



Seattle Office of City Auditor

David G. Jones, City Auditor

April 1, 2025

www.seattle.gov/cityauditor

2024 Annual Report

Advancing accountability, efficiency, equity, and transparency throughout City of Seattle government

Message from City Auditor

For 32 years, Seattle's Office of City Auditor has provided the Seattle City Council, the Mayor, City Departments, and the public with accurate information about City of Seattle (City) funded activities, and recommendations for improving City operations. The Office of City Auditor was created by a voter-approved amendment to the Seattle City Charter in 1991 and began operations in 1993. Since then, we've made hundreds of recommendations to improve City programs, of which about 72% percent have been implemented. We've received national recognition for the [quality of our performance audit reports](#) and our staff from the [Association of Local Government Auditors](#) (ALGA). I am proud that our office [has passed five independent peer reviews](#) by ALGA that assessed our compliance since 2008 with the [Government Auditing Standards](#), which emphasize an audit office's commitment to objectivity, independence, and high-quality work. Furthermore, our office is committed to the City's efforts to end institutional racism in City government and achieve racial equity across our community. To this end, we use a racial equity toolkit in each of our audits as a standard part of our audit process. Building on this foundation, we continued to support the well-being of the public in 2024 through the following work:

- We completed work on important issues that the City faced such as [concentrations of overdoses and crime](#); the [availability and cleanliness of restrooms in Seattle's parks](#); the City's use of [surveillance technologies](#); and steps the City could take to address the increasing and dangerous cybersecurity threats it faces.
- We also continued our [annual reporting on the implementation status of our audit recommendations](#), which helps ensure that City departments act on them (see details on page four).
- I am pleased to note that our July 2024 report on *Addressing Places in Seattle Where Crime and Overdose are Concentrated* won a [Knighton Award](#) for being one of the best performance audits of 2024 from the Association of Local Government Auditors. Congratulations to the audit team of Dr. Claudia Gross Shader and IB Osuntoki.
- In July 2024, we welcomed a new Office Manager, Rita Moore, who had previous experience working with the City of Tacoma and the Seattle City Clerk's Office.
- We welcomed a new Deputy City Auditor, Arushi Thakorlal, who joined us in January 2025. Arushi previously worked with the U.S. Government Accountability Office, the City of Seattle's City Budget Office, and served as the Chief Audit Executive for the City and County of Honolulu.
- In 2025, we will continue our work on audits started in 2024 covering gun violence in Seattle, Comcast's adherence to the City's Cable Customer Bill of Rights, crime prevention, and a cybersecurity review.

We have important ongoing and planned work to accomplish in 2025 (see our work program on page six). I appreciate the commitment of our team to doing this work and the Seattle City Council's history of strong support for our office's work and performance auditing in Seattle.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David G. Jones".

Highlights from 2024

Addressing Places in Seattle Where Overdoses and Crime are Concentrated: An Evidence Based Approach

Seattle Mayor Bruce Harrell and former City Council President Debora Juarez requested that our office perform an audit that identifies and documents evidence-informed approaches for addressing areas in the city where crime and overdose incidents are concentrated. In addition to our research of evidence-informed approaches, we used a case study methodology that examined a two-block area in Seattle’s Belltown neighborhood. We found that diagnosing and disrupting the unique characteristics that contribute to overdose and crime concentrations is best accomplished using an established, place-based problem-solving approach that includes implementing evidence-based strategies to address overdoses and crimes.

We recommended that the Mayor’s Office designate a high-level project champion to oversee this approach, work with other departments to use a proven coordination system, seek technical assistance from and collaborate with federal agencies, and regularly evaluate the City’s efforts in addressing places where overdoses and crime are concentrated.

Exhibit: Audit Case Study Site – Third Avenue from Virginia Street to Blanchard Street



2023 Annual Surveillance Technology Usage Review

Seattle Municipal Code 14.18.060 requires the City Auditor to annually review City Council-approved non-police surveillance technologies used by City of Seattle departments. This 2023 Annual Surveillance Usage Review included the Seattle Department of Transportation Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) traffic cameras; the Seattle Fire Department (SFD) Computer-Aided Dispatch, Hazardous Materials, and Emergency Scene Cameras; and Seattle City Light (SCL) Current Diversion Technologies. In 2023, we found that the departments complied with Seattle Municipal Code 14.18.060.



Seattle Department of Transportation CCTV
Source: SDOT Traffic Cameras Fact Sheet

Furthermore, our audit noted that on September 16, 2024, the Seattle Information Technology Department (ITD) [issued a report](#) that revised the City of Seattle's Master List of Surveillance Technologies. ITD determined that the technologies used by SFD and SCL, which our office had been reporting on, do not meet the definition of surveillance technologies. Therefore, we will no longer provide annual reports on these technologies and will close the pending recommendations we made about these technologies in our previous audit reports. However, we will continue to report annually on the Seattle Department of Transportation's use of CCTV cameras.

Gun Safe Storage Ordinance: Statistical Report on 2023 Data

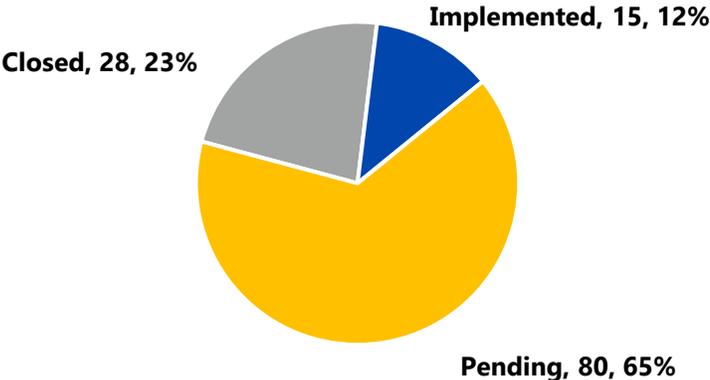
Ordinance 125620 directed the Seattle City Auditor to work with Public Health - Seattle & King County and the Chief of the Seattle Police Department to produce five annual reports containing descriptive statistics on: (1) Firearm-related hospitalizations and deaths in Seattle for the overall population and among youth (i.e., persons less than 18 years in age), and (2) Guns reported to or recorded by the Seattle Police Department as stolen in Seattle.

This report was the final one required by the ordinance and provides data on 2023 firearm-related deaths and number of guns reported or recorded as stolen in 2023. We included links to resources for future firearm-related data in the report.

Audit Recommendation Progress

In 2024, we continued our annual practice of following up on open audit recommendations. As seen in the chart below, in 2024 departments implemented 12 percent of the 123 open recommendations made in our reports. Our 2024 status report and dashboard on departments' implementation of our audit recommendations will be published in Quarter 2 of 2025.

Recommendation Status as of Dec. 31, 2024



Our interactive [dashboard](#) shows the status of our past reports' recommendations.



Status Categories

IMPLEMENTED: We determined that the recommendation or the intent of the recommendation has been met, or we see significant progress has been made and there is no barrier to its full implementation.

PENDING: We determined that implementation is in process or is uncertain, and additional monitoring is warranted. We will follow up on these recommendations in the future.

- CLOSED:** We decide to close recommendations when either:
1. The recommendation is no longer relevant.
 2. Implementation is not feasible.
 3. The audited entity's management does not agree with the recommendation and is not planning to implement the recommendation; or
 4. The recommendation was considered by the City Council but not adopted. We will no longer follow up on these recommendations.

The Office of City Auditor Continues to be Certified as Meeting Stringent Professional Auditing Standards

After conducting a thorough review, a team of two auditors independently selected by the Association of Local Government Auditors (ALGA) concluded in November 2024 that our office operated in compliance with Government Auditing Standards from October 2, 2021, through October 1, 2024.

The Government Auditing Standards are issued by the U.S. Comptroller General to provide a framework for performing high-quality audit work with competence, integrity, and independence. This is the fifth consecutive ALGA Peer Review the Office of City Auditor has passed since David Jones became City Auditor in 2009. The next review will occur in 2027.

2024 Completed Reports

Performance Audits

- [Addressing Places in Seattle Where Overdoses and Crime are Concentrated: An Evidence-Based Approach](#)
- [2023 Annual Surveillance Technology Usage Review](#)
- [City Should Reassess Approach to Park Restroom Cleanliness and Availability](#)¹
- A cybersecurity audit

Other Reports

- [Status Report on Implementation of Office of City Auditor Recommendations as of December 2023](#)
- [Gun Safe Storage Ordinance: Statistical Report on 2023 Data](#)
- [Seattle Office of City Auditor 2023 Annual Report](#)

Seattle Office of City Auditor Staff

David G. Jones, City Auditor
Arushi Thakorlal, Deputy City Auditor
Rita Moore, Office Manager
Melissa Allman, Assistant City Auditor
Sarah Bland, Assistant City Auditor
Claudia Gross Shader, Ph.D., Director of Research and Evaluation
IB Osuntoki, Assistant City Auditor
Andrew Scoggin, Assistant City Auditor
Marc Stepper, Utility Auditor Specialist

¹ This report was completed in November 2024 and published in February 2025.

Office of City Auditor Annual Work Program

(as of April 1, 2025, and subject to change)

Projects	Source	Estimated Completion Date
1. Gun Violence	City Council President Nelson	Published March 25, 2025
2. Comcast Cable Customer Bill of Rights	City Councilmember Hollingsworth and Mayor Harrell	Q2 2025
3. Office of City Auditor 2025 Annual Recommendation Follow Up Report	City Council Request	Q2 2025
4. A Cybersecurity Review	City Auditor	Q2 2025
5. 2024 Annual Surveillance Technologies Review	Ordinance 125376	Q3 2025
6. Scoping Exercise for SOAP Ordinance	Ordinance 127086	Q3 or Q4 2025
7. Scoping Exercise for SODA Ordinance	Ordinance 127085	Q3 or Q4 2025
8. Crime Prevention	Request by City Council President Nelson and Mayor Harrell	TBD
9. Services and Safety in City-Funded Housing and Shelters	City Councilmember Rivera	TBD
10. Certificate of Occupancy	City Councilmember Strauss	Q4 2025
11. Audit of a Seattle Public Utilities Program	City Auditor	TBD
12. Astound Cable Customer Bill of Rights	City Councilmember Hollingsworth and Mayor Harrell	Q1 2026
13. Quality Assurance Reviews of Office of Inspector General Investigations	Under the agreement between the City of Seattle and the Seattle Police Officers' Guild Appendix E – 3.29.125 (H), we review investigations the Office of Inspector General (OIG) performs when the Office of Police Accountability has a conflict of interest with an investigation and OIG must perform it.	As needed