SEATTLE PUBLIC UTILITIES ASSET HIERARCHY ASSESSMENT

CLIENT
Seattle Public Utilities

LOCATION
Seattle, WA

DURATION
20 months

ROLE
Technical Lead

BUDGET
$50,000

COMPLETED
February 2020

City of Seattle

One of the values of an enterprise asset management system is the ability to perform standard queries of asset data and perform relatable assessments of system health and the value of management practices. Having data organized in a fashion that allows for easy searching and report generation is critical. For assets, this often involves some form of a standardized asset hierarchy.

Seattle Public Utilities (SPU) faced this exact problem within their computerized maintenance management system (CMMS). As new assets were added to SPU's system and asset management best practices evolved, the asset hierarchies for different asset classes evolved as well. This led to inconsistent data entry and challenges with querying, reporting, and onboarding assets. Seattle Public Utilities (SPU) partnered with Blue Cypress Consulting to assist their water, drainage & wastewater, and solid waste lines of business to holistically analyze utility business processes to develop an organization-wide asset hierarchy that best aligns with business needs.

The Blue Cypress team took a three-step process to develop and test the hierarchy. First, the group assessed SPU's current use of hierarchies within their CMMS. This provided the "status quo" that the organization had used to generate and manage work activities. Next, the team interviewed operations and engineering staff to understand their reporting needs and how they query data. This led to business requirements for a new, standard hierarchy.

With this information, the team performed a comprehensive test of the existing hierarchy against a revised and standard organization-wide hierarchy. Successful testing required closely working with those most familiar with the data as well as the in-house CMMS technical experts. The resulting standardized hierarchy can now be phased into the organization over time leading to improved data querying and reporting capabilities for the organization.