focus on its key mission of serving the public. As such, the Department of Real Estate was abolished to become a division per Council Ordinance #30-14-OR, under the direction of the Department of Administrative Services in conjunction with the Office of Property Assessments. Additionally, the Office of Marketing and Special Events was transferred from the Parks Department to Administrative Services.

In 2019, the County determined that the Division of Computer Services should be separated from the Department of Administrative Services and established as its own department. Effective January 1, 2020, the Department of Information Technology was formed to better serve County government departments in recognition of the importance of technology and data security in today's information environment.

Further alternative methods of service delivery that could be employed include:

- **De-centralize the administration of the internal service functions performed by the Department** by designating that each of the County's other departments manage these functions individually for their own departmental needs. Such internal service functions could include records management, printing, mailing, purchasing, marketing and special events. *Rationale for not pursuing this method:* The County would lose the benefit of economies of scale for each of these internal service functions. Providing these services in bulk quantities as can be achieved with the current departmental responsibilities saves the County money on staffing, pricing of goods and services, and enables the County to meet the needs of departments in a timely manner.
- **Break-up the Department into separate, smaller departments.** In 2019 the County determined that the Division of Computer Services should be separated from the Department of Administrative Services and established as its own department. Effective January 1, 2020, the Department of Information Technology was formed to better serve County government departments in recognition of the importance of technology and data security in today's information environment. Additional separations could be considered, such as creating a

Department of Elections, or a Department of Real Estate and Assessment Services, if determined that such a structure could better serve the public.

- **Contract the non-legally mandated services to outside vendors.** Likely candidates for consideration for privatization would include printing, marketing and special events.
Rationale for not pursuing this method: If these functions were outsourced, the County departments that rely on their fast, reliable, cost-competitive service provision and privacy protections would be negatively impacted.
- **Transfer Weights and Measures to another government agency.** Weights and Measures could be transferred to the Commonwealth's Department of Agriculture that performs this function for 55 counties in the State.
Rationale for not pursuing this method: The public has benefited from the division being part of the Department as the County can more directly ensure the delivery of these services for affected constituencies. The low rate of non-compliance may be related to local administration of this function.
- **Transfer Veterans Services to the Department of Human Services (DHS).** Veterans Services' primary focus is providing transitional services for many recent veterans, including temporary housing, benefit assistance, and emergency relief, many or all of which overlap with services provided by DHS. Having this function transferred to DHS could result in greater resources available to veterans in need, but would have to weighed against the possibility of diminished focus on this priority population.

H. Evaluation of whether county government is the most effective body to implement the department's programs

Because general administrative functions (mailing, printing, records management), purchasing, and marketing and special events are integral to the efficiency and effectiveness of the current organizational design, the County is the most effective entity to provide these services. These divisions provide several support functions that enable other County departments to provide essential services to the public. The County is required by legislative mandates of the Commonwealth to provide Elections, Property Assessments, Real Estate and Veterans Services.

I. Evaluation of whether the absence or reduction of the department or the department's provision of services would significantly harm or endanger the public health, safety or welfare

While the absence or reduction of the Department would not directly impact public health, safety or welfare, there would be indirect effects on all departments, including Emergency Services, Police, Public Works, Kane, Jail, Economic Development, Health, and Human Services, and thus ultimately on the general public. Each of these critical, public-facing agencies require the services provided by the Department to be able to fulfill their mandates. Some specific examples include:

- Property Assessment provides accurate valuation of real property that enables county, municipal and school district units of government to levy and collect property taxes to pay for critical services, including police, fire, emergency medical services and public

education. In addition, the county property taxes that are able to be levied and collected as a result of the assessment function support the court system, District Attorney and Sheriff's Office, which are also critical components of public health, safety and welfare.

- The Elections Division provides voters with the ability to exercise their constitutional right to choose their elected representatives in a fair, open, and democratic process. The elimination or reduction of this vital service would compromise public welfare and the common good.
- An absence or reduction to the division of Real Estate would affect the public's ability to access documents that provide the legal evidence of land ownership within the county.
- Veterans' needs would be greatly impacted without the services that help to acclimate them upon returning to civilian life, such as assistance with employment, housing, mental and physical health benefits.

J. Analysis showing the costs of compliance for individuals or other entities regulated by the department

The costs of compliance for this Department are referenced in the Resolutions (Operating Budget # 12-23-RE 12856-23, Capital Budget # 10-23-RE 12857-23, and the Special Revenues/Grants Budget # 11-23-RE 12858-23) signed by the County Executive on December 6, 2023. Additionally, the costs of compliance for the approved budget listed above are delineated within the 2024 Comprehensive Fiscal Plan (CFP) which can be referenced here:

<https://www.alleghenycounty.us/Government/Departments-and-Offices/Department-Directory/Budget-and-Finance/Comprehensive-Fiscal-Plan>

K. Efficiency with which formal public complaints filed with the department have been processed

Due to the broad array of services, the process of filing public complaints occurs as follows:

- With respect to the divisions of Administration, Property Assessment, Real Estate, Purchasing and Veterans Services, public complaints are generally received by the County Call Center, and either resolved directly by the Call Center or referred to the division in question. Between 2020 and 2023, these divisions received 9,177 public inquires, which were closed within an average of 5 days in 2023.
- Due to the constitutional nature of complaints related to Elections, such calls are referred to the Elections Division, the Department of Administrative Services, or the County Law Department. The Elections division received 33,162 requests between 2020 and 2023

The Department receives very few Right-to-Know requests, averaging approximately 13 per month in 2023. Recent (May 2024) response times averaged 13.7 business days to close.

L. Recommendation

Recognizing that the efficiency and effectiveness of county operations are enhanced through the services offered by the Department of Administrative Services, much of the organizational design should remain the same.

Veterans Services should be considered to transfer to DHS to maximize access to appropriate programs and aid available to veterans. Professionals within DHS have a requisite skillset and training that best equips them to handle a variety of needs, from mental and physical health needs, financial concerns, and housing needs that face veterans today. The Veterans Services staff can continue to manage burial benefits, marker distribution, and employment assistance while working directly under DHS management to provide as much assistance as possible.

Board of Property Assessment Appeals and Review (BPAAR)

A. Legal mandate or necessity for the agency

Article X, Section 5 of the Allegheny County Home Rule Charter required the creation of the Board of Property Assessment Appeals and Review (“the BPAAR”). The BPAAR was established on September 1, 2000 to replace the Board of Property Assessment Appeals & Review, which was established by the State Legislature effective 1st Monday of January, 1942. The Allegheny County Home Rule Charter provided that the BPAAR “shall exercise all powers and duties that [previous Board of Property Assessment Appeals & Review] had before the effective date of this Charter”. The BPAAR operates pursuant to provisions of the Allegheny County Administrative Code, of the Second-Class County Assessment Law, and of the General County Assessment Law.

The BPAAR is comprised of seven members, each appointed for three-year terms. Three members must have not less than ten years practical experience as a registered real estate broker, or real estate appraiser or assessor; one member must have not less than ten years practical experience as a building construction engineer, civil engineer or general contractor or assessor; and, one member must have not less than ten years’ experience as a practicing attorney at law with residential valuation expertise.

County Council appoints four members, and the County Executive appoints three members, with confirmation by County Council. No member may serve more than four consecutive terms.

B. Determination of public need for the continued existence of the agency and its services

Any person with a direct pecuniary interest in a property has a right to challenge the certified assessed value of the property. If the BPAAR was eliminated, parties would be required to file an appeal directly with the Allegheny County Court of Common Pleas, Board of Viewers. Filing an appeal directly with the Court of Common Pleas would result in increased costs to the taxpayer. Further, the scheduling of the appeal and the resolution of the appeal would take substantially longer.

C. Review of the methods used in the implementation of each agency's functions and an analysis of alternative methods that may be employed to achieve the agency's legal mandates

The role of the BPAAR is to:

- Hear and decide all appeals concerning the valuation of real property within Allegheny County; and
- Hear and decide all appeals of determinations of the tax-exempt status of any real property within Allegheny County.

Value appeal hearings are conducted by hearing officers designated by the BPAAR. Hearing officers are independent contractors and must meet the certain professional requirements provided in the Allegheny County Administrative Code. If the majority of the BPAAR accepts the hearing officer’s

recommendation, then that recommendation shall be the decision of the BPAAR. If the hearing officer's recommendation is not accepted by a majority of the BPAAR, the BPAAR shall review the audio recording of the hearing—if deemed necessary—and all evidence supplied at the hearing to reach its own determination. After the decision is made at a regularly scheduled public meeting, a disposition notice is mailed to all interested parties.

Exemption and abatement appeal hearings are conducted by the BPAAR Solicitor and/or a BPAAR member. The Solicitor or BPAAR member creates a report and recommendation for review and discussion at a regularly scheduled BPAAR meeting where the BPAAR will vote to either sustain or reverse the determination made by the Office of Property Assessments.

As the BPAAR's functions and methods are delineated and governed by statute and other legislation, including the Allegheny County Code, an analysis of alternative methods is not appropriate.

D. Evaluation of whether the agency is the most effective body to implement the agency's programs

The BPAAR provides a timely, affordable, equitable, and efficient forum for resolving appeals of real estate assessment valuation. The BPAAR is independent from the Office of Property Assessments whose function is to place an assessed value on each property in Allegheny County. BPAAR resolved 44,293 appeals and between 2020 and 2023. In that timeframe, 50% of BPAAR cases were decided within 134 days of an appeal.

E. Evaluation of whether the absence or reduction of the agency or the agency's provision of services would significantly harm or endanger the public health, safety or welfare

If the BPAAR was eliminated interested parties would be forced to file an appeal directly with the Allegheny County Court of Common Pleas, Board of Viewers. Utilizing the Court system requires costs to the taxpayer. In addition, the scheduling of the appeal and the resolution of the appeal would take substantially longer.

F. Analysis showing the costs of compliance for individuals or other entities regulated by the agency

BPARR is not a regulatory body and does not charge fees for its services.

G. Efficiency with which formal public complaints filed with the agency have been processed

All complaints are made directly to the BPAAR. The BPAAR has specific procedures to address complaints.

H. In the case of an agency that has received appropriations from the County's operating budget in any of the five years prior to the sunset review, a financial audit of the agency performed by an entity independent of the County

As this entity received an appropriation from the County's Operating budget, an audit is part of the primary County audit conducted for the Office of the County Controller by Zelenkofske Axelrod LLC.

I. Recommendation

Continue.

Department of Information Technology

A. Vision

The vision of the Department of Information Technology (DIT) is to support the departments of Allegheny County government by aligning information technology best practices with the underlying business initiatives and goals. We will do this by engaging our business partners and stakeholders in technology related planning and the operational parameters of our information technology (IT) service portfolio to provide exceptional customer service to frontline end-users and the residents of Allegheny County.

B. Mission

To enable the Allegheny County departments to fulfill business and constituent services by providing leadership and support for the integration of technology, data, and cyber security in a cost-effective, innovative manner while remaining flexible to ever-changing needs and requirements.

C. Overview

The Department of Information Technology advises and assists its customers at all stages of the technology life cycle including requirements definition, selection, implementation/integration, and use of information technology. The Department of Information Technology offers a portfolio of services that work in unison to provide core business functions of advisement, deployment/implementation, and management/operation of technology systems that encourage innovation and collaboration and enhance cybersecurity. The technology portfolio includes infrastructure, project management, GIS, and application management for over 6,000 users, 81 locations, 30 critical applications and two data centers. Deployment and implementation of new technology, whether business software, constituent services, or infrastructure, is an ongoing effort that requires compliance with risk management, information security, documentation, and data access standards for the County to operate effectively.

D. Achievements of department since 2019 (2020 through 2023)

Election Support

DIT designed, implemented, and supported the information technology needs for the 2020 Presidential election, including four new satellite elections offices to process ballot applications and return mail-in ballots. At the elections warehouse, DIT expanded the network to enable access to up to 50 Statewide Uniform Registry of Electors terminals, installed two state-of-the-art video surveillance systems (primary and redundant backup), provided observation monitors, and coordinated the installation and operation of backup generators. During the 2020 Presidential Election, the full suite of the new Electionware software system was in operation for the first time. On election night, DIT operated six regional tabulation centers, processed results into the Electionware system, and made results publicly available in a timely fashion.

During the 2021-22 election cycle, DIT designed and implemented network and other infrastructure changes to improve performance and increase security in the warehouse tabulation rooms. These performance changes led to improved delivery of tabulation results. On election night DIT operated seven regional tabulation centers.

During the 2022-23 election cycle, DIT worked with the election software vendor, ES&S, to improve and increase security of the tabulation equipment at the remote regional sites. This improvement ensured that the tabulation equipment could not be tampered with while in-transit to and from the elections warehouse and regional centers. DIT has also led three phased projects to improve surveillance within the elections warehouse to enhance physical security within the facility. On election night, DIT operated eight regional centers.

Modernizing Infrastructure

In 2021, DIT implemented a redundant disaster recovery data center to sustain critical systems, networks, and cloud connections through a catastrophic event. DIT deployed networks in 53 locations, many of which provide wireless network access by means of nearly 800 Wireless Access Points across 62 sites. Wireless technology reduces cabling costs, encourages collaboration, facilitates meeting effectiveness, and provides on-demand access to data and systems.

DIT completed several infrastructure projects to modernize its technology base in 2022. Key efforts included migrating over 4,000 third-party operated phone lines to the County's unified communications system, which complies with enhanced 9-1-1 regulations and offers more flexible communications solutions. DIT implemented redundancy on its metropolitan network, increased the capacity and resiliency of its internet presence, and expanded connectivity at County parks. DIT consolidated over 280 physical servers onto 7 VM host servers running virtualization software with failover capabilities to the County's secondary data center.

Cyber Security and Risk Management Initiatives

In 2021, DIT took precautions to drastically improve the County's information security posture. The Department deployed 14 next-generation firewalls with centralized technical management, procedural change management and highly trained administrators. Additionally, DIT implemented an enterprise-wide log management system that provided a high degree of accountability and visibility into data and operations and rolled out multi-factor authentication.

DIT rolled out a holistic cyber security initiative aimed toward improving security and minimizing costs in 2022. As part of the initiative, DIT implemented and enhanced endpoint detection and response, multi-factor authentication, a rapid phishing response system, and web application firewalls. The Department mandated training for staff involved in elections, encouraged continuous learning, and educated the County's end-users. Additionally, DIT retired outdated systems, which saved money, reduced landfill waste, reduced exposed security vectors, and protected data in legacy systems. This process involved dismantling DIT's legacy data center and auctioning valued assets. Disabling dormant communications and phone lines saved the County more than \$50,000.

The Risk Management Office (RMO) was created in 2022 to help control cyber liability insurance costs and reduce threat exposure. This effort included onboarding top talent, implementing a risk management platform, enumerating assets, identifying threats, and quantifying threat levels. The

RMO is responsible for complying with Payment Card Industry, Criminal History Information Act, Pennsylvania Justice Network, and Healthcare Insurance Portability and Accountability Act data security standards. Additionally, the RMO manages risks and compliance associated with technology vendors and partners and consolidates and standardizes IT policies for use in future operations/technology acquisitions. DIT continues to refine the RMO, educate County departments about proper risk management, and utilize outcomes of the process to enhance and manage the County's information security program.

[In 2023, DIT continued to implement and fine-tune its security program by addressing three main components of information security: People, Data, and Infrastructure.](#)

DIT partnered with stakeholders to instill a strong information security culture across the County and lay foundational efforts for an IT advisory board. In tandem with director-level coordination, County personnel received information security communications, resources and online security and awareness trainings. The RMO established applicable information security and risk management processes that are included in all IT purchases and acquisitions.

DIT plays a significant role in implementing encryption standards, which manage data at rest or in transit, effectively filter internet traffic, and secure email communication. DIT set system documentation standards and partners with County entities to ensure proper documentation and analysis from a security perspective.

DIT implemented and upgraded numerous infrastructure assets including firewalls to provide network segmentation and limit exposure of sensitive information and the integration of multi-factor authentication into most enterprise applications and technologies. DIT bolstered its tools and skillsets to secure both on-premises and remote technologies.

Service Delivery Enhancements

[In 2021, DIT created an Information Technologies Service Delivery Program](#), elements of which included a reorganized County Information Center, the IT Help Desk, and designating Technical Coordinators to serve as liaisons to and advocates for customers. The program office also established an IT service catalog, service level agreements, and key performance indicators to measure success in these areas. The outcomes of this program allowed DIT and County departments to identify the most efficient way to deploy resources in a cost-effective manner. This has included reducing the number of staff permanently deployed to sites and moving more support procedures to first contact personnel.

[DIT consolidated IT resources as part of a cost-saving and service improvement initiative in 2021. This effort resulted in standardization, increased security, efficiency, and improved customer service.](#) The Allegheny County Medical Examiner's Office and the Allegheny County Jail were assigned Technical Coordinators who liaised with technical staff to ensure that DIT can anticipate and deliver services when needed. As a result, the Medical Examiner's Office published a more interactive website, began recording telephone calls, increased wireless coverage, and better secured its laboratory instruments. The Allegheny County Jail realized more efficient wireless coverage, quicker resolutions on break/fix tickets, and better management of its Offender Management System.

DIT implemented a service delivery and management initiative in 2023 with a goal of cutting costs and improving customer experience by ensuring that the provided services align with their needs and expectations. DIT used a four-phase, multi-cycle approach and adopted the Information Technology Infrastructure Library (ITIL) framework to assess service delivery and management. Through these assessments, DIT identified and analyzed multiple opportunities for improvement. The old Service Desk model was replaced with single contact resolution. Through a training roadmap, system documentation, creation of a knowledge base, call center skill development and cross-training, DIT transformed the service desk from a place to report problems to a solution center that fixes issues to provide value. Inefficiencies in the management of the County's Service Catalog were also uncovered. To correct these, DIT created a comprehensive service catalog and service subscription catalog to ensure proper documentation of service utilization. This resulted in improved service delivery and reduced costs by eliminating redundancies, standardizing configurations, improving customer service response time and satisfaction, and improved compliance through a reduction of shadow IT.

Streamlining Enterprise Systems

The DIT Project Management Office (PMO) was established in 2020 to standardize project methodology, improve portfolio management, conduct process improvement projects, and increase collaborative engagements across all departments. PMO implemented a "Project Intake" process to prioritize requests from departments. In addition, the PMO collaborated with the Human Resources Department to consolidate several departments under a single Enterprise Learning Management System (Cornerstone). This collaborative effort with Human Resources and the Budget and Finance departments allowed for the enterprise time and attendance system (NovaTime) to be standardized and streamlined across several departments. Collaboration with the Health Department led to improvements to their customer engagement, using GovQA. The PMO also engaged departments on more specialized requests, such as the Facilities Management Parking Lot application upgrade, the Health Department's municipal contract tracking, Administrative Services/Elections ReliaVote and Electionware implementations, and DIT's Disaster Recovery Center.

In 2023, DIT completed a multi-year, enterprise-wide initiative to implement a central time and attendance system – NovaTime - which enables standardized time keeping practices and empowers centralized reporting workflows. The project team overcame numerous obstacles due to the complexity of the County's operations as well as the breadth of industries and bargaining units that comprise the County workforce. The new system's implementation enabled the County to retire multiple obsolete systems, including internally developed and maintained applications, Kronos, and paper tracking.

E. Legal mandate or necessity for the department

This service is empowered by Article VI, Section 2(l) of the Charter that empowers the County Manager to ensure the maintenance of a management information system dealing with County services and operations.

F. Determination of public need for the department's services

The Department of Information Technology ensures that the public can access reliable information services and shapes long-term business strategies which benefits citizens with better public service at a competitive cost through the implementation of an enterprise-wide information technology infrastructure. The Department also facilitates and enables all County departments and their employees to efficiently deliver services in a modern, technology-centric world.

G. Review of the methods used in the implementation of each department's programs and an analysis of alternative methods that may be employed to achieve the department's legal mandates

In 2019 the County determined that the Division of Computer Services should be separated from the Department of Administrative Services and established as its own department. Established in 2020, the Department of Information Technology was formed to better serve the technology and data security needs of County government.

H. Evaluation of whether county government is the most effective body to implement the department's programs

The Department of Information Technology provides the mission-critical technology infrastructure for all County departments. The Department's strategic planning, project management, and operational acumen combine to deliver cost-effective, highly reliable, and secure information systems to Allegheny County with an expertise that cannot be met by outside contracts alone.

I. Evaluation of whether the absence or reduction of the department or the department's provision of services would significantly harm or endanger the public health, safety or welfare

This Department provides several mission-critical support functions that enable other County departments to provide essential services to the public. Services include administration of the Offender Management System for the Allegheny County Jail, the time and attendance management system for all departments, and GIS functions for Emergency Services, the Division of Real Estate, and the Public Works Department. DIT operates a highly available network that connects all County facilities and enables business functions. A reduction or absence of this department's services would significantly harm or endanger public health, safety, and welfare.

J. Analysis showing the costs of compliance for individuals or other entities regulated by the department

The costs of compliance for this Department are referenced in the Resolutions (Operating Budget # 12- 23- RE 12856-23 and the Capital Budget # 10-23-RE 12857-23) signed by the County Executive on December 6, 2023. Additionally, the costs of compliance for the approved budget listed above are delineated within the 2024 Comprehensive Fiscal Plan (CFP) which can be referenced here:

<https://www.allegHENYcounty.us/Government/Departments-and-Offices/Department-Directory/Budget-and-Finance/Comprehensive-Fiscal-Plan>.

K. Efficiency with which formal public complaints filed with the department have been processed

The Department of Information Technology maintains several avenues for the public to interact with the department. In line with accepted practices, DIT maintains publicly expected email addresses including webmaster and dnsmaster. Emails to these addresses generate tickets in the Department's internal tracking system where they are processed accordingly. More general complaints would be addressed to the County's Information Center where they are logged into the County's CRM and resolved accordingly in a timely manner.

The Department received 72,220 complaints/requests for service in 2023, 45% of which were resolved the same day in 2023. The Department closed requests within 8 days on average in 2023. In addition, there were 5 Right-to-Know requests for information from the department in 2023, which were closed in 12 days on average.

L. Recommendation

Recognizing that the efficiency and effectiveness of County operations are enhanced through the services offered by the Department of Information Technology, the current organizational design should be retained.

Department of Facilities Management

A. Vision

To present County-owned facilities in a clean, safe, comfortable, well-maintained condition for all residents and employees in support of the mission of service and stewardship for Allegheny County

B. Mission

To maintain and improve County facilities for all employees and residents.

C. Overview

The Department of Facilities Management maintains and upgrades Allegheny County's 45 major buildings, as well as the 12,000-acre County park system and other properties, such as ski slopes, wave pools, golf courses and other recreational facilities. The Department of Facilities Management promotes the stewardship of County resources by ensuring that County facilities are constructed, renovated, and maintained to provide for energy efficiency, safety, and practicality thus promoting a positive atmosphere for all residents and County employees. The Department also strives to lead by example in the areas of energy, water, and waste conservation to reduce our carbon footprint and operational costs, to increase environmental and human health, and to increase green job opportunities. The department often works on projects that extend across departments, which requires collaboration and results in operational efficiencies. In addition, the Department manages property and casualty loss control efforts and the prevention of County employees' work-related injuries and illnesses. To fulfill these responsibilities, the Department consists of the following two divisions:

- Administration: Maintains strong internal financial and administrative controls related to personnel, payroll, human resource functions, procurement, and budget. Additionally, it develops strategies to ensure departmental operations are executed efficiently and professionally.
- Operations: Provides capital management and maintenance of all County-owned and certain County-leased facilities.

D. Achievements of department since 2019 (2020 through 2023)

COVID-19 Preparedness and Prevention Efforts

In-house building trades staff assisted with several projects throughout 2020 to protect residents and staff at the Kane Community Living Centers. Staff helped construct a personal protective equipment (PPE) storage building at Kane Glen Hazel, allowing easy access to protection for nursing staff and other employees as they cared for COVID-19 positive patients. The PPE storage building was centrally located to be easily accessible to other County entities. In-house trades staff remodeled existing wings in Kane facilities into infectious disease wings. The new wings allowed for isolation and included touchless lighting, automatic toilet flushometers, and individual ionization units to clean the air. The wings can be used in the future to contain any infectious disease. Facilities management staff

also built patient visitation rooms in every Kane facility to create safe spaces where families and friends could visit residents.

Throughout 2020, Facilities Management took additional steps to keep County employees safe. Custodial staff increased disinfecting and sanitizing efforts throughout over one million square feet of space of County facilities, became Bactronix-certified and worked extra hours to keep facilities sanitized. Staff also constructed thousands of plexiglass barriers to protect County employees and the public.

Enhancing Energy Efficiency and Recycling

In 2020, electrical efficiency efforts resulted in a 9 million kilowatt-hours (kWh) and \$1.2 million in electricity costs savings compared to 2015.

Recycling efforts diverted 342 tons of waste from landfills and reduced 1,080 metric tons of CO₂ in 2022. Between 2020-2022, 926 metric tons of waste were diverted from landfills and the County doubled recycling between 2019-2022. In 2021, Facilities Management partnered the Allegheny County Economic Development Department (ACED) to coordinate a large-scale paper purge and file digitization to support ACED downsizing, recycling 43,835 pounds of paper and reducing CO₂ emission by 21.9 metric tons.

Between 2020-2022, the County's fleet expanded to 12 Electric Vehicles (EVs), reducing net CO₂ emissions by 18.6 metric tons, and saving an estimated \$7,185. The first four EVs in the County's fleet were purchased in 2020 through PA DEP Alternative Fuels Incentive Program grant funds awarded to the County.

In 2021, Facilities implemented a comprehensive Green Cleaning program for in-house janitorial services to improve indoor air quality and the health and safety of custodial staff and County employees. In 2022, a new dilution-based cleaning system was implemented in the downtown buildings, resulting in cost savings, longer lasting products, product consistency, and packaging waste reduction.

Facilities upgraded air handling units with models that run at variable capacity and speed based on demand, increasing the overall efficiency and reliability of the units. The upgrades were completed in 2023 in the City County Building.

Facilities installed solar arrays and electrified mechanical systems at Deer Lakes and White Oak Parks as part of the Net Zero Parks project, which broke ground in 2022. The White Oak solar canopy is estimated to generate 156,000 kWh per year and the Deer Lakes roof solar canopy is estimated to generate 180,000 kWh per year. Both parks will be applying for Net Zero Certification.

Creating New Office Space

Facilities renovated multiple spaces in the County Office Building to accommodate staffing changes and create office space for departments between 2020 and 2022.

- Renovations to accommodate the Sheriffs Investigations Office relocation included energy efficiency barriers and replacement of fluorescent fixtures with LED lighting to reduce energy consumption in 2020. This relocation consolidated personnel into a centralized location and

Facilities placed technology and security at forefront considerations, creating barriers between workstations to create safer spaces for employees.

- Space was renovated to house the new Department of Children Initiatives in 2021. Forty new LED lights and sensors and a high-efficiency heat pump for ventilation, cooling, and supplemental heating were installed to make the new space energy efficient.
- The Elections and the Public Defender office spaces were relocated and renovated to consolidate disparate personnel locations and provide public access to their respective services.
- Facilities renovated the entire 6th floor to accommodate the growing Department of Information and Technology. New offices, workstations with breakrooms, a lunchroom and shower facilities were incorporated into the design that consolidates personnel from different floors and rental facilities.

Facilities Management renovated the Family Law Center to include a family waiting room with a children's play area, two new consultation rooms, an exam room, staff areas and a sensory room for the UPMC Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh space within the building in 2022. The sensory room is designed to comfort children with sensory processing sensitivities and provides an immersive experience with lighting, tactile objects, therapeutic scents, music and more.

In 2023, Facilities renovated a space in the County Courthouse to house a new Gun Permits Office for the Sheriff's Firearms Division in 2023. This renovation included a demolition, addition of a steel reinforced block wall and a ballistic door to enhance employee safety, new flooring and carpeting, installation of energy-efficient LED lights and packaged thermal air conditioning units, and painting.

Facilities Management designed and built a new outdoor break space for Emergency Services in 2023. The space includes a wooden pavilion structure with picnic tables and seating.

Maintaining and Upgrading County Facilities

Facilities coordinated the construction of thermal generation steam plants in the County Office Building and the Allegheny County Jail which allows the County to generate its own steam to heat buildings. Completed in 2020, the County Office Building thermal plant provides reliable and efficient district heating and domestic hot water service to the Courthouse Complex – the Allegheny County Courthouse, Family Law Center, County Office Building, City County Building, and the Health Administration Building. The Allegheny County Jail plant, completed in 2021, provides heating and domestic hot water service to the County Jail and the Municipal Courts Building. The plants increase recirculation of the condensation water from 25% to 95% and reduce the amount of wastewater entering the sewer system by reusing water.

In 2022, Facilities Management oversaw the installation of a new salt dome for District 1 near North Park. This is a temporary structure and will be repurposed once a permanent salt dome is installed.

Facilities Management remolded and upgraded the County Courthouse ground floor women's restroom to be accessible and meet ADA standards. This reconfiguration involved replacing sinks and stalls and modernizing the facility while maintaining its historical infrastructure.

The roof replacement on the County's half of the City County Building, which will meet energy codes and provide better protection, began in 2023. This project included installation of 11 storefront windows to ensure the proper insulation depth to meet energy code requirements. The installation of the new modified bitumen roof assembly, metal wall panels and flashings is expected to have a 20+-year life expectancy.

Facilities renovated the Fire Academy with LED lighting, fresh carpeting, and vinyl flooring. This project included a kitchen renovation and repainting to provide a modern and welcoming environment.

Facilities constructed a gender-neutral bathroom in the City County Building. The existing bathroom was refurbished with privacy toilet stalls, a baby changing station, new ventilation, and LED lighting.

Facilities replaced and updated multiple amenities at County-owned parks, including construction of an inclusionary basketball court, roof replacements, and pool upgrades.

- Facilities repurposed the existing basketball court at South Park into a Bankshots™ basketball court that is accessible to differently abled participants. The court was completed in 2022.
- Facilities replaced the existing failing roofs of the Boyce Park Ski Lodge and the Boyce Park Administration Building with a black EPDM roof that has a 30-year warranty. This project included metal flashings and new insulation to meet the energy code requirements.
- Facilities replaced the deteriorated and failing North Park baby pool with a zero-entry state-of-the-art aquatic facility.
- The 2021 annual painting blitz included ticket booths, restrooms and buildings at the Boyce Park Wave Pool and playground equipment, restrooms, fire hydrants, and shelter roofs Settler's Cabin and White Oak parks.

Facilities upgraded equipment in Medical Examiner's office to be more efficient and reliable. The Department upgraded four coolers (incoming, outgoing, toxicology, and evidence) and replaced two existing chillers at the end of their life expectancy with more efficient units. Facilities also replaced the obsolete lab control system with and upgraded, non-proprietary system.

Facilities replaced the District 5 Public Utility Warehouse, incorporating sustainable features including a solar array, daylight harvesting, and EV charging stations. The new facility also contains truck bays, offices, and a salt storage building to serve South Park and other districts.

Historic Preservation and Restoration

In 2021, Facilities coordinated a \$2.5 million capital investment into the renovation and beautification of the Hartwood Acres Stables, originally erected in 1927. Facilities preserved the original appearance of the courtyard stone wall during repairs and rebuilt the original horsehead fountain. The original horse stalls were repainted and have new flooring. Other upgrades included roof and stair replacements, new stormwater drainage, lighting in the main courtyard, and new pavement.

Carpenters and trowel trades staff rebuilt the stone hearth, repointed the chimney, and installed a new roof and picnic tables at the Nevin Shelter in 2022. Originally built in 1931 and designed by the first Parks director and Swiss landscape architect, Paul Riis, Nevin Shelter is one of the oldest shelters in South Park.

Facilities refaced the 100-year-old Harrison Hills Barn with a new vinyl board and batten siding. This will help ensure another 100 years of service to the Harrison Hills Nature Center.

Facilities renovated Courtroom 307 to restore the original design intentions of H.H. Richardson, the County Courthouse architect. The dropped ceiling was removed to restore the original round-top windows. To complete the restoration, walls were removed to return to the original open courtroom concept and new finishes were added, including restored original wood paneling.

Internal Process Improvements

Facilities Management's fiscal team adopted Lean process improvement techniques to reduce costs and increase efficiency by eliminating redundancies and streamlining processes. The improvements included implementing a centralized email address for vendor invoice submissions, efficiencies in utility bill processing, implementing an OnBase purchase order workflow, and creating an organized database of potential contractors for competitive bids.

- Through enhanced procurement procedures, vendor relations solidified, resulting in greater discounts on products and emergency mechanical items being readily available with zero credit hold instances. By immediately obtaining these items for quick repair, facilities throughout the county experience little or no down time in their operations.
- Utility voucher processing was converted to summary billing, reducing over 200 labor hours per year with greater data recording accuracy. Reducing this administrative burden created more time to thoroughly review usage and capture errors, eliminating potential obstruction in services.
- Eliminating paper requests and increasing the efficiency of voucher processing and blanket purchase orders allowed Facilities to leverage term and bulk purchase discounts, saving of thousands of dollars annually. Facilities' fiscal team is working with the JDE team and the Controller's Office to make this an automatic process that the entire county can utilize, realizing greater savings in the future.

The Facilities Administration division actively worked to enhance personnel safety. The staff obtained first aid kits for all vehicles driven by Facilities Trade staff. Currently, a Lock out/Tag out program is being researched for electrical tool safety. The division is also exploring intra-departmental cross-training to optimize human resources and ensure operations continue in case of emergencies.

E. Legal mandate or necessity for the department

Recognizing the need to retain structural, environmental, and physical integrity of the county assets, the County Executive proposed a restructuring of functions historically performed by the Department of Public Works and Administrative Services and created the Department of Facilities Management. By the adoption of the 2013 budget through Resolution 28-12 RE by County Council, the Department was officially sanctioned.

F. Determination of public need for the department's services

The Facilities Management Department ensures that County facilities are constructed, renovated, and maintained in a manner that protects the structural integrity of County assets, as well as the safety and quality of life of the general public. Through safe, efficient, and effective delivery of service, this department guarantees that revenues are used appropriately to maintain facilities so that the other County departments, offices of independently elected officials and offices and courtrooms of the Court of Common Pleas can operate safely while fulfilling their public service missions.

G. Review of the methods used in the implementation of each department's programs and an analysis of alternative methods that may be employed to achieve the department's legal mandates

The department delivers its services by utilizing the skills of seven labor groups including painters, electricians, boilermakers, carpenters, masonry, stationary engineers, and plumbers. While the delivery of facility maintenance and repair services could be provided through third-party private contractors, contracted services would most likely occur at a higher cost and longer lead times. In most cases where capital projects are small-scale and/or time-sensitive, management requires the flexibility to use in-house design, management, and labor to deliver the projects on-time and under budget. The department has also demonstrated that custodial services are provided with in-house staff at lower cost than previously contract services.

H. Evaluation of whether county government is the most effective body to implement the department's programs

Allegheny County government is ultimately responsible for the condition of its owned assets. The County uses a combination of in-house Facilities Management staff and contracted services for capital projects. Routine maintenance is largely handled by Facilities Management staff. On a case-by-case basis, the County should continue to evaluate and assign Facilities capital and maintenance work based on cost efficiency, quality and timeliness within which the work is required to be completed.

I. Evaluation of whether the absence or reduction of the department or the department's provision of services would significantly harm or endanger the public health, safety or welfare

The absence or reduction of the Facilities Management would have significant adverse consequences, including but not limited to:

- Increased costs for repairs or facility replacements because appropriate preventive maintenance was not being performed; and
- Facility or system failures such as electrical, mechanical plumbing or building structure that would put the health and welfare of County employees and the general public at jeopardy.

J. Analysis showing the costs of compliance for individuals or other entities regulated by the department

The costs of compliance for this Department are referenced in the Resolutions (Operating Budget # 12- 23- RE 12856-23 and the Capital Budget # 10-23-RE 12857-23) signed by the County Executive on December 6, 2023. The costs of compliance for the approved budget listed above are delineated within in the 2024 Comprehensive Fiscal Plan (CFP) which can be referenced at: <https://www.alleghenycounty.us/Government/Departments-and-Offices/Department-Directory/Budget-and-Finance/Comprehensive-Fiscal-Plan>.

K. Efficiency with which formal public complaints filed with the department have been processed

Between 2020 and 2023, a total of 75,451 service requests were submitted to Facilities Management. In 2023, 18,841 service requests were created and 18,314 were closed, with an average time to close of 31 days.

L. Recommendation

Given that the Department of Facilities Management was created in 2013 to protect the structural integrity of County government's building assets, it is recommended that the Department be maintained.

Department of Parks

A. Vision

Act as a mechanism to preserve the integrity of the environment and enhance the region's ability to promote itself as "green" which gives it a strategic and competitive edge in the race to recruit companies, families, individuals, and students to relocate here.

B. Mission

To enhance the quality of life and wellbeing of Allegheny County residents by providing quality landscapes, facilities, programs, and special events that meet countywide needs for leisure and recreation.

C. Overview

The Parks Department sustains and enhances the nine County parks comprising 12,119 acres, with over 200 miles of trail and 279 facilities available for rental. All parks are open 365 days a year, free of charge. The Parks Department encourages the involvement of people of all ages through park programs, leagues, and volunteer opportunities. Within the parks, residents can enjoy many amenities, including two golf courses, four lifeguarded pools, two skating rinks, a ski slope, and more. The department also offers a wide variety of health and fitness programs, sports clinics, leagues and lessons, outdoor programs and activities, arts and entertainment events and programs, adaptive programming, and a variety of special events.

The Parks Department fulfills its responsibilities and provides services through three main divisions:

1. Parks Administration: Parks Administration provides oversight and development of programming to enhance community life specifically in the following:
 - Administers and manages the resources of the nine County Parks
 - Seeks funding for park projects
 - Provides long-term planning for preservation, conservation, and use of the County Parks resources
 - Implements programming to address recreational needs throughout the year
2. Park Rangers: Park Rangers serve as unarmed and non-sworn ambassadors of the parks for the education of the public and the protection and preservation of the natural environment, including:
 - Monitors the parks, which will lead to parks that are better maintained, safe, and welcoming to visitors
 - Offers information, guidance, programming, and assistance to visitors at the parks
 - Serves as the educational ambassadors, presenting outreach programs to local schools and work to bring schools to the parks for field trips
 - Works with many other organizations like the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts to create community connections with the parks
3. Parks Maintenance: Parks Maintenance maintains the Parks' facilities and properties, including:

- 279 rental facilities
- 28 ball fields
- Two 18-hole golf courses and one 9-hole course
- The animals and area at the South Park Game Preserve and the Round Hill working farm
- Two ice skating rinks
- Five off-leash dog areas
- Park roads
- 200 miles of park trails

D. Achievements of department since 2019 (2020 through 2023)

The Parks Department had numerous achievements between 2020 and 2023. In addition to other noteworthy projects, the Department achieved the following attendance levels and impact:

Season	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	Total
Ice rink attendance	42,006	27,339	48,174	51,429	168,948
Boyce Park ski attendance	14,482	17,842	19,875	14,088	66,287
Boyce Park tubing attendance	11,754	10,216	8,688	5,653	36,311

Year	2020	2021	2022	2023	Total
Golf course attendance	111,410	112,654	114,776	137,952	476,792
Pool attendance	0	141,935	141,121	155,785	438,841
Ranger program participants	5,540	5,742	6,751	10,898	28,931
Total ranger programs	322	365	348	322	1,357
Rangers outreach programs	168	161	157	142	628
Number of trees planted	1,712	1,383	2,978	2,258	8,331
Recreation programs offered	229	399	478	532	1,638
Recreation program participants	7,793	17,024	19,207	23,052	67,076

Overcame COVID-19 Challenges

Parks moved 67 programs to virtual platforms to ensure the health and safety of community members during the pandemic. Rangers recorded multiple videos which allowed users to interact and ask questions and shared prerecorded programs through Facebook and YouTube. Rangers partnered with local libraries and schools to hold virtual programming. The Latodami Nature Center offered six educational videos online, which received more than 30,000 views. Soccer Shots created instructional videos for their participants and Parks offered four free hockey educational videos to the public online.

Adapting to a contactless payment approach allowed Parks to set and supervise the proper capacity limits due to COVID-19. The public was able to access advanced ticket sales and registration for sessions at the ice rinks and ski slopes online.

In 2020, the Parks Department implemented a new concessions model to improve profit margins. Despite COVID-19 closures, total concession profit increased \$28,263 from 2019. The new model streamlined alcoholic beverage offerings and food menus, implemented better inventory tracking, modified hours of operation and instituted a time management system to optimize staffing levels. In addition to these changes, concessions implemented a takeout-only policy due to COVID-19. Overall,

Golf Course Concessions' net sales increased \$44,661 compared to 2019 despite being closed March and April due to COVID-19. The gross profit margin also increased from 7% in 2019 to 18% in 2020, indicating that even though expenses increased due to demand, funds were spent more efficiently.

Expanded New Recreational Programming

In 2020 and 2022, Parks established a variety of new recreational programs. In 2020, Parks formed the i9 Sports Basketball League, the Penguins Foundation Women's League, the "Parks and Reps" fitness class, outdoor yoga classes, and PiYo in the Park. Park Naturalists collaborated with L.L. Bean to create a Fall Foliage Kayak Paddle program. In 2022, Parks added several new programs including stand-up paddle boarding, Full Psych Adventures, pickleball programs, and Kidokinetics, a sports fitness program for kids.

Parks expanded program offerings through partnerships in 2020 and 2023. The Parks Department partnered with the YMCA of Greater Pittsburgh to offer YMCA programming in three County parks in 2020. Students participated in virtual lessons while YMCA instructors were available to support the transition to virtual learning. Parks also partnered with ENVISION Blind Sports, which supports individuals who are blind or visually impaired to hold a dek hockey clinic in 2020. This partnership expanded to include a summer camp offered in 2023.

Attendance and Revenue Growth

Between 2020 and 2023, several Parks programs grew in both attendance and revenue. During 2020, revenue from tennis lessons increased 251% from the prior year's total revenue. Soccer shots programs and Quick Skills Soccer also saw participation and revenue increases compared to 2019. Learn3ride programs experienced a 39% increase in attendance after adding 4 program locations in 2020. Throughout 2022, Parks increased their program count, program-related net profit, and program attendance. YMCA Summer Camps saw a 32% increase in total revenue and a 21% increase in total attendance. Trail Adventures Mountain Biking saw a 32% increase in both total revenue and attendance. In 2023, Parks increased free swimming lesson sessions and saw a 50% rise in participation compared to 2022. Both golf courses officially moved to a new reservation system for tee times, resulting in greater efficiency, increased revenue, and positive impacts on the pace of play. Golf course admissions and revenue were 20% higher in 2023 compared to 2022.

The Parks Department organized and hosted several well-attended events in 2022. The Allegheny County Wine and Spirits Festival had 654 participants. At the close of pool season, the Department held a Pooches in the Pool event with 843 dogs and 1,951 participants in attendance. In the fall, Hartwood Acres Park hosted the 6th Annual Punkin Chunkin with over 1,200 participants.

In 2023, Park Rangers held the most successful Outreach Programming year yet, reaching 9,456 participants. The large increase was credited to school programming throughout the county. In addition, the rangers hosted 68 volunteer projects with 715 total volunteers working 2,054 hours. This work could be valued at a total of over \$65,000.

Established Inclusive Recreation and Summer Programs

In 2023, Allegheny County Parks partnered with the Southpointe Grizzlies and the Special Olympics to host Bankshot™ basketball clinics. Bankshot™ is a non-exclusionary game that wheelchair and able-bodied athletes can play together with neither at a disadvantage.

Hometown Hoops Mini-Camps returned in 2023 for the first time since 2019. In partnership with the Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank, a free boxed lunch was provided to all participants. Throughout the summer, Parks hosted nearly 1,000 participants at over 30 free basketball mini camps held in 13 different communities throughout the county.

In 2023, Parks partnered with ENVISION Blind Sports to facilitate what is believed to be the largest blind camp for athletes in America. Over 80 athletes from over 12 different states participated in the sports camp held at Penn State Behrend. ENVISION Blind Sports supports individuals who are blind or visually impaired by providing services and education to ensure they have ample opportunities to be physically active. Parks hockey coaches ran dek hockey clinics and supplied the athletes with hockey sticks and balls.

Parks held the first We are Beautiful – Knowing Your Self-Worth Summer Camp for over 20 participants in 2023. We are Beautiful is a specialty workshop that equips girls and young women with the skills to develop and strengthen their confidence to build their self-worth. Their programming is designed to assist with building life skills, developing self-confidence, and forming mentorship relationships.

Improving User Experiences Through Amenity Upgrades and Capital Projects

Renovations of the Hartwood Stables complex, including a roof replacement, accessibility enhancements, and historical preservation, occurred between 2020 and 2023. The Hartwood Acres Stables parking and accessibility project enables universal parking and access to the courtyard event space and restroom facility. The roof at the Stables complex and Amphitheater were replaced by County roofers. The courtyard cobblestones were replaced, and ten sculptures were placed in new locations throughout the park, including eight that underwent a meticulous restoration process. One of the Stables apartments was converted into a bridal suite and fire damage was removed from the other apartment to allow for future renovations.

Parks constructed a Bankshots™ Basketball Court in 2022 to support inclusive programming. Bankshots™ is a non-exclusionary game that wheelchair and able-bodied athletes play together. Bankshot™ sports are non-aggressive and entirely inclusionary because participants play alongside, not against, each other.

The \$1.1 million newly renovated Boyce Park tennis and pickleball complex opened to the public in December 2023. The facility features six pickleball courts, two hybrid tennis/pickleball courts, and two tennis courts, replacing the previous complex that was built in 1977. The project received a \$140,000 grant from the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources' (PA DCNR) Community Conservation Partnerships Program. The new complex includes two large rain gardens that will manage stormwater runoff from the 36,000 square foot court surface and help improve local water quality.

The South Park children's playground renovation, which replaced a nearly 30-year-old playground in its entirety, was completed in 2023. The total project cost was \$1.8 million and received a \$500,000 grant from the PA DCNR Community Conservation Partnerships Program. The site's parking lot was replaced with green space that will significantly reduce polluted stormwater runoff.

Between 2020 and 2023, Parks added amenities and improved several facilities throughout the parks.

- **North Park:** The tennis field house was converted into public restrooms and a ranger office. The swimming pool bathhouse was renovated, and a second set of pool bleachers was restored. Pearce Mill Road was widened and a paved trail alongside Tennis Court Road was installed, helping to improve pedestrian and biker safety. The scoreboard at JC Stone Field was replaced. Parks also partnered with the Department of Public Works to repair a large landslide along Lakeshore Drive with in-house staff. Accessible doors were added to the skating rink and the baby pool was replaced and now includes an ADA-compliant zero entry, new filtration system, and other kid-friendly features.
- **Deer Lakes:** The filtration system and a cistern were updated to provide safe and clean water for users of the spray park.
- **Round Hill Parks:** The filtration system and a cistern were updated to provide safe and clean water for users of the spray park. The roof of a barn was also replaced. A 75' seat wall, a large shade unit, an ADA-accessible ramp to the site, and synthetic turf surrounding the splash pad were added.
- **Boyce Park:** The hull rope was replaced on the ski lift and ski slope lights were replaced with LEDs. Replacements of the administration office, lodge roofs and lodge flooring, and renovations to the picnic hut restrooms also occurred. A facility was added that included a public restroom, a concession area, a ticketing area for snow tubing and a storage area. The camera system at the wave pool was replaced and expanded. In-house heavy equipment operators and laborers replaced a retaining wall at Hillcourt Shelter.
- **South Park:** The Museum Building underwent significant emergency repairs. Repairs and renovations were made to the Agricultural Hall facility and the Nevin Shelter. The cottage facility men's restrooms were refurbished, new women's restrooms were constructed, and an accessible restroom was added to the building. The administration office HVAC system was replaced along with filters for the pool. The golf course irrigation system was revamped by a pump replacement and renovations to the pump house. The bridge over Catfish Run was replaced along with a section of the wall along the bank of Catfish Run. There were significant repairs to the sewage lines within the Fairgrounds area and two sinkholes were repaired.
- **Settlers Cabin:** The bathroom near the dek hockey rink and basketball courts was rehabilitated.
- **Harrison Hills:** The siding on the maintenance barn was replaced and all roads and most of the parking lots were paved.
- **Dog parks were added and opened** at Boyce Park, Settlers Cabin Park, and Harrison Hills Park.
- **Parks expanded their fleet and replaced outdated maintenance equipment.** Parks replaced the landscaping equipment and Zamboni at North Park, snow groomers for the Boyce Park Ski Slopes, a manure spreader at Round Hill Park farm, and several pieces of mowing equipment for the parks and golf courses. A mini excavator was added to the heavy equipment fleet to

support in-house projects. Utility vehicles were replaced and two new vehicles were added to the fleet.

Upgrading Trails and Routes

Parks completed multiple upgrades to existing trails and routes between 2020 and 2023. Completed in 2020, the Settlers Cabin Park waterfall trail improvement redirected users around ecologically sensitive areas. In 2021, Parks established the Allegheny County Trail Crew to assist with maintaining existing trails, building new trails, and installing structures. The Trail Crew helped complete the rerouting of ten unsustainable trails and maintained and improved over 50,000 feet of trails in their first season. Over 3,500 feet of trail was re-routed in South Park to connect to a new section of trail that was completed by volunteers and Trail Crew staff. Complementing the work of the Trail Crew, Parks installed 14 trailhead kiosks to help with wayfinding and a new bridge was built to restore access to Marshall Island. Additionally, Parks entered a multi-year contract with a trail specialist to improve the trail system. In 2023, Parks completed improvements, marking, and re-routes of 13.89 miles of trail with 2,645 hours invested in these trail projects.

The North Park Tennis Court Road Trail, which encompasses a paved ADA-compliant route that enhances pedestrian safety and reduces vehicle congestion, was completed in 2023. The project included additional seating and landscape improvements, a new bridge, and streambank stabilization measures to control excessive erosion. Over 2,500 trees and shrubs were planted to improve air and water quality and enhance the wildlife habitat.

Advanced Sustainability and Green Initiatives

Throughout 2020 and 2021, solar energy upgrades were made throughout the parks. The Solar Shelters project installed eight solar powered outlets in each park between 2020 and 2021. In South Park, solar lighting was installed along Corrigan Drive, a popular pedestrian pathway.

Parks restored natural areas through plantings and lawn-to-meadow conversions between 2020 and 2023. In 2020, Parks planted 2,617 trees which facilitated the restoration of three acres of riparian habitat at Hartwood Acres Park and two acres of riparian habitat along Pine Creek in North Park. These plantings will mature to reduce stormwater flows, improve aquatic, pollinator, and avian habitats, and improve air quality. A five-acre meadow was installed at South Park and is expected to reduce approximately 2 million gallons of stormwater runoff annually. This meadow creates critical habitat for pollinators and birds. Between 2021 and 2022, Parks planted 4,361 trees and seeded 22 acres of meadow, diverting 21 million gallons of stormwater runoff in 2022. In 2023, Park Rangers partnered with the 10 Million Trees for Pennsylvania Project and the Izaak Walton League to secure tree protection and over 2,000 seedlings that were planted in the Allegheny County parks.

The Settlers Cabin acid mine drainage treatment system, constructed to treat the largest source of abandoned mine drainage (AMD) water in the watershed, was completed in 2022. The system is expected to remove 38 tons of acidity, 7 tons of aluminum, and 2 tons of iron from the water, while adding 30 tons of alkalinity to Pinkerton's Run creek annually.

Between 2021 and 2023, Parks completed several projects to better manage stormwater runoff. In partnership with Facilities Management, Parks installed two rain gardens in Boyce Park that are expected to capture approximately 238,000 gallons of stormwater runoff annually. A green parking

lot was installed in South Park that will capture 95% of all stormwater generated on-site and divert polluted stormwater from local waterways. The Hartwood stables parking surface was restored with a stabilizing blend of soil that allows grass to grow and stormwater to infiltrate. This design helps preserve the countryside character of the historic stables while minimizing the impact on downstream water quality in the Little Pine Creek watershed. The South Park children's playground parking lot was replaced with green space which will significantly reduce polluted stormwater runoff to Catfish Run.

Growing Parks Staff

Parks took action to overcome the lifeguard shortage by offering four lifeguarding classes and training sessions to "grow its own" lifeguards in 2021. Parks hired two aquatic professionals to train and certify individuals with an American Red Cross Lifeguard certification. A total of 80 candidates enrolled and successfully completed the program, with 65 joining the County pools staff in 2021. Parks plans to be able to appropriately staff all four pools by introducing more classes each year.

The Parks Department, working with the Human Resources Department, improved the seasonal employee processing system to increase efficiency. Parks provided virtual employment orientations for staff to better accommodate prospective employee schedules. The process not only saved time but allowed Parks to more safely process the paperwork related to hiring staff during the pandemic.

E. Legal mandate or necessity for the department

The legal mandate is authorized by Article XIII, Section 6(d) of the Home Rule Charter of Allegheny County. Additionally, Division 6 of the Allegheny County Code of Ordinances regulates the Department of Parks.

F. Determination of public need for the department's services

County parks, amenities and recreational programs improve residents' physical and psychological health, strengthen communities, and make Allegheny County an attractive place to live and work. Numerous studies have shown that the social, environmental, economic, and health benefits of a robust park system. Well-cared for parks attract tourists, serve as community signature cultural amenities, offer a marketing tool for cities to attract businesses and conventions and host festivals, concerts and athletics events. Parks contribute to home values, as homebuyers prefer homes that are close to parks and open space. Green spaces in urban/suburban areas provide substantial ecosystem services, including sequestering carbon, supplying oxygen, reducing air pollution, and controlling flooding.

G. Review of the methods used in the implementation of each department's programs and an analysis of alternative methods that may be employed to achieve the department's legal mandates

The Parks Department delivers its services organized as follows:

- Parks Maintenance: utilizing its own team of maintenance staff and laborers, the department maintains the 12,119 acres within the parks, as well as over 400 facilities including rental buildings, shelters, maintenance/support buildings, storage buildings, long term lease facilities, nature centers, restrooms, barns, etc. across all nine parks.
- Park Rangers: County's Park Rangers offer educational and interpretive programming as well as outreach programming to local schools and communities. They also provide park visitors with orientation and information while ensuring park regulations are being followed.
- Recreational Activities and Programming: the department directly employs staff to operate the four park pools, two skating rinks, two golf courses and ski/snow tubing slopes. Additional seasonal and part-time staff are employed to deliver recreational programs such as yoga and youth sports lessons. The department also contracts with organizations such as the YMCA and L.L. Bean to provide even more programming opportunities like day camps and kayaking lesson.
- Capital Improvements: Parks Department often partners with the Facilities Management Department to design and implement capital projects, such as the Hartwood Acres wedding facility. Larger, more complex and/or projects with great time flexibility may be contracted out for design and/or construction. In addition, the Allegheny County Parks Foundation provides matching funds to improve, conserve and restore park facilities and open spaces by raising funds, designing projects, and supporting educational, recreational, and cultural activities in the nine parks.

The Parks Department already uses a combination of in-house and contracted services, and internal and external funding sources to provide programming and fulfill its legal obligations to maintain and improve the county parks system.

H. Evaluation of whether county government is the most effective body to implement the department's programs

County government can apply for grants, obtain Allegheny Regional Asset District funding, develop partnerships, and obtain sponsorships to continue to offer recreational opportunities and facilities at little or no cost to County residents and visitors. If the County Parks were operated privately, the cost to residents would be higher.

I. Evaluation of whether the absence or reduction of the department or the department's provision of services would significantly harm or endanger the public health, safety or welfare

The Parks Department helps to ensure public health, safety, and welfare by: (1) providing active recreational opportunities for healthy lifestyles; (2) maintaining park acreage as green space, contributing to a healthy environment; and (3) operating facilities such as its swimming pools and ski slopes in compliance with federal, state and local safety regulations. The reduction or elimination of the County Parks Department would reduce or eliminate the recreational amenities and facilities within the county parks, which would reduce the standard of living for residents of the region.

J. Analysis showing the costs of compliance for individuals or other entities regulated by the department

The costs of compliance for this Department are referenced in the Resolutions (Operating Budget # 12- 23- RE 12856-23, Capital Budget # 10-23-RE 12857-23 and the Special Revenues/Grants Budget # 11-23-RE 12858-23) signed by the County Executive on December 6, 2023. The costs of compliance for the approved budget listed above are delineated within in the 2024 Comprehensive Fiscal Plan (CFP) which can be referenced at: <https://www.alleghenycounty.us/Government/Departments-and-Offices/Department-Directory/Budget-and-Finance/Comprehensive-Fiscal-Plan>.

K. Efficiency with which formal public complaints filed with the department have been processed

The Parks Department received 230 Service Requests between 2020 and 2023. The Parks Department completed service requests within 10 days on average in 2023.

Between 2020 and 2023, the Parks Department received 18,536 requests and inquiries through GovQA. The Parks Department fulfilled these requests within 3 days on average in 2023.

L. Recommendation

Recognizing that the Department of Parks enhances the quality of life of county residents, attracts outside resources to support its mission, and operates effectively and efficiently, this department should be retained as currently configured.

Parks Foundation

A. Legal mandate or necessity for the agency

The Allegheny County Parks Foundation supports the improvement, preservation, and restoration of the county parks. The Foundation is a nonprofit agency that solicits private donations to finance and manage capital improvement projects in the Allegheny County Parks system and works with the parks constituencies in all county parks and coordinates volunteer activity.

B. Determination of public need for the continued existence of the agency and its services

There is a public need for the Allegheny County Parks Foundation. As a nonprofit, the organization is able to solicit tax-deductible private donations for projects in the Allegheny County park system for the public good.

C. Review of the methods used in the implementation of each agency's functions and an analysis of alternative methods that may be employed to achieve the agency's legal mandates

The Foundation strengthens the health and vibrancy of the community by improving, conserving and restoring the nine Allegheny County parks. Working in partnership with the County, the Parks Foundation brings together ideas, leadership and resources to make the parks more sustainable and enjoyable for all. The Foundation raises public and private funds from foundations, corporations, state and federal grant programs and individuals to design and implement projects in the parks. It commissions and conducts surveys, plans and ecological assessments of individual parks and the park system which guide the strategic development of improvements in all nine county parks. All projects are undertaken in partnership with the County, and the County matches most private and non-county public funds raised by the Foundation.

D. Evaluation of whether the agency is the most effective body to implement the agency's programs

The Allegheny County Parks Foundation is effective as a private nonprofit agency that is able to fundraise for County parks improvement projects and partner with the County to plan and implement projects.

E. Evaluation of whether the absence or reduction of the agency or the agency's provision of services would significantly harm or endanger the public health, safety or welfare

To experience and enjoy our parks, the Allegheny County Parks system requires a high level of maintenance and management. The Allegheny County Parks Foundation has the ability to raise private funds from individual, corporations and foundations. The nonprofit provides contributors with

tax deductions on contributions and a way to be engaged in our parks. There is no other legal organization that allows for fundraising specifically for the Allegheny County Parks.

F. Analysis showing the costs of compliance for individuals or other entities regulated by the agency

The Foundation is not a regulatory agency.

G. Efficiency with which formal public complaints filed with the agency have been processed

As no formal public complaints have been filed with this Foundation, this issue is not applicable.

H. In the case of an agency that has received appropriations from the County's operating budget in any of the five years prior to the sunset review, a financial audit of the agency performed by an entity independent of the County

The Foundation does not receive an appropriation from the County's operating budget.

I. Recommendation

Continue.

Penn State Cooperative Extension

A. Legal mandate or necessity for the agency

The Penn State Cooperative Extension was created through a series of acts by the federal government. In 1862 the Morrill Land Grant Act was passed which enabled states to sell federal land, invest the proceeds and use the income to support colleges where the objective will be to teach agriculture and the mechanical arts along with scientific and classical studies. Subsequently, the state legislature designated Penn State University the land grant institution of Pennsylvania.

On January 27, 1907, the College's Board of Trustees took action to officially start an extension education program, offering non-credit courses in agricultural science. In 1914, the federal government passed the Smith–Lever Act of 1914 which mandated the creation of cooperative extensions, specifically connected to the land-grant universities, in order to inform people about current developments in agriculture, home economics, public policy/government, leadership, 4-H, economic development, and many other related subjects. Today, the Penn State Cooperative Extension in Allegheny County is one of 67 extension offices within each county of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

The Cooperative Extension is a function of Pennsylvania State University. The continued existence is wholly dependent upon the University and the College Board of Trustees. As part of the function of a land grant institution, the University is required to offer the services provided by the Extension.

While this agency has been included in previous Sunset Reviews, the County does not have the authority to authorize its continuance or dissolution. Because it does not fall under the control of the County it will not be further reviewed.

Department of Public Works

A. Vision

Commitment to our mission enhances the quality of life, promotes economic prosperity, and improves mobility for the citizens of Allegheny County. As a recognized public works leader, we strive to continuously improve our operations to provide for the safety of our employees and the public and to ensure a safe and sustainable infrastructure for current and future generations.

B. Mission

The Department of Public Works is committed to providing the residents of Allegheny County with exceptional infrastructure, maintenance, and engineering services in a timely, cost-effective, and environmentally responsible manner.

C. Overview

The Department of Public Works is responsible for ensuring the safety, accessibility, and quality of 408 miles of roadway as well as 518 bridges and drainage structures. It also purchases and maintains the county's fleet of more than 800 vehicles and heavy equipment. The Department also provides essential services in support of emergency response efforts. It is accredited by the American Public Works Association (APWA) and is the first and only department in Pennsylvania with that distinction.

To accomplish the responsibilities, the Department is structured in three divisions:

- a. **Accounting and Administration:** The division plans, directs, and manages the department's payroll, purchasing, operating and capital budgets, reimbursements, and policies and procedures. Also, it oversees the activities required to maintain accreditation through the American Public Works Association (APWA).
- b. **Engineering and Construction:** The division is responsible for all aspects of the management and execution of the department's Capital Improvement Program for roads and bridges as well as projects for other county departments and governmental agencies. The division provides engineering and management services for preservation, rehabilitation, construction, and reconstruction of county-owned roads, bridges, and slope support structures using the most economical engineering technologies and environmentally safe methods and materials. Also, the division is responsible for bridge safety inspections, right-of-way management, and permitting.
- c. **Maintenance Operations:** The division maintains county-owned roads and bridges by doing high-quality, cost-effective preventative work and repairs. It extends the useful lives of the roads and bridges until funds are available for major preservation, rehabilitation, and reconstruction projects. The division is comprised of two sections: Road/Bridge Operations and Fleet Management. The Road/Bridge Operations section's services include milling and paving, road repairs, shoulder maintenance, vegetation control, snow removal and ice control, drainage work, slope support projects, street sweeping, traffic services (road signs and pavement markings), county sign and decal

fabrication, heavy equipment operation, and ironwork. The Fleet Management section maintains the county's vehicle and heavy equipment fleet. It oversees a cost-effective fuel-purchasing program for fleet operations, and ensures that county vehicles and equipment are safe, reliable, economical, and minimize their carbon footprint. That is accomplished with in-house management personnel and a third-party contractor that performs preventive and routine maintenance and repairs.

D. Achievements of department since 2019 (2020 through 2023)

Bridge Projects

Ensuring the quality and safety of county bridges is one of Public Works' top priorities, which is reflected by the completion of 53 contracted bridge projects since 2020. The department has reduced the number of poor-rated county bridges that are 8 feet or longer by 71.6% since 2013. Of the remaining 19 poor-rated county bridges that are 8 feet or longer, most are culverts, and only two are more than 100 feet in length.

Public Works completed a \$23.3 million Rachel Carson (Ninth Street) Bridge rehabilitation project in 2020. The project included repairs to the structural steel, concrete/masonry substructure, and stairs; replacement of the concrete deck, expansion dams, sidewalks, and utility lines; repainting; drainage improvements; and lighting replacements to resemble the bridge's original appearance from 1920s.

Public Works completed a \$34.4 million Roberto Clemente (Sixth Street) Bridge rehabilitation project in 2023. The project included repairs to the structural steel, concrete/masonry substructure, and stairs; replacement of the concrete deck, expansion dams, sidewalks, utility lines, and delineators; refurbishment of the pylons; repainting; scour protection; drainage improvements; and lighting replacements to resemble the bridge's original appearance from 1920s. More than 11,000 locks were removed during the project and donated to the Industrial Arts Workshop of Hazelwood. Additionally, an enhanced lighting system was installed on the Roberto Clemente, Andy Warhol (Seventh Street), and Rachel Carson (Ninth Street) Bridges as part of the project. The system included 2,628 feet of linear fixtures on the suspenders, 192 rounded fixtures on the eyebars, 132 spotlight fixtures, and 12 replica fixtures.

Since 2020, Public Works bridge projects have received seven awards. In 2020, the Philip Murray (South Tenth Street) Bridge rehabilitation project received the American Council of Engineering Companies (ACEC) National Recognition Award, American Council of Engineering Companies of Pennsylvania (ACEC/PA) Diamond Award (Structural Systems Category), Association for Bridge Construction and Design (ABCD) Outstanding Rehabilitated Bridge Award, and Pennsylvania Society of Professional Engineers (PSPE) Pittsburgh Chapter Outstanding Engineering Achievement Award. That same year, the Andy Warhol (Ninth Street) rehabilitation project received the American Institute of Steel Construction (AISC) National Prize Bridge Award (Rehab Category). In 2022, the Rachel Carson (Ninth Street) Bridge rehabilitation project was selected from a worldwide list of distinguished projects by the International Bridge Conference to receive its Abba G. Lichtenstein Medal, and it also received the ABCD's Outstanding Rehabilitated Bridge Award. That same year, the Dooker's Hollow Bridge replacement project was selected by the Pittsburgh chapter of the American Society of Highway Engineers to receive its Outstanding Project Award.

Tunnel Project

In 2023, Public Works began work on a \$13.1 million project to rehabilitate the Armstrong Tunnels. The project includes concrete repairs; removal of the ceramic tile liner and replacement with fireproof wall panels; masonry cleaning at the tunnel entrances and exits; lighting, electrical, and fire detection and suppression system upgrades; installation of a CCTV monitoring system; and placement of new pavement, curb, sidewalk, signage, and pavement markings. Once the tunnels reopen, they will have a new lane configuration that is intended to slow traffic and improve safety.

Road Projects and Maintenance

In 2021, Public Works headed a \$2 million project to widen Pearce Mill Road in North Park, allowing for the installation of additional dedicated bicycle and pedestrian lanes. Crews also made slope and drainage improvements as well as milled and paved the roadway.

In 2021, Public Works led a \$698,698 project to construct a new pedestrian and cyclist path as part of a master plan to expand the Three Rivers Heritage Trail system. The path runs along Springhill Road in Harrison Township and enhances connectivity between Natrona, AlSCO Community Park, and Freeport Road. The project included roadway milling and paving, traffic reconfiguration, drainage improvements, and installation of curbs, ADA-compliant ramps, pavement markings, delineators, and signage.

Between the 2020 and 2023 winter seasons, Winter Operations crew spread a total of 42,633 tons of salt on County roads. Public Works Winter Operations crews spread 5,787 tons of salt in December 2020, the seventh snowiest month in county history with more than 27 inches of snow, to ensure roadway safety.

Sustainability Projects

In 2021, Public Works oversaw the installation of 122 solar lights in South Park, which was estimated to prevent 20,194 pounds of carbon dioxide, 16 pounds of sulfur dioxide, and 14 pounds of nitrogen oxide emissions from area power plants annually. The new light poles, each mounted with a solar panel and LED light illuminated approximately two miles of a popular pedestrian path along Corrigan Drive between Library Road and Brownsville Road. The LED bulbs are 50% more energy efficient than typical bulbs according to the National Renewable Energy Laboratory. DPW installed 25 new signs along the path to inform the public about air quality and air pollution reduction strategies.

Public Works managed a \$2.4 million project to construct a 2.5-acre permeable parking lot along Corrigan Drive in South Park. The lot accommodates 125 vehicles, including five ADA-accessible spaces, and captures 95% of all rain that falls on it, about 2.5 million gallons of stormwater annually. Nearly 100 trees were planted and perimeter garden beds and two large rain gardens containing native plants, boardwalks, and benches were installed during the project.

COVID-19 Recovery Efforts

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Public Works Maintenance Operations crews completed 44 pickups and deliveries of 273,707 masks, 193,200 gloves, 11,573 face shields, 7,482 disinfectant bottles, 844 medical suits, and more. For their efforts, the department received the Green Building Alliance Emerald Award in the COVID-19 Recovery Efforts category in 2020. The department also helped build

a free COVID-19 testing site in McKeesport, and its Sign Shop fabricated more than 500 COVID-related signs, decals, and banners to keep residents and County employees safe.

Waze Partnership

Public Works partnered with Waze to share information that helped DPW divert drivers away from closed roads, proactively solve issues, and make more informed project and maintenance decisions. The partnership began in 2021. The County provided information about planned and current construction-related traffic restrictions. In exchange, Waze shared data related to vehicle speed, crashes, hazards, potholes, roadkill, downed trees, and missing signs.

Cost-Effective Equipment Enhancements

Public Works purchased a new paving machine in 2021 that is estimated to save the county as much as \$100,000 annually due to reduced repair needs and enabling crews to pave roads faster. The paver removes roadway irregularities, creates a smoother surface, uses less asphalt, and is 15% more fuel efficient and runs quieter than its predecessor, cutting down on the emissions and noise pollution.

In 2021 and 2022, Public Works purchased two new excavators that dramatically reduced harmful emissions and allowed the county to realize savings. Previously, the department either had to rent excavators or contract some landslide and slope work, which was costly. Both newly purchased excavators met EPA emission standards at the time of purchase. The excavator purchased in 2022 increased maintenance crews' ability to tackle tough jobs, remove problematic vegetation that could not be reached before, and move faster between jobs. They are also less likely to damage roads and parking lots.

Public Works purchased pipe inspection cameras for the first time in 2021, making stormwater system assessments more efficient and affordable. The two cameras provide clear views in hard-to-reach areas and help identify if county-maintained pipes need to be cleaned, repaired, or further inspected. Before, the department had to rely on costly consultants to perform video inspections and resolve some road drainage issues.

Public Works obtained six new tractors in 2023, which improved road maintenance operations' ability to cut back roadside vegetation. Failing to control vegetation along county roads can create visibility issues for drivers. Public Works' previous vegetation control efforts included the use of three old, inherited tractors not suited for cutting along roadways.

Public Works obtained six new trucks with snow equipment in 2023, which greatly enhanced the County's snow and ice removal operations. They filled a significant need, as the trucks they replaced were old and prone to breaking down during winter storm events. The trucks were purchased with Diesel Emissions Reduction Act (DERA) funding and reduce diesel emissions with newer, cleaner engines.

Public Works began using new management software to maintain its heavy equipment fleet more efficiently in 2022. The software alerts the heavy equipment supervisor and mechanics to preventative maintenance schedules and repairs and allows work orders to be sent remotely. The software stores the maintenance history, associated photos, and work orders in one convenient and

searchable location. This has saved time and allowed DPW to proactively address the fleet's maintenance needs.

E. Legal mandate or necessity for the department

The Department of Public Works is authorized by the continuity provisions of the Home Rule Charter, Article XIII, Section 6(d).

In addition, the Allegheny County Administrative Code at Chapter 913 (section 01-05) entitled assigns supervision over public works contracts to the Department of Public Works. As such, the department is responsible for the letting and administration of all contracts involving the construction, reconstruction, alteration, repair, and improvement of county assets comprising more than 408 lane miles of roads and 518 bridges and drainage structures.

F. Determination of public need for the department's services

The functions of the Department of Public Works – road and bridge maintenance, repair, and replacement, emergency incident support, and related services – are essential public services. Ensuring the delivery of these services in the most efficient and effective manner, at the highest level of quality to ensure public safety, is a core responsibility of county government.

G. Review of the methods used in the implementation of each department's programs and an analysis of alternative methods that may be employed to achieve the department's legal mandates

The Department of Public Works contracts with private engineering, geotechnical, and other consulting and construction firms for certain capital projects that are beyond the scope of in-house staff to deliver due to size, complexity, and/or time constraints.

The department periodically reviews its snowplow routes and adjusts its agreements with municipalities to improve response times and optimize resources.

During 2019, the department underwent a process improvement project to reduce its vendor payment processing times. As a result, processing times were reduced from 40 to 18 days. The department continues to explore alternative methods of service delivery and administration.

H. Evaluation of whether county government is the most effective body to implement the department's programs

County-owned roads, bridges, vehicles, and equipment improve mobility, promote economic prosperity, and enhance the quality of life for the citizens of Allegheny County. Public Works maintains these public assets to ensure the safety of the residents and visitors and the viability of the community.

Every four years, the American Public Works Association (APWA) performs an onsite evaluation to ensure that the department maintains the standards of excellence that enabled them to become accredited. Accredited in 2007 and re-accredited in 2012, 2016, and 2020, Public Works is the first and remains the only agency in Pennsylvania to achieve this prestigious honor. This status helps to validate that the county is the most effective entity to implement the activities performed by this department.

I. Evaluation of whether the absence or reduction of the department or the department's provision of services would significantly harm or endanger the public health, safety, or welfare

The department is responsible for maintaining and improving a portion of Allegheny County's transportation infrastructure. Many of these responsibilities are critical functions, providing for the safety, mobility, and economic prosperity of the public. Eliminating the department or drastically reducing its resources would not only have an adverse impact on the economy, environment, and well-being of the citizens of Allegheny County, but would prevent the county government from performing inherently governmental functions and fulfilling its legal mandate.

J. Analysis showing the costs of compliance for individuals or other entities regulated by the department

The costs of compliance for this department are referenced in the Resolutions (Operating Budget # 12- 23- RE 12856-23 and the Capital Budget # 10-23-RE 12857-23 and the Special Revenues/Grants Budget # 11-23-RE 12858-23) signed by the County Executive on December X, 2023. The costs of compliance for the approved budget listed above are delineated within in the 2024 Comprehensive Fiscal Plan (CFP) which can be referenced at:

<https://www.alleghenycounty.us/Government/Departments-and-Offices/Department-Directory/Budget-and-Finance/Comprehensive-Fiscal-Plan>

K. Efficiency with which formal public complaints filed with the department have been processed

The County implemented a new customer relationship management system in 2018 to track complaints and requests for service. Between 2020 and 2023, DPW received 8,021 service requests and closed requests within 43 days on average in 2023. Between 2020 and 2023 DPW received 58 Right-to-Know requests. Right-to-Know requests were closed within 16 days on average in 2023.

L. Recommendation

Given the essential nature of the services provided by the Department of Public Works, the retention of the Department as currently designed is appropriate.

Department of Sustainability

A. Vision

To improve the environment and health of Allegheny County workers and residents by minimizing the negative impacts our operations may have in the community.

B. Mission

To ensure County operations and facilities are maintained in such a way to promote energy and operational efficiency, reduce energy consumption, employ sustainable management best practices, and minimize waste.

C. Overview

The Department of Sustainability promotes comprehensive practices within County government through countywide policies, programs, and green projects to reduce the County's carbon footprint. These efforts include increased waste diversion through recycling and composting, significant energy and water use reductions, sustainable procurement, and encouraging sustainable development. Sustainability is also committed to reducing our reliance on fossil fuels through renewable energy purchases and installations, and conversion of fleet vehicles and equipment to alternative fuels.

Sustainability became a core focus of County leadership with the hiring of the first Sustainability Manager in 2010, leading to the creation of a Sustainability Office within the Department of Facilities Management. In 2022, the County determined that Sustainability should be separated from Facilities Management. The Department of Sustainability was established as its own department in 2023.

D. Achievements of department since 2019 (2020 through 2023)

Waste Reduction and Alternative Energy Efforts

Through implementation of new waste diversion requirements, scrap metal recycling from all County facilities totaled over 241 tons in 2023. This included over 10 tons from a Department of Human Services office remodel and 48 tons from a County Office Building construction project. The County continued to reduce waste that enters landfills by redistributing unused items to other County departments and recycling everyday recyclables, e-waste, and scrap metals.

The Sustainability Department partnered with the Health Department's Bureau of Environmental Health to create the [Recycling Drop-off Finder](#) guide which provides residents with information about where to take hard-to-recycle items in Allegheny County. Launched in September 2023, the online resource guide includes information on how to recycle items such as TVs, computers, and batteries. The guide is interactive, allowing users to sort by items by type and find places to take them for disposal. The goal was to turn the annual Recycling Resources Guide into a more user-friendly resource.

The County installed solar panel arrays in Deer Lakes and White Oak Parks to offset all the energy consumed in the respective parks annually, which is equivalent to the electricity consumed by 28

homes each year. The solar panel canopy in the parking lot near the Chestnut Shelter in White Oak generates roughly 156,000 kilowatt hours of power each year while providing shade to the lot. In Deer Lakes Park, a small demonstration solar array was installed on the spray park pumphouse roof, and a larger system was installed near the park office and maintenance barn, generating roughly 180,000 kilowatts hours of electricity per year. These systems will become operational once the utility companies approve the connection to the electric grid.

Awards and Acknowledgements

Allegheny County's downtown campus was one of the first organizations to earn a gold level designation from the new Sustainable Pittsburgh Workplace program in 2023. A Sustainable Pittsburgh Workplace is any business, nonprofit, or other organization that demonstrated a commitment to socially just and environmentally sustainable operations. Sustainable Pittsburgh evaluates the workplace across a range of categories including carbon reduction, diversity, equity, and inclusion, resource conservation, responsible sourcing, and product design.

In 2023, Allegheny County received the Governor's Award for Environmental Excellence for the South Park Green Parking Lot project. This project involved the installation of a 2.5-acre water-permeable parking lot designed to capture 95% of all rainfall, which amounts to about 2.5 million gallons each year. The County was honored at the Annual Banquet hosted by the Pennsylvania Environmental Council in Harrisburg, PA.

Sustainability Initiatives Story Map

The Department of Sustainability created [a story map](#) in 2023 to showcase Allegheny County's sustainability initiatives and projects over the years. The projects focus on several important areas such as water and energy use, sustainable development, and waste management. The interactive map further details these initiatives to help inform and educate residents on sustainability efforts in their communities.

E. Legal mandate or necessity for the department

Ordinance 12402-22, adopted on September 13, 2022, provided for the creation of a separate County department within Allegheny County Government effective as of January 1, 2023 to be known as the Department of Sustainability, setting forth the duties, functions and responsibilities of the Department of Sustainability within Allegheny County Government, and amending Chapter OC of the County Code of Ordinances entitled "Organizational Chart" to reflect the creation of the Department of Sustainability.

F. Determination of public need for the department's services

The creation of a separate Department of Sustainability was determined as the next logical step after review by the County administration of the success of the Sustainability Office since its inception in 2009. While operating within the Department of Facilities Management, the Sustainability Office implemented numerous best practices such as:

- Implementation of an electronic contracting and bidding process

- Institution of a recycling program for County facilities
- Commencement of a comprehensive green cleaning program for in-house janitorial services for County-owned facilities
- Elimination of approximately 225,000 plastic straws previously in use in concessions at the County parks by using compostable corn replacement straws
- Demand Response program participation, which works to lessen the impact on the electrical grid
- Incorporation of green infrastructure to manage stormwater in County parks

As the role of the Sustainability Office within County government has expanded, it was decided that the County's efforts to integrate and invest in environmentally sensitive and sustainable measures would be improved and strengthened by the creation of a separate department dedicated solely and exclusively to planning, promoting, and implementing a County "Green Sustainability Plan" and more widespread sustainability practices with County Government.

G. Review of the methods used in the implementation of each department's programs and an analysis of alternative methods that may be employed to achieve the department's legal mandates

The Sustainability Department was created as a separate department from Facilities Management because of the successful implementation of its programs and responsibilities. Though already working closely as support for other County departments, the Sustainability Department will expand successful implementation of sustainable best management practices in all County operations, as well as support the community, as per the expectations of Ordinance 12402-22. An alternative method of service delivery could be service delivery through contractors. The Sustainability Department primarily provides its services through internal staff but does use contractors and consultants when necessary. Solely using outside contractors would most likely incur higher costs and being external would likely create a barrier to executing duties outlined in the Ordinance 12402-22, such as developing integrated, countywide sustainability policies and coordinating an internal County Green team.

H. Evaluation of whether county government is the most effective body to implement the department's programs

Allegheny County is responsible for the operations of its facilities, parks, and other assets and therefore, sustainable and efficient operations lead to cost savings and reduction in environmental impacts. Given this, the County is the most appropriate entity to implement sustainable best practices in relation to its operations.

I. Evaluation of whether the absence or reduction of the department or the department's provision of services would significantly harm or endanger the public health, safety or welfare

The Sustainability Department implements efficient and resilient programs and practices to ensure that County operations are cost-effective, cost-efficient, and sustainable. This includes reduction in water and energy costs for County facilities, reduction in air pollution from the County fleet, implementation of more sustainable purchasing practices and an overall reduction in environmental impacts. The elimination of the Department and its responsibilities would prevent these improvements to the overall quality of life for our residents and communities.

J. Analysis showing the costs of compliance for individuals or other entities regulated by the department

The costs of compliance for this Department are referenced in the Resolutions (Operating Budget # 12- 23- RE 12856-23, Capital Budget # 10-23-RE 12857-23 and the Special Revenues/Grants Budget # 11-23-RE 12858-23) signed by the County Executive on December 6, 2023. The costs of compliance for the approved budget listed above are delineated within in the 2024 Comprehensive Fiscal Plan (CFP) which can be referenced at: <https://www.alleghenycounty.us/Government/Departments-and-Offices/Department-Directory/Budget-and-Finance/Comprehensive-Fiscal-Plan>.

K. Efficiency with which formal public complaints filed with the department have been processed

No complaints have been filed to date.

L. Recommendation

Given that the programs and services provided by the Department of Sustainability have been in operation since 2009, and that establishing it as a standalone department it will expand support to all County departments, the Department itself should be maintained.

Appendix A: Sunset Review Schedule

The table below shows the schedule for Sunset Reviews by department through 2030.

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
Administrative Services				X				X		
Budget and Finance		X				X				X
Children Initiatives***			X				X			
Court Records		X				X				X
Economic Development			X				X			
Emergency Services	X				X				X	
Equity and Inclusion*			X				X			
Facilities Management				X				X		
Health			X				X			
Human Resources		X				X				X
Human Services			X				X			
Information Technology**				X				X		
Jail	X				X				X	
Kane Community Living Centers			X				X			
Law		X				X				X
Medical Examiner	X				X				X	
Parks				X				X		
Police	X				X				X	
Public Defender		X				X				X
Public Works				X				X		
Shuman Center****	X									
Sustainability*****				X				X		

* The Department of Minority, Women, Disadvantaged Business Enterprise was renamed the Department of Equity and Inclusion in 2020.

** The Division of Computer Services was separated from the Department of Administrative Services and became the Department of Information Technology in 2020.

*** The Department of Children Initiatives was created in 2021.

**** Shuman Center closed in 2021.

***** The Department of Sustainability was created in 2023.