

Quality Assurance Annual Update:

FY 2012 (Oct. 2011-Sept. 2012)

Public Space Management



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Quarter I & II: Developmental Stages

Many problems and concerns that Downtown's public spaces face require help and assistance from federal and local agencies. Understanding this principle, Public Space Management began establishing relationships with several D.C. Government agencies and the National Park Service. This included dialogue with the Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs, the Department of Public Works, D.C. Water and Sewer Authority, the District Department of Transportation and the Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Engagement. DDOT, which maintains nearly 70 percent of the items in our public spaces in the Downtown, has the most decentralized departments, with more than eight departments that have domain on public space assets. Additionally, NPS maintains more than 36 areas in the BID (including park reservations, Pennsylvania Avenue and Federal Triangle), so active participation and communication with this agency is crucial.

In order to collectively collaborate and share information, PSM created the Public Space Working Group, which includes 16 agencies, in November. During bi-monthly meetings throughout FY 12, the group maintained regular agency attendance and discussed topics and problems ranging from sidewalk replacement, steel utility plate removals, vending, and waste management, among other items. PSM sees these relationships as vital to our mission to maintain and improve public spaces in Downtown and the department will continue to nurture these relationships in the next fiscal year.

In addition, during the first months of FY 12, many fundamental concepts for the Quality Assurance Program, and particularly the Field Asset Management Project, were formulated. This included developing a paper ticketing system which highlighted 44 assets in public space such as streetlights and pavers, along with variable conditions like vandalism and panhandling. This was the precursor to the BID's current electronic reporting system using the mobile application. During the first five to six months of the fiscal year, PSM worked to develop the groundwork for the mobile application, creating a condition and disposition matrix to determine which elements to track in public space. In the end, 47 permanent assets and variable conditions were included. Moreover, this entailed more than 60 different types of conditions or deficiencies that could occur in relation to permanent assets.

In February, PSM undertook efforts to institutionalize a method of reporting public space deficiencies and problems by creating a routine schedule for the BID's Downtown Safety/Hospitality and Maintenance (SAMs) employees. This first included training SAM supervisors, followed by the Safety and Hospitality SAMs in three separate courses presented by the PSM staff. This entailed outlining various scenarios that occur in public space, the priority of reporting, and more descriptive information such as block face and intersection locations. During the training, SAMs were also given deficiencies to report and document, allowing for a better understanding of how problems should be reported.

Following the trainings, PSM implemented this process with qualified SAMs making up the Field Asset Management Team, now referred to as the Quality Assurance Team. The process's basic functionality included dividing the BID into eight unique zones with teams of SAMs surveying specific reporting areas each week throughout the course of a month. These reporting areas consisted of sidewalks, streets, parks and green spaces, and alleyways. The process was largely developed to help refine focus and attention on particular parts of the BID, assuring that issues were not overlooked.

Quarter III: Implementation & Integration

As mentioned, PSM identified a few specific areas of need through feedback from both property managers and D.C. agencies during the month of May. One area included identifying locations where steel plates were placed. Steel plates are typically placed over areas that either require utility work or water and sewer line replacement, or are developing sinkholes. Publisher box related defects and problems were also identified throughout the BID, with 110 boxes documented as being damaged, vandalized, or used as a trash receptacle. PSM then conducted a survey of parking garage entrances and locations, attempting to understand any security vulnerabilities that may exist and relaying that information to the Metropolitan Police Department. The findings illustrated that of the 144 garages identified, several either had a security camera present or personnel operating the entrance gate.

In addition to the areas assigned to the Quality Assurance Team, PSM also conducted an inventory of crosswalk conditions in the DowntownDC BID area. Of the 147 intersections surveyed, only 48 were determined to need some level of maintenance. This included re-stripping the crosswalk lines either in a traverse or continental style or repaving the street surface, including the crosswalk path. Of the 48 determined to need maintenance, 20 crosswalks required maintenance on all four sides, while 21 had just one side needing attention. This information was shared with DDOT's Street & Bridge Maintenance Division for future assessment to map the locations where high density improvements are needed.

The department began using the new *Field Asset Management Application* in June, which allowed SAMs and BID staff to report conditions, defects and other issues instantly from the field. Training for the application also occurred in June to ensure that users who were a part of the QAT, along with SAM supervisors, fully understood the dynamics and components of the mobile application. Additionally, staff was trained on functionality of the desktop application, which allows the QAT to verify information from the mobile application before submitting it to the appropriate agency.

Quarter IV: Project Progression

In July, PSM continued to witness a positive transition in the reporting tools used by the SAMs making up the QAT. PSM staff also moved forward entering previous service request, or SR, data into the geodatabase to ensure that all information was stored accurately. Additionally, July saw many different projects spearheaded by PSM staff. First, PSM was able to conduct its annual sidewalk café inventory identifying 147 different locations over the course of three days. PSM staff also was able for the first time to collect accurate numbers of seats for cafes as opposed to previous years where only visual estimates were documented. A total number of 4,381 seats were counted, which would attribute to a 33 percent increase from 2011's average range total. During the inventory, PSM was able to collect accurate information and update the BID's GIS data by using the mobile application, eliminating data entry and therefore becoming more efficient.

PSM designated interns also inventoried the number of closed-circuit television cameras in the BID's public spaces, which totaled roughly 869 cameras with monitoring activity in Downtown.

This information helps the DowntownDC BID Security Initiative establish a baseline for the current number of potentially monitored areas.

PSM staff then used the mobile application for the Downtown Quarterly Homeless Count. From utilizing the application, the BID was able to better understand homeless population demographics, including gender, race, veteran history, and recent shelter help, among other things. The total number of homeless individuals counted came to 189. Tallying the information in this way now enables us to address the homeless issue in an improved fashion. With help from staff and 34 volunteers, the PSM was able to conduct its homeless count more accurately than in years past. Staff also engaged with individuals and provided them with appropriate resources, including shelter locations, warm meals, and employment services.

Furthermore, the end of July witnessed the implementation of the monthly quality assurance inventory. This included the QAT and PSM staff surveying roughly 12 permanent public space assets to identify their current condition. The project ran for 30 days, beginning on July 30th and ending on August 28th. SAMs were dispatched every Tuesday and Thursday surveying nearly 50 of the 138 square blocks in the BID, while PSM staff allocated time each day to the project and surveyed more than 90 of the 138 blocks. The number of surveyed assets totaled nearly 10,000, which on average is exactly 71 assets around one square block. The inventory findings illustrated that of the permanent assets surveyed, several were indeed in relatively good condition, with nearly 93 percent of the total being problem free. Nonetheless, there still were more than 700 unique conditions reported during the project. Moreover, throughout the project staff discovered that the GIS data was inaccurate, outdated or needed to be moved to properly correlate with other elements in the public space, thus prompting us to conduct GIS editing and inventory simultaneously. As a result, PSM will undertake full-scale, GIS inventory throughout FY 2013.

Public Space Statistics and Findings

The total number of SRs and conditions reported during FY 2012 were 1,790, while the total amount of known resolved SRs was 274, or roughly 15.3 percent. This number was adjusted for prior months where a GIS editing condition was reported for an asset (e.g., a missing street pole). These included only completed SRs that PSM was aware of through agency notification or through regular follow up inspections conducted by the QAT. Furthermore, there are nearly 1,500 conditions that were added or submitted into the field asset management database, with more than 1,200 submitted through the mobile application.

In tables 1.0 and 1.1 are the breakdowns of the SR numbers for FY 2012 by asset and condition, while chart 1.0 provides a visual of the number of resolved conditions. Also, as Chart 2.1 illustrates the number of SRs reported for each quarter. As illustrated SRs has risen over the second half of FY 12 mainly due to the improved reporting methods. In the last quarter of the fiscal year PSM witnessed a 453 percent increase from the third quarter. Prior to quarter four, the largest increase was 87 percent from Q1 to Q2 for the fiscal year. Furthermore, when comparing the total number of FY 11 conditions reported of 476 to 1,790 the BID witnesses a 276 percent increase.

The top three most common problems reported to the PSM department during FY 2012 included sidewalk repair, street pole repair, and tree and tree box issues (excluded "other" since there are various conditions included under that category). In examining which of the related dispositions had the highest demand of SRs, as seen in Chart 3.0, three of the top five include DDOT departments (Street & Bridge Maintenance, D.C. Streetlights, and the Urban Forestry Administration). However, both the BID and Downtown's properties have a high number of SRs because of the large number of receptacle related issues and tree box maintenance issues.

Of the reported issues, such as sidewalk repair, many require reinvestment because they have sustained natural wear and greater pedestrian traffic. Other issues, such as tree root expansion, the high frequency of power washing sidewalks, and neglect following utility work, are reasonable explanations for the large number of damaged pavers. Also, issues involving street poles were most commonly attributed to general wear such as rusting and paint peeling, along with the removal and theft of base covers. However, a large percentage of problems persisted from small issues like light timing malfunctions, commonly known as "day burners." And finally, many of the problems tied to tree boxes were general maintenance issues such as a lack of painting, rusting of tree guards or the presence of iron grates, which impeded tree growth. Thus, PSM will continue to work with property managers and increase communications with properties having these persistent issues.

While public space asset and condition reporting has improved over the course of the last six months with mobile application use, it is imperative that PSM maintain excellent relationships with each of the 16 agencies interested in public space. Thus, the BID will continue to engage and communicate with these agencies to seek feedback and areas to supplement their projects when needed. PSM also assists a variety of properties with topics ranging from sidewalks and sidewalk permitting, street lighting, alleyway cleaning, publisher box inquiries, and public safety concerns, to keep parties engaged.

Total Public Space Management Projects FY '12

1. Field Asset Management Solution ó January-May
2. Quarterly Homeless Counts ó January, April, July
3. Crosswalk Condition Inventory ó May
4. Parking Garage Inventory ó June
5. Security Camera Inventory ó June
6. Asset Inventory Project ó August
7. GIS Inventory NPS/Federal Land Project ó Ongoing

Table 1.0 Reported By Asset & Condition (1,790)

Type of Asset	Percentage	Actual
Alleyway	2.1%	38
Curb & Gutter	2.1%	39
NPS Parks	6.4%	114
Parking Meters	2.5%	45
Receptacles	8.5%	152
Sidewalks	13.1%	234
Signage	4%	70
Streets (includes potholes)	6.8%	122
Street Poles	20.3%	363
Traffic Systems Maintenance	3.4%	61
Tree & Tree Boxes	21.5%	384
*Other	9.4%	168

*Includes abandoned bicycles, abandoned vehicles, fire hydrants, publisher boxes, storm drain catch basins, and utility repairs; does not include 189 homeless persons documented during the July Quarterly Homeless Count, or other homeless and panhandlers identified.

Table 1.2 Resolved By Asset & Condition (274)

Type of Asset	Percentage	Actual
Alleyway	21.1%	8
Curb & Gutter	18%	7
NPS Parks	5.3%	6
Parking Meters	57.8%	26
Receptacles	N/A	N/A
Sidewalks	12.8%	30
Signage	40%	28
Streets (includes potholes)	18.9%	23
Street Poles	10.2%	37
Traffic Systems Maintenance	42.6%	26
Tree & Tree Boxes	15.6%	60
*Other	13.7%	23

*Includes abandoned bicycles, abandoned vehicles, fire hydrants, publisher boxes, storm drain catch basins, and utility repairs; homeless individuals documented during July Quarterly Homeless Count were not counted in the resolution process.

Chart 1.0 Resolved By Asset & Condition

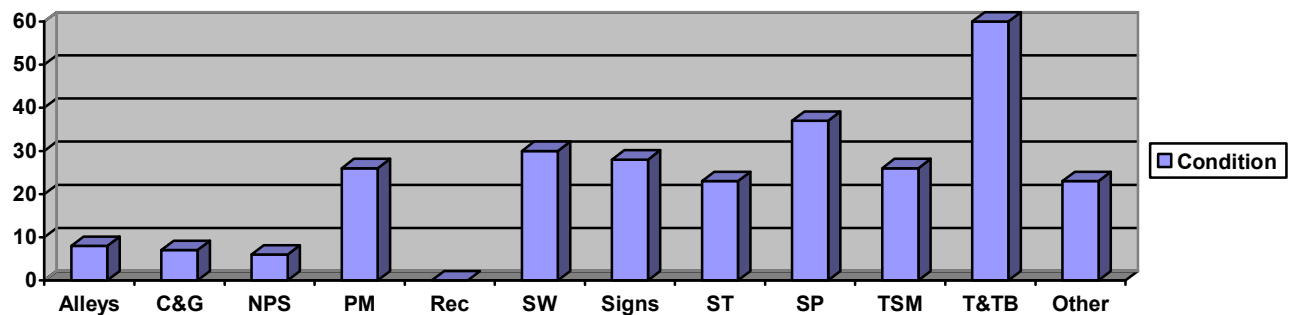


Table 2.0 Conditions Reported By Month

Month	Service Requests (SRs)
October	50
November	23
December	56
January	47
February	75
March	119
April	151
May	70
June	28
July	444
August	776*
September	157

*Included conditions that are defined as GIS edits; conditions have since been removed.

Chart 2.0 Conditions Reported By Month

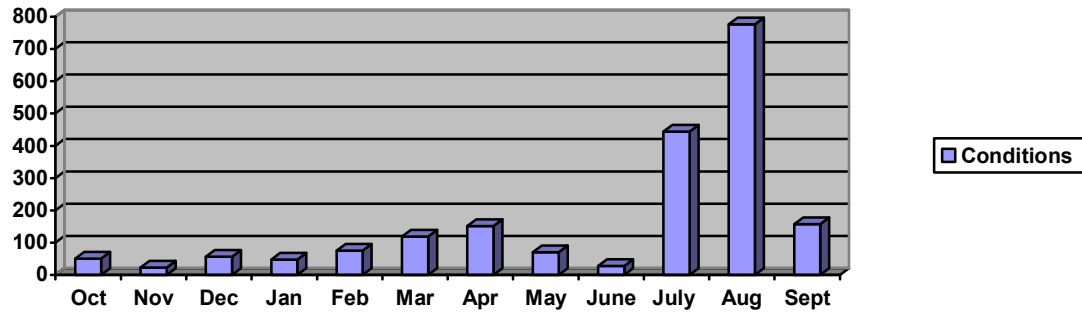


Chart 2.1 Conditions Reported By Quarter

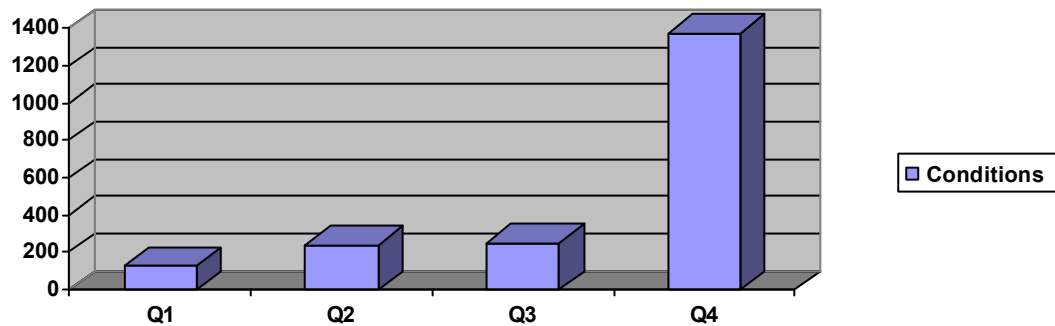
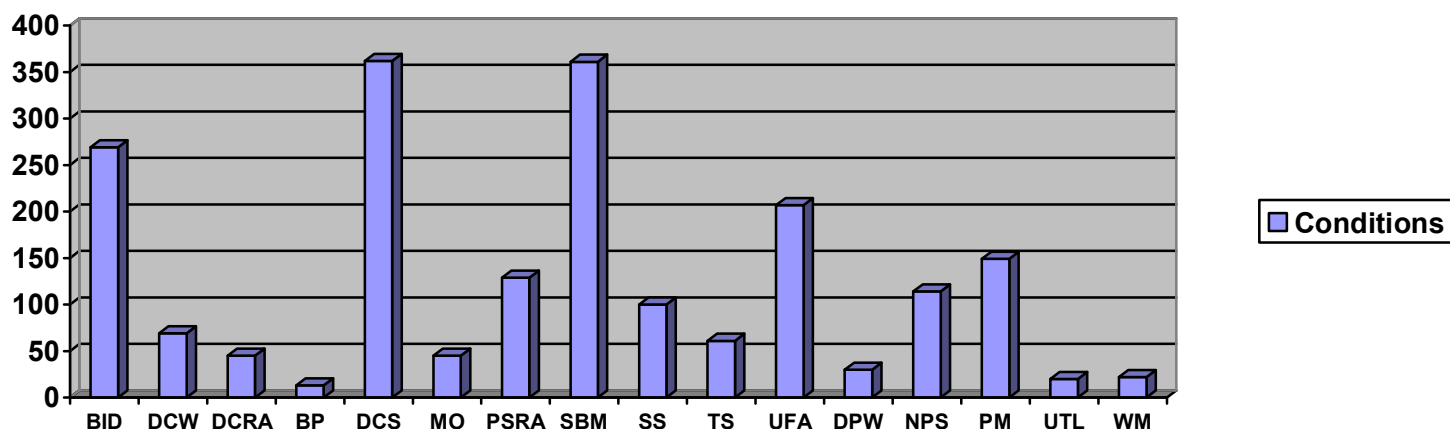


Table 3.0 Conditions Assigned By Public Space Agencies & Departments

<i>Disposition</i>	<i>Service Requests (SRs)</i>	<i>Abbreviation</i>
DowntownDC BID	269	BID
DC Water & Sewer Authority	69	DCW
Department of Consumer & Regulatory Affairs	45	DCRA
DDOT Bike Programs	13	BP
DDOT DC Streetlights	362	DCS
DDOT Meter Operations	45	MO
DDOT Public Space Regulation Administration	129	PSRA
DDOT Street & Bridge Maintenance	361	SBM
DDOT Sign Shop	70	SS
DDOT Traffic Signal Maintenance	61	TSM
DDOT Urban Forestry Administration	207	UFA
Department of Public Works	30	DPW
National Park Service	114	NPS
Property Manager	149	PM
Utilities (Pepco, Washington Gas, Verizon)	20	UTL
Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority	22	WMATA

Chart 3.0 Number of Conditions Per Disposition



Property Managers' Blog Update

During September, blog activity climbed from 115 to 252 viewers. Chart 4.0 illustrates this increase and the overall monthly viewership of the blog while it has been in operation. Nonetheless, the blog had 2,872 views from a universe of only 300 known property managers, facilities managers, and security managers. The roughly 140 posts continued to cover public safety related updates, homeless outreach successes, public space activity as it relates to government agencies, and public meetings and events like neighborhood engagements. Additionally, we added 761 public space-related stories to the site for viewers to read, allowing them to enhance their knowledge of local activity. Below is a statistical breakdown of the blog's activity. More engagement will likely be needed to justify operating the blog. An FY 013 goal includes adding nearly 50 percent more viewers during the year.

Property Manager Blog Statistics

- Five Categories
 - Monitoring the Public Realm - 92
 - Homelessness - 18
 - Public Meetings - 30
 - Public Safety - 50
 - Public Space Success Stories - 20
 - Total Posts 6 139*

*Multiple tags for posts

- In-the-News
 - Public Space Related Stories - 761
- Activity
 - Views All-time 6 2,872
 - Average Views Per Day 6 9.5
 - Busiest Day - January 11th, 211 views
 - Busiest Week - January 8th-14th
 - Busiest Month 6 March, 462 views
 - Total Weeks 6 28 of 45 weeks had at least 40 or more views

Chart 4.0 Monthly Viewership of Property Manager Blog

