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STATE OF WASHINGTON  
**WASHINGTON STATE PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION**

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July 17, 2025

## **Item E-5: Capital Program Update – Report**

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:** This item provides the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission with a comprehensive update on the Capital Program. It summarizes key accomplishments for the 2023-25 biennium, progress and strategy for implementing the 2025-27 capital budget, preparation for the 2026 supplemental budget, and planning for the 2027-29 biennium. The report highlights continued advancements in project delivery, technology integration, and budget performance, while also addressing ongoing challenges and priorities.

**2023-25 BIENNIUM ACCOMPLISHMENTS:** The Capital Program has significantly improved performance in delivering projects during the 2023-25 biennium. Major accomplishments with respect to construction funded projects include:

***Overall Project Delivery:***

- ***40% increase in projects under construction***
- ***28% increase in projects completed***

**Minor Works Projects:**

- Completed all projects with funding older than 4 years.
- 66% of projects with funding between 2 and 4 years old complete or under construction
- 77% of new 23-25 funded projects complete or under construction

**Non-Minor Works Projects:**

- 83% of projects older than 4 years complete or under construction.
- 65% of projects between 2 and 4 years old complete or under construction.
- 69% of new 23-25 funded projects are complete or under construction.

**Budget Performance:**

We have seen great improvement in delivering projects on budget. Of the 17 projects bid from June 2024–June 2025 the average award was 8% under the pre-bid engineer's estimate. Notable examples include:

- Kittitas Depot: 15.5% below estimate
- Millersylvania Paving: 54.4% below estimate
- Fort Flagler Theater: 9% below estimate

### Technology Advancements:

Another area of focus was on IT modernization for the program. We now have three modern IT platforms in place that will provide greater opportunity for project efficiency, transparency, collaboration and coordination. In addition, we purchased three new sets of state-of-the-art survey equipment. One of the benefits of this new equipment is that it can allow for real time updating of CAD drawings between the office and the field.

### Challenges:

The program does still face some challenges. One of the biggest impacts to efficiently delivering projects is our continued difficulty in recruiting and retaining our first line environmental engineers, particularly in EA WA. We continue to work with HR to try and improve recruitments for these positions, as well as look at ways to improve our overall recruitment and retention of engineers in the program and create more pathways or career advancement.

The regulatory timeline for our projects continues to be a challenging issue. We have had success elevating local and state regulatory slowdowns to the program leadership level. However, the federal regulatory process is still very timely. We do elevate these projects to the program and even agency leadership level but have had much less success as with local and state regulatory slowdowns.

### **2025-27 BUDGET IMPLEMENTATION**

The 2025-27 biennium capital budget was approved at approximately \$110 million, with funding supporting 17 new projects and 82 reappropriated projects. Implementation is guided by legislative directives that emphasize timely project delivery with a goal of moving projects to construction within 4 years and completing projects within 6 years.

New funding in the 2025-27 Budget includes construction funded projects, and design only funded projects.

### **2027-29 CAPITAL BUDGET DEVELOPMENT**

The development of the 2027-29 capital budget has begun and will follow a comprehensive process like the one used for the 2025-27 budget proposal to engage internal stakeholders and prioritize projects. Key steps include:

- May/June 2025: Engage Area Managers, Maintenance, Stewards, and Archaeologists
- July–Sept 2025: Prioritize projects by region
- Fall 2025: HQ and Statewide program project identification and prioritization
- Winter 2026: Charter Committee develops recommendations
- April 2026: Seek Commission feedback on budget structure and magnitude
- July 2026: Commission reviews and adopts draft request
- Sept 2026: Submit final budget to OFM

### ***LOOKING AHEAD***

Major Areas of focus for the 2025-27 biennium and beyond will include:

- Our biggest focus this biennium will be continued improvement in project delivery.
- Working with Communications and Legislative Affairs to tell our story, highlight successes, and be successful with our budget requests.
- Improved recruitment and retention, employee recognition, and creating pathways for career advancement.
- Working with Facilities to identify projects that we can begin to scope and design through the scoping team process to be more shovel ready by the time we make a capital request.

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**Reviewers:**

**Kira Swanson, SEPA:** Pursuant to WAC 197-11-704, staff has determined that this Commission agenda item is a report and therefore is not subject to State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) review.

**Van Church, Fiscal Review:** Report only, no impact at this time.

**Andy Woo, Assistant Attorney General:** Report only, no impact at this time.

**Heather Saunders, Parks Development Director**

**Approved for transmittal to Commission by:**



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**Diana Dupuis, Director**