



# Seattle Office of City Auditor

David G. Jones, City Auditor

March 31, 2023

[www.seattle.gov/cityauditor](http://www.seattle.gov/cityauditor)

## 2022 Annual Report

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

### Message from City Auditor

The Office of City Auditor was created by a voter-approved amendment to the Seattle City Charter in 1991 and began operations in 1993. We provide reports to the City Council, City departments and the public with objective, accurate information about City of Seattle-funded activities. We've made hundreds of recommendations to improve City programs over the past 30 years, of which about 71 percent have been implemented. We've received national recognition for the quality of our audit reports from the [Association of Local Government Auditors](#) (ALGA). I am also proud that since 2008 our office has [passed four independent peer reviews](#) that assessed our compliance with the [Government Auditing Standards](#).

- In 2022 our work focused on some of the important issues that the City of Seattle faced, such as [unsanctioned encampments](#), [substance use disorder](#), [gun violence](#), [the City of Seattle's use of surveillance technologies](#), [solid waste billing](#), and [purchases of police vehicles](#).
- We continued our [annual reporting on the implementation status of our audit recommendations](#).
- We continued overseeing program evaluation work related to equity issues addressed through the Sweetened Beverage Tax, a federal grant to prevent youth crime and victimization in Rainier Beach, and the [Secure Scheduling Ordinance](#).

We have important work planned in 2023 (see our work program on pages 8-9) such as producing ordinance-required reports on seven surveillance technologies and examining Seattle's experience with organized retail crime. I appreciate the commitment of our team to doing this work and the Seattle City Council's steadfast support of our office's work.

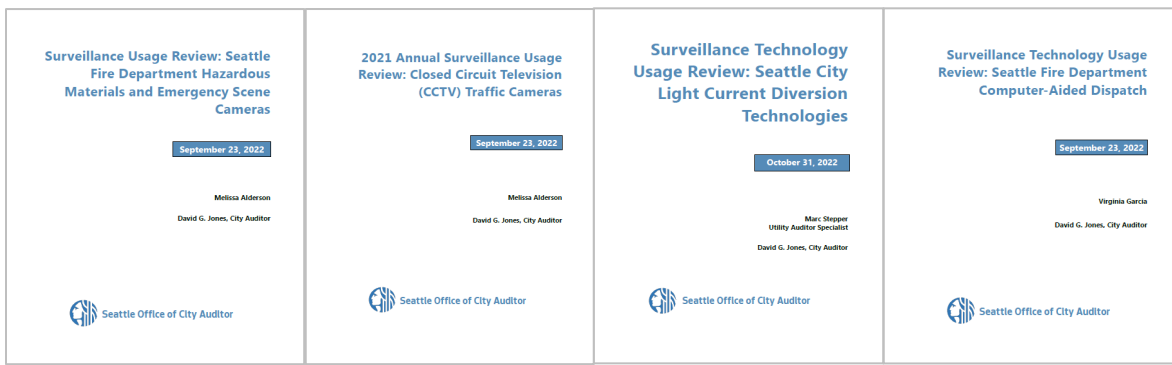
A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David G. Jones".

## Highlights from 2022

**Surveillance Technology Usage Reviews:** During 2022, as required by [Ordinance 125376](#), we published four reports on the City departments' use of surveillance technologies. These reports concerned the following:

- Seattle Fire Department's Hazardous Materials and Emergency Scene Cameras
- Seattle Fire Department's Computer-Aided Dispatch
- Seattle City Light's Current Diversion technologies
- Seattle Department of Transportation's Closed Circuit Television Traffic Cameras

The four reports contained a total of 52 recommendations to improve City departments' compliance with the requirements of the Surveillance Ordinance codified in Seattle Municipal Code 14.18.



## [Audit of Seattle Police Department Patrol Vehicle Procurement](#)

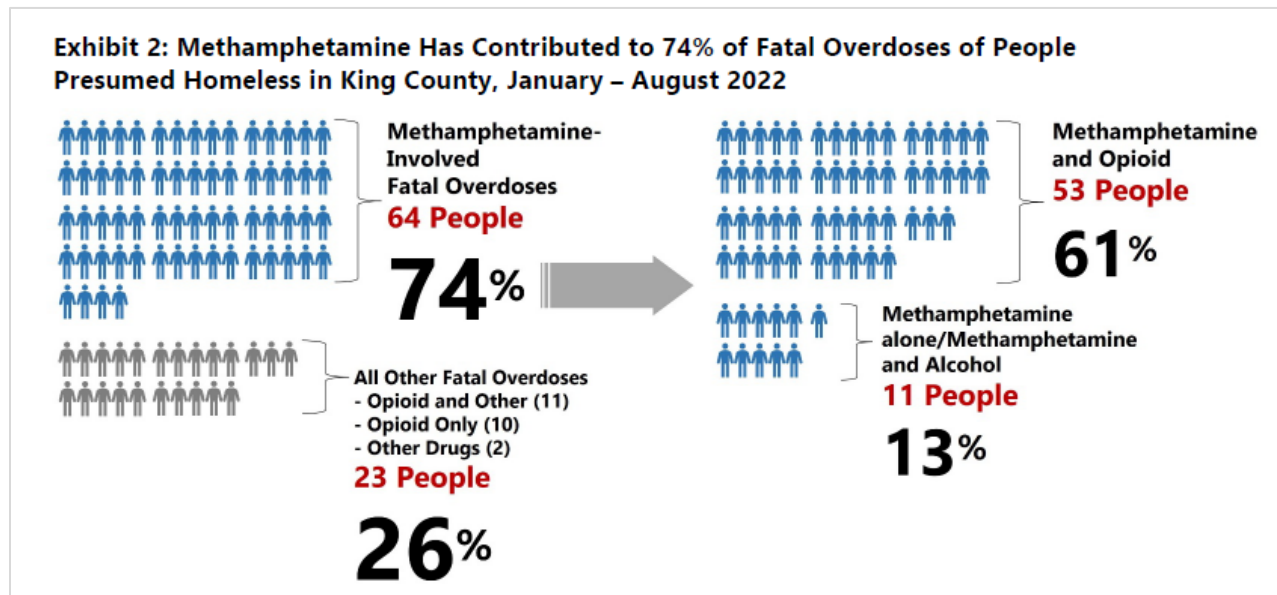
This audit was conducted in response to Seattle City Councilmember Andrew J. Lewis' request for our office to review the procurement of the Seattle Police Department's (SPD) primary patrol vehicle: The Ford Police Interceptor Utility (PIU). Our report analyzed PIU's purchase and maintenance costs, customization selections and costs, and information on the number of SPD patrol vehicles and current patrol vehicle procurement challenges. We made three recommendations to address issues with procuring patrol vehicles. We

recommended that the City Budget Office allow the Department of Finance and Administrative Services (FAS) to adhere to their vehicle replacement schedule for the PIU so that vehicles can be retired in a timely way. We also recommended that FAS begin purchasing replacement vehicles one year in advance.



## Action is Needed to Explore Ways to Offer an Evidence-Based Treatment for People Who Use Methamphetamine

This audit report grew out of work requested by Seattle City Councilmembers Andrew Lewis and Lisa Herbold, specifically our July 15, 2022 audit, [The City of Seattle Should Use a Data Dashboard to Track its Progress in Addressing Unsanctioned Encampments](#), and our forthcoming audit regarding Organized Retail Crime fencing operations in Seattle.



Source: City of Seattle Office of City Auditor analysis of King County Medical Examiner's Office, King County Presumed Homeless Death Report, as of August 31, 2022.

1. This audit identified reasons why government, including the City of Seattle, should act with urgency to provide evidence-based treatment for people who use methamphetamine.
2. Provided an overview of Contingency Management, an evidence-based treatment that has been proven effective for people with methamphetamine use disorder.
3. Offered possibilities for deploying Contingency Management in Seattle, including directly to the places where people with methamphetamine use disorder reside.

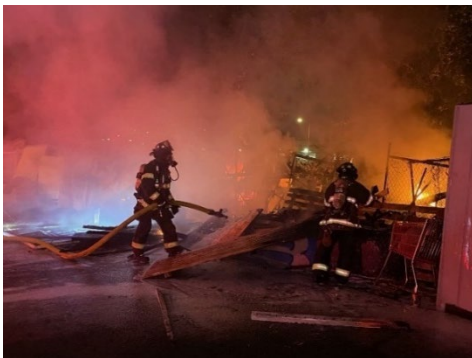
We recommended that government, including the City of Seattle, should act with urgency to address methamphetamine use disorder in non-clinical settings by exploring ways to scale-up implementation of evidence-based treatment like Contingency Management with innovations that reduce barriers to participation and with ongoing rigorous research to ensure that positive outcomes are achieved.

Our audit had significant support and immediate impact. Just one month after our audit was published, the City of Seattle applied for a 10-year, \$12 million grant from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to address methamphetamine use disorder using the approach that we recommended. The NIH selected the City's proposal to complete a full application for consideration.

## The City of Seattle Should Use a Data Dashboard to Track its Progress in Addressing Unsanctioned Encampments

This audit follow-up work was requested by Seattle City Councilmembers Andrew Lewis and Lisa Herbold. Our report contains potential measures for a data dashboard for the City to track conditions related to unsanctioned encampments. In August 2022, the Mayor’s Office launched its [One Seattle Homelessness Action Plan](#) website, which includes some of the metrics that we proposed.

The website indicates that the Mayor’s Office will continue to update and add metrics to track progress and drive accountability. Our work on this report was based on our four previous reports on the City’s former Navigation Team that provided outreach to unsanctioned encampments,<sup>1</sup> our review of practices from other jurisdictions, and input from public health professionals and researchers.



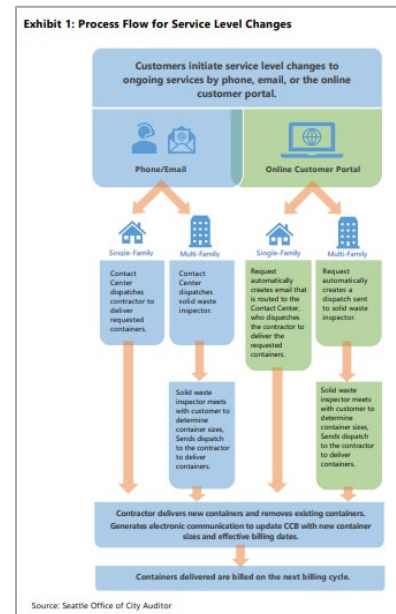
One of the metrics that we recommended and that the Mayor’s Office has included in its [data dashboard](#) is data on encampment fires.

For 2022, there were a total of 1,617 fires at tents/RV encampments, an average of 4.5 per day.

Photo: Crews from Seattle Fire Department responded to a fire on S. Kenyon St. Source: Seattle Fire Department

## Seattle Public Utilities Residential Solid Waste Billing Controls Audit

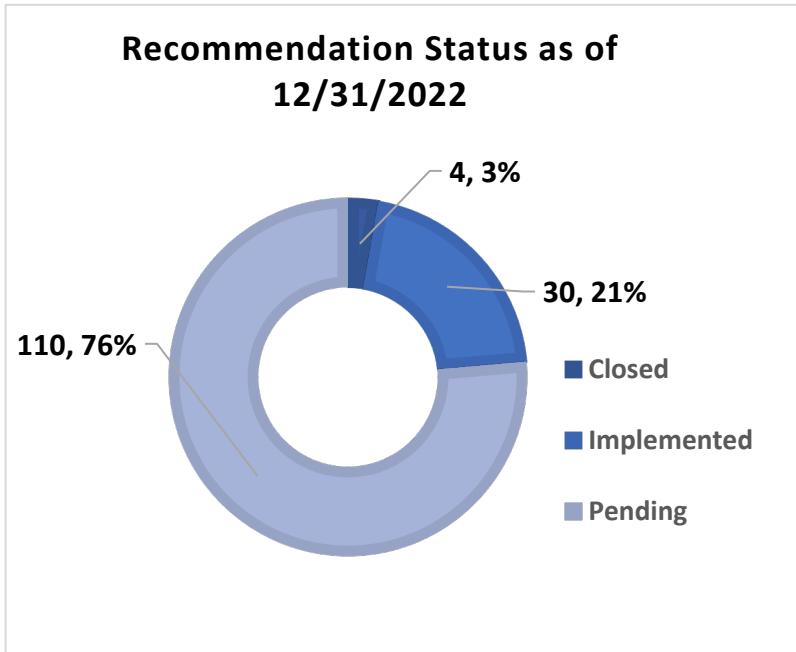
This report concerned billing controls for Seattle Public Utilities’ (SPU) residential solid waste customers that are supposed to provide reasonable assurance of complete, accurate, authorized, and timely billing. In general, we found that SPU implemented controls that achieve these objectives; however, we identified certain controls that were either lacking or need to be strengthened. We made 12 recommendations for improving controls that SPU concurred with.



<sup>1</sup> See [Reporting Plan for Navigation Team](#), published November 7, 2017; [Review of Navigation Team 2018 Quarter 1 Report](#), published October 2, 2018; [Review of Navigation Team 2018 Quarter 2 Report](#), published February 7, 2019; and [Five Steps the City of Seattle Should Take to Reduce Trash Around Unsanctioned Encampments](#), published February 24, 2020

## Follow-Up on Recommendations

In 2022, we continued our annual practice of following up on open audit recommendations. As seen in the chart below, in 2022 departments implemented 21 percent of the 144 open recommendations made in our reports. Our 2022 status report and dashboard on departments' implementation of our audit recommendations will be published in Quarter 2 of 2023.



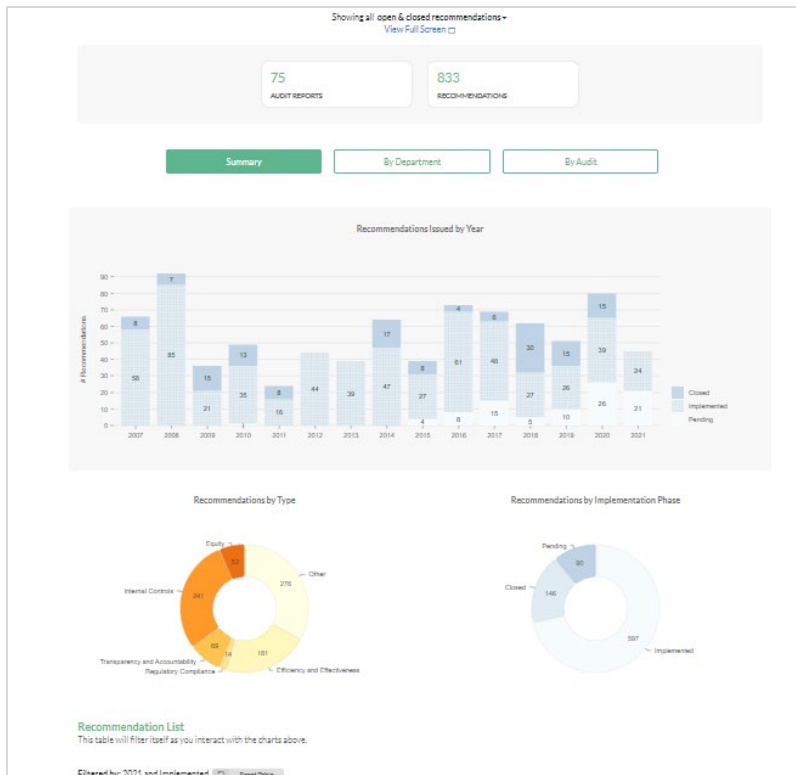
## Status Categories

**IMPLEMENTED:** We determined that the recommendation or the intent of the recommendation has been met, or we see significant progress has been made and 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.



We have an interactive [dashboard](#) that shows the status of our reports' recommendations (left).

## Race and Social Justice Initiative

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 and use internal metrics to encourage our staff to build their expertise in race and social justice issues.

### In our 2022 reports, we addressed Race and Social Justice Initiative (RSJI) outreach issues and made RSJI-related recommendations as follows:

- In the [four reports we issued in 2022](#) for our ordinance-mandated reviews of non-police surveillance technologies, we raised RSJI issues and made related recommendations such as taking steps to reduce the impact on the civil liberties of disadvantaged populations, producing equity metrics, and performing an equity analysis.
- In our March 20, 2022 report [Seattle Public Utilities Residential Solid Waste Billing Controls Audit](#), we met with a Seattle Public Utilities (SPU) manager to discuss SPU's plans to use the City's Racial Equity Toolkit to analyze recent years' solid waste extras charges to determine if the data showed that there were racial or other disparities in extra garbage charges.
- In our July 15, 2022 report [The City of Seattle Should Use a Data Dashboard to Track its Progress in Addressing Unsanctioned Encampments](#), we recommended that the City of Seattle develop and regularly update a data dashboard to track its progress addressing unsanctioned encampments. Another recommendation was that this dashboard be developed with input from City departments, the King County Regional Homelessness Authority, and people with lived experience of homelessness. We also recommended that an element focus on the experience of people living in unsanctioned encampments be included in any encampment progress dashboard created by the City of Seattle.
- In our October 24, 2022 report [Action is Needed to Explore Ways to Offer an Evidence-Based Treatment for People Who Use Methamphetamine](#), we recommended that government, including the City of Seattle, act with urgency to address methamphetamine use disorder in non-clinical settings by exploring ways to scale up implementation of evidence-based treatment (i.e., Contingency Management that involves rewards) with innovations that reduce barriers to participation and with ongoing rigorous research to ensure that positive outcomes are achieved. For this audit, we worked with researchers from Promoting Research Initiatives in Substance Use and Mental Health (PRISM) Collaborative at Washington State University who have led multiple effectiveness trials that use community-based participatory research methods to co-develop and test contingency management interventions and evaluate treatments for substance use in diverse, low-resource settings. We also incorporated feedback from the Seattle Office for Civil Rights on the use of appropriate language in our report to describe various populations, including people with substance use disorder.

## Peer Reviews Conclude Our Office Meets Government Auditing Standards

The federal [Government Auditing Standards](#) require that our office undergo external peer review for compliance every three years. The Standards provide a framework for performing high-quality audit work with competence, integrity, and independence.

A team of experienced auditors independently selected by the Association of Local Government Auditors (ALGA) concluded that we complied with the Government Auditing Standards in the three-year period ending in 2021. This is the [fourth-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 2024.

## 2022 Published Reports

### Performance Audits

- [Surveillance Technology Usage Review: Seattle City Light Current Diversion Technologies](#)
- [Action is Needed to Explore Ways to Offer an Evidence-Based Treatment for People Who Use Methamphetamine](#)
- [2021 Annual Surveillance Usage Review: Closed Circuit Television \(CCTV\) Traffic Cameras](#)
- [Surveillance Technology Usage Review: Seattle Fire Department Computer-Aided Dispatch](#)
- [Surveillance Technology Usage Review: Seattle Fire Department Hazardous Materials and Emergency Scene Cameras](#)
- [The City of Seattle Should Use a Data Dashboard to Track its Progress in Addressing Unsanctioned Encampments](#)
- [Seattle Public Utilities Residential Solid Waste Billing Controls Audit](#)
- [Audit of Seattle Police Department Patrol Vehicle Procurement](#)

### Other Reports

- [Status Report on Implementation of Office of City Auditor Recommendations as of December 2021](#)
- [Gun Safe Storage Ordinance: Statistical Report for 2020](#)

## Seattle Office of City Auditor Staff

David G. Jones, City Auditor  
Virginia Garcia, Deputy City Auditor  
Sarah Bland, Office Manager  
Melissa Alderson, Assistant City Auditor  
Claudia Gross Shader, Ph.D., Director of Research and Evaluation  
Miroslava Meza, Assistant City Auditor  
IB Osuntoki, Assistant City Auditor  
Andrew Scoggin, Assistant City Auditor  
Kamaria Sims, NIJ Grant Human Services Coordinator  
Marc Stepper, Utility Auditor Specialist



During 2022, Sarah Bland, IB Osuntoki, Andrew Scoggin and Miroslava Meza joined our office. We are pleased to have them on board. We also welcomed Nhi Tran who joined in late March 2023. In December 2022, Kamaria Sims, who worked on the Rainier Beach Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports project funded by a U.S. National Institute of Justice grant, left for a job in another state; we will miss her and wish her success in her endeavors. Finally, Deputy City Auditor Virginia Garcia, a long-time member of our office and the City of Seattle will be retiring on May 1. Among her many accomplishments, she was honored by the Association of Local Government Auditors with its Lifetime Achievement Award. Virginia was a tireless and effective advocate for our office’s RSJI efforts and incorporating diversity, equity, and inclusion into performance auditing. She will be deeply missed.

## Office of City Auditor Annual Work Program (as of March 31, 2023, and subject to change)

Projects	Source	Estimated Completion Date
1. Management of Secure Scheduling Evaluation Contract	<a href="#">Ordinance 125135</a>	Final report required by the ordinance, which was on <a href="#">2022 employer implementation</a> , was published on January 13, 2023.
2. Office of City Auditor 2022 Annual Recommendation Follow up Report	City Council Request	Q2 2023
3. Organized Retail Crime	Request by Councilmembers Lewis and Herbold	Q2 2023
4. City Workforce Equity in Promotions	Request by Councilmember Morales	Q3 2023
5. Permitting for Housing	Request by Councilmember Strauss	Q2 or Q3 2023
6. Rental Registration Program	Request by Councilmembers Pedersen and Sawant	Q3 or Q4 2023
7. Seattle Public Utilities Cybersecurity Incident Response Plans	Request by Councilmember Pedersen	Q3 2023
8. 2022 Annual Surveillance Usage Review: Seattle Fire Department Computer-Aided Dispatch System	<a href="#">Ordinance 125376</a>	Q3 2023
9. 2022 Annual Surveillance Usage Review: Seattle Fire Department Emergency Scene Cameras	<a href="#">Ordinance 125376</a>	Q3 2023
10. 2022 Annual Surveillance Usage Review: Seattle Fire Department Hazmat Cameras	<a href="#">Ordinance 125376</a>	Q3 2023



Projects	Source	Estimated Completion Date
11. 2022 Annual Surveillance Usage Review: Seattle City Light Binoculars/Spotting Scope	<a href="#">Ordinance 125376</a>	Q3 2023
12. 2022 Annual Surveillance Usage Review: Seattle City Light Check Meter Device	<a href="#">Ordinance 125376</a>	Q3 2023
13. 2022 Annual Surveillance Usage Review: Seattle City Light Sensor Link Amp Fork	<a href="#">Ordinance 125376</a>	Q3 2023
14. 2022 Annual Surveillance Usage Review: Seattle Department Closed Circuit Television Cameras	<a href="#">Ordinance 125376</a>	Q3 2023
15. Seattle City Light Cybersecurity Incident Response Plans	To be initiated by City Auditor	TBD
16. Parks District Cycle 2 Funding Plan Performance Audits	Parks District Cycle 2 Funding Plan (Amendment 9 – Sponsor Councilmember Lewis)	TBD
17. Management of Sweetened Beverage Tax Evaluation Reports	<a href="#">Ordinance 125324</a>	Q2 2023
18. Participation in Federally Funded Evaluation of National Institute of Justice Grant: Rainier Beach Campus Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports	Follow up to City Council requested report published by our office in 2011 on crime hot spots	Q2 2023
19. Firearm-Related Hospitalizations and Deaths and Stolen Guns Statistical Report	<a href="#">Ordinance 125620</a>	Q4 2023
20. 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