

**SBP 2019 SWOC Assessment  
Summary Review of 2013, 2016 SWOCs**

**1. STRENGTHS THEMES**

- People
  - Customers: Highly satisfied and see high quality service connected to quality of life
  - Workforce: Competent and dedicated
- Business
  - Financial: Fiscal strength, rate based, high bond ratings
  - Service Delivery: High quality, reliable
- Environment + Health
  - Seattle as national leader and careful steward with strong commitments and relationships

**2. WEAKNESSES THEMES**

- People
  - Customers: Concern about high bills and visibility/understanding of work
  - Workforce: Succession planning, development, expectations
- Business
  - Financial: Improve prioritization, fixed costs, O&M new resources
  - Service Delivery: Aging/incomplete systems, process + staff inefficiency, pacing w/ demand
- Environment + Health
  - Service equity

**3. OPPORTUNITIES THEMES**

- People
  - Customers: Build Voice of Customer culture and increase knowledge about SPU
  - Workforce: Improve flexibility, adaptability, diversity
- Business
  - Financial: Balance rate pressures and affordability
  - Service Delivery: Strengthen partnerships and continuous improvement culture inc. tech
- Environment + Health
  - Expand partnerships, leadership, keep working upstream, nature-based solutions, climate

**4. CHALLENGES THEMES**

- People
  - Customers: Eroding trust in government
  - Workforce: Retirement/Recruitment tension
- Business
  - Financial: Affordability/ability to pay, Looming and mounting demands
  - Service Delivery: Big event Emergency response
- Environment + Health
  - Regulatory demand, climate adaptation, lower recycling rates for certain streams

# SPU Strengths – 2013, 2016 SWOCs

		2013 SWOC	2016 SWOC
<b>People (E+E)</b>	<b><u>Customers + Community</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- High satisfaction w/service</li> <li>- Recognize and link services to quality of life</li> <li>- High quality outreach/education methods and materials</li> </ul>	X X	X X X
	<b><u>Workforce</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Strong analytic and technical skills and abilities</li> <li>- Pride, dedication, innovative, engaged, professionalism</li> </ul>	X X	X X
<b>Business (A+A)</b>	<b><u>Financial</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Fiscal strength, rate based, and high bond ratings</li> <li>- Strong rate design (recycling, conservation)</li> <li>- Commitment to asset management principles and practice</li> </ul>	X X X	X X X
	<b><u>Service Delivery</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- High quality, reliable services with few outages</li> <li>- Strong emergency management functions</li> </ul>	X X	X
<b>Environment + Health (R+R)</b>	<b><u>Water Resources</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Watershed resources and agreements</li> <li>-Water quality best in US</li> <li>-Regional Conservation savings</li> <li>-Improved storm tracking, analysis, response</li> <li>-Enough drinking water til 2060</li> </ul>	X X X X X	
	<b><u>Solid Waste Resources</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Good at getting organics out of garbage</li> <li>-Recycling leader</li> <li>-Know the waste stream</li> </ul>	X X X	
	<b><u>Corporate</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- SPU and community commitment to regulatory compliance and progressive stewardship</li> <li>- Careful management of natural resources to meet needs of (people, fish, env)</li> <li>- National leader in sustainability, conservation</li> <li>- Good relationships with federal, state, local agencies</li> </ul>	X X X X	X X X X

# SPU Weaknesses – 2013, 2016 SWOCs

		2013 SWOC	2016 SWOC
<b>People (E+E)</b>	<b><u>Customers + Community</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Feeling that bills are too high; affordability</li> <li>- Lack of understanding about services SPU provides (invisibility of work, lingo)</li> <li>- Equity issues with service delivery, language, culture barriers (inc tap water – immigrants)</li> <li>- Lack sufficient customer input to utility</li> </ul>	X X X X	X X  X
	<b><u>Workforce</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Insufficient succession planning</li> <li>- Employ low number of millenials</li> <li>- Insufficient training and professional development (including soft skills, tech)</li> <li>- Lack of clear expectations, accountability, empowerment (fear of making mistakes)</li> <li>- Union relationships</li> <li>- Trust deficit, silo'ing</li> </ul>	X  X X X X X	X X X X  X
<b>Business (A+A)</b>	<b><u>Financial</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Transparency around where/how/how much money is being spent</li> <li>- Lack of effective prioritization</li> <li>- O&amp;M for new projects not adequately resourced</li> <li>- High % of fixed costs (wlob)</li> <li>- Lack of risk management processes</li> </ul>	X X X X X	 X X X  X
	<b><u>Service Delivery</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Aging Infrastructure, deferred and lack of maintenance (valves, hydrants, metering accuracy)</li> <li>- Lack complete systems, models, full operations (dww, scada)</li> <li>- Lack of systems planning</li> <li>- Technology not keeping pace with needs, customer expectations</li> <li>- Inefficient, inconsistent, excessive business processes and programs</li> <li>- Lack understanding of roles and resources needed to get work done (when need new crew, etc)</li> <li>- Lack of enforcement of some codes, rules, etc (creating underperformance)</li> </ul>	X X X X X X X	X X  X X X  X

<b>Environment + Health (R+R)</b>	<b><u>Water Resources</u></b>		
	- Insufficient funding for creeks, streams, habitat restoration		X
	- Stormwater impacts to receiving water bodies	X	
	- Neighborhood equity/lack of service/unplanned emergency issues flooding, sewer backups	X	X
	<b><u>Solid Waste Resources</u></b>		
	-Historic Landfills not dealt with	X	
	-Cost of garbage, recycling pickup	X	
<b><u>Corporate</u></b>			
- Lack plan to address SPU carbon footprint		X	

# SPU Opportunities – 2013, 2016 SWOCs

		2013 SWOC	2016 SWOC
<b>People (E+E)</b>	<b><u>Customers + Community</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Explore additional ways to help low income pay bills</li> <li>- Expand efforts to meet the needs of historically underserved populations</li> <li>- Increase knowledge about SPU services, benefits, value, regulatory cost drivers</li> <li>- Continue to build Customer Centric/Voice of the Customer culture, transcreation</li> </ul>	X	X
	<b><u>Workforce</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Improve workforce and workclass flexibility, adaptability, diversity and strength</li> <li>- Improve employee safety practices and programs</li> <li>- Cultivate environmental focus/image to be employer of choice</li> <li>- Continue building One-Team practices</li> <li>- Push decision making down to lower levels</li> </ul>	X	X
<b>Business (A+A)</b>	<b><u>Financial</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Balance rate pressures and affordability for customers</li> <li>- Maximize alternative financing (grants, loans)</li> <li>- More transparency, accountability</li> <li>- Sell landfills (Kent)</li> </ul>	X	X
	<b><u>Service Delivery</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Improve use of technology to meet customer/staff communication expectations</li> <li>- Strengthen partnerships with departments, governmental and NGOs</li> <li>- Expand use of data to make informed decisions</li> <li>- Strengthen continuous improvement culture and business practice</li> <li>- Look at value added services (insurance, side sewer, etc)</li> <li>- Focus on critical asset improvements (cathodic, fireflow, backbone, morse lake)</li> </ul>	X	X
<b>Environment + Health (R+R)</b>	<b><u>Water Resources</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Partner with others distributed utilities, off-gridding, decentralized green systems</li> <li>- Partner with others where joint water missions</li> </ul>	X	X

	<b><u>Solid Waste Resources</u></b>		
	- Take advantage of spring boards for more product stewardship	X	X
	- Strong waste prevention and recycling ethic	X	X
	- One less truck – Solid Waste	X	
	<b><u>Corporate</u></b>		
	- Strengthen and expand relationships with customers, partners to meet environmental goals	X	X
- Develop contingency planning to ensure resiliency		X	
- Be a leader in climate change and environmental protection	X	X	
- Less idling trucks	X		

# SPU Challenges – 2013, 2016 SWOCs

		2013 SWOC	2016 SWOC
<b>People (E+E)</b>	<b><u>Customers + Community</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Eroding trust in government</li> <li>- Concern about punitive approach to ensuring customer compliance (recycling)</li> <li>- New residents not part of Seattle’s environmental ethos</li> </ul>	X	X X X
	<b><u>Workforce</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- High % of workforce eligible to retire</li> <li>- Recruiting and retaining a workforce that responds to the demands of a growing and changing city</li> <li>- Union resistance to productivity and efficiency improvements, number of unions</li> </ul>	X	X X
<b>Business (A+A)</b>	<b><u>Financial</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ability and willingness to pay</li> <li>- Aging infrastructure needing rehab or replacement that exceeds funding</li> <li>- Funding, staffing required to move, repair, restore infrastructure associated with Transportation projects</li> <li>- Mandates, regulatory requirements and other costs outside of SPU control driving rates and using resources</li> <li>- Limited competition for contracted services (solid waste)</li> <li>- Potential for losing wholesale customers</li> <li>- In 2028 landfilling will become more expensive</li> <li>- King County pricing for waste water treatment</li> <li>- Pressure to privatize</li> </ul>	X X X X X X X X	X X X X X
	<b><u>Service Delivery</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ability to maintain service levels as population grows, changes (mixed use, traffic)</li> <li>- Ability to respond effectively to emergencies (including seismic events, floods)</li> <li>- Shiny thing syndrome (elected, internal)</li> <li>- SCL impacts on SPU service delivery</li> <li>- Rapid pace of changing technology</li> <li>- Metering program</li> </ul>	X X X X X	X X
<b>Environment + Health (R+R)</b>	<b><u>Water Resources</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Keeping up with evolving water quality regulations and mandates</li> <li>- Ability to adapt to climate change impacts (drought, excess water, slr)</li> </ul>	X X	X X

	- Recycled water, decentralized system capital costs – certifications	X	
	<b><u>Solid Waste Resources</u></b>		
	- Multi-family, commercial, self haul recycling are lower	X	X
	- Weak recycling markets for certain materials and difficulty of siting recovery facilities		X
	- Waste stream contamination		X
	- Changes towards non-recyclable packaging		X
	- Continued, growing demand for clean city services	X	