



Vegetation & Grounds Maintenance

Administrator Tameka Allen

January 13, 2026 Engineering Services Committee
January 20, 2026 Augusta Commission Meeting



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Options for Structure

Overview

1. Keep Current Structure with Added Resources

- Retain separate units in each department, but adjust key areas
- Add resources for pilot program

2. New Department for Vegetation & Ground Maintenance

- Centralize staff and contract management under one new director

3. New Division within Central Services

- Centralize staff and contract management as new division within Central Services

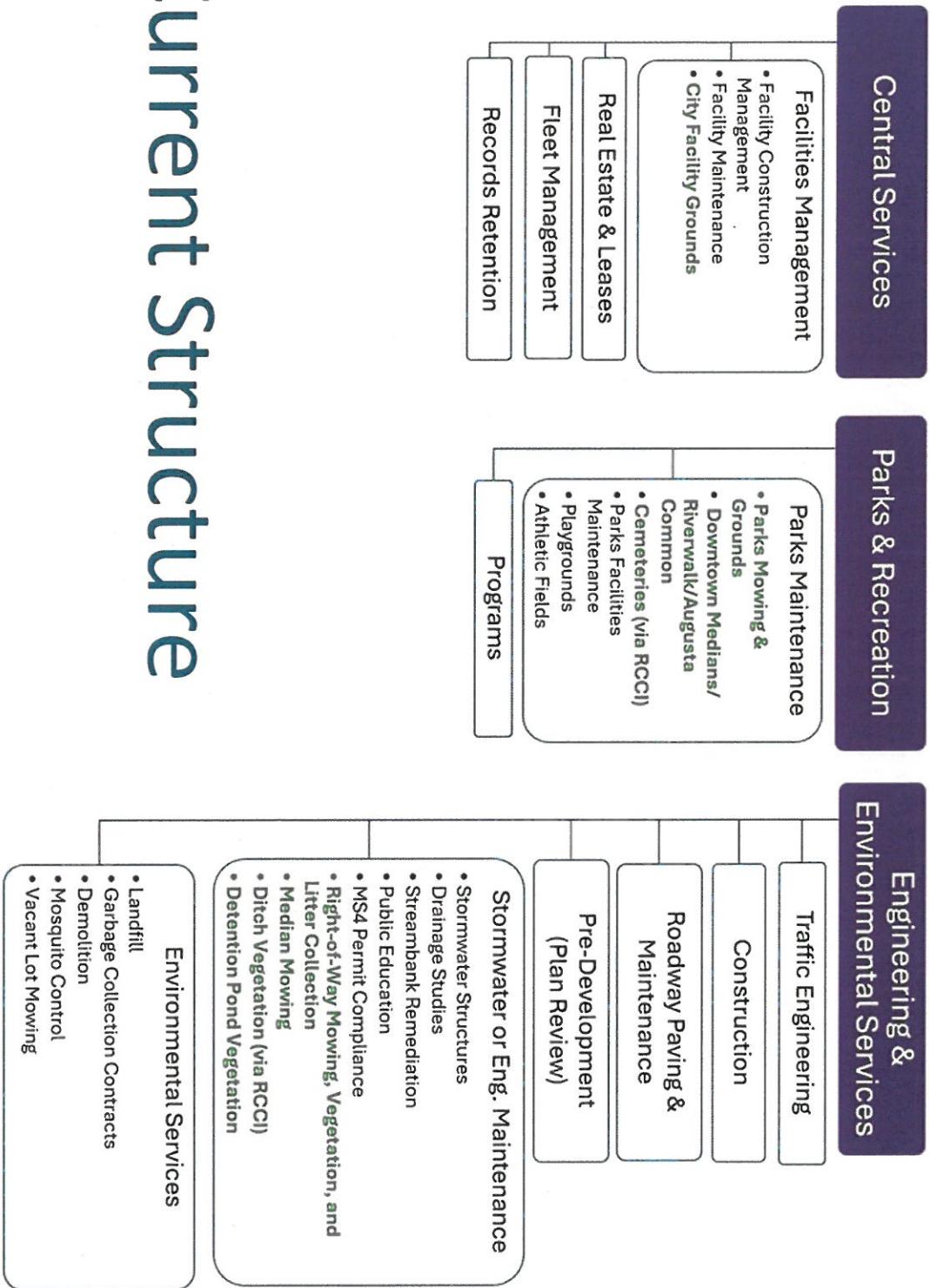
Note: All options assume status quo for RCCI

Current Structure

Portfolio for Current Maintenance

- 1,080 Center-Lane Miles of Roadway
- 168 City-owned Detention Ponds
- 9-15 Linear Miles of Ditches Per Year (~70 miles total in system)
- 49 Park Facilities (on mowing schedule)
- 21 Non-Park Augusta Facilities + Libraries (on mowing schedule)
- 3 City Cemeteries + 5 Historic Private Cemeteries

Current Structure



Current Structure

Central Services

- Grounds Maintenance at “Big Box” Augusta Facilities and Libraries* (1 cut/week) – 3 contractors
**Augusta Regional Library pays for the contractors at Library facilities*
- Grounds Maintenance at Outlying Facilities (1 cut/week) – 6 FT positions in 2 crews

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Current Structure

Recreation & Parks

- Parks Mowing (2 cuts/month) – 2 contractors, 10 FT positions in 2 crews
- Riverwalk/Augusta Common/Downtown – 5 FT and 2 PT positions
 - Responsible for mowing, trimming, trash, restrooms, flower beds
- Pendleton King Park – 3 FT and 1 PT positions
 - Responsible for maintenance, mowing, landscaping

RCCI Crews – Cemetery Grounds

- 6 crews – in 2024, averaged 3-4 details/week – mows 2x/month

Current Structure

Engineering & Environmental Services

- **Right-of-way Mowing**
 - 158 CLM contracted for 8 cuts/year - 5 contractors
 - Remaining roadway – rural (2 cuts/year), urban (3+ cuts/year) - 13 FT positions in 2 crews
- **Detention Ponds** (1 cut/year + dam removal) – 4 contractors for city-owned
 - RCCI crews for non-maintained private ponds
- **Medians/Landscaped Areas** – 2 contractors
- **Tree Management** – 4 FTE, 2 on-call contractors

RCCI Crews - Ditch Maintenance

- Assigned 13 crews (11 RCCI and 2 AED civilian) – in 2024, averaged 7 crews

Current Resources

Staff + Contractors

	Full-Time Employees	Contracts
Central Services	6	3
Recreation & Parks	18 (+ 3 PT)	2
Engineering &	17	13
Environmental Services		
Total	41 (+ 3 PT)	18

RCCI Crews – 13 for Engineering and 6 for Cemeteries (if fully staffed)

9-12 total currently

Current Resources

Approved FY 2026 Budget

Continue Median Maintenance Contracts

- FY23: \$400,000 added to budget (one-time)
- FY24: \$350,000 funded by ARPA
- FY25: \$350,000 added to budget mid-year

Additional Resources for New or Existing Depts.

Total Approved Additional Resources	\$800,000
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- 2. New Department for Vegetation & Ground Maintenance**
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Option 1 – Keep Current Structure

Projected Costs - from \$800,000

Item	Projected Cost
• Cemeteries: Add contract support or additional RCCI civilian crews	\$100,000
• Engineering position changes (combine 4 positions into 3 - contract management)	Budget neutral
• Downtown Maintenance • Bid process for ACE/contractor • Consider additional FT or PT positions for Recreation Downtown crew	\$549,470 currently allocated from <i>Urban Services Fund</i> \$60,000
• Additional contract resources • Pilot program for hot spot maintenance • Continue median program & on-call arborist	\$640,000

Option 2 – New Department

Projected Costs - from \$800,000

Item	Projected Cost
• Cemeteries: Add contract support or additional RCCI civilian crews	\$100,000
• Downtown Maintenance: Bid process for ACE/contractor	\$549,470 currently allocated from <i>Urban Services Fund</i>
• Combine existing staff & equipment (including contract manager)	Budget neutral
• Create Department Director position	\$140,000 including benefits
• Create Administrative Coordinator position	\$60,000 including benefits
• Office + warehouse space upfit	<i>Capital budget – est. \$400,000</i>
• Utilities, operating costs	\$80,000
• Continue median maintenance	\$420,000

Options for Structure

Summary of Considerations

- Option 1: Keep Current Structure with Added Resources
- Option 2: New Department

- Incremental change / lower startup costs
- Can be implemented most quickly
- Does not resolve accountability concerns

- Vegetation under one umbrella with new leadership > clearer accountability
- Bigger implementation lift
- Shared responsibility for MS4 requirements