

# OFFICE OF THE CITY AUDITOR

## Recommendation Monitoring Report

December 2019

## Implementation Status of Audit Recommendations Fiscal Years 2015 – 2019



CITY OF  
KANSAS CITY,  
MISSOURI

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CITY OF FOUNTAINS  
HEART OF THE NATION



KANSAS CITY  
MISSOURI

## Office of the City Auditor

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December 2, 2019

Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council:

Section 2-112 of the Code of Ordinances requires the city auditor to monitor implementation of audit recommendations and periodically communicate management's progress towards implementing them to the Mayor and City Council.

The Audit Report Tracking System (ARTS) is used to track and report on management's progress towards implementing audit recommendations. This process provides the Mayor and City Council with a useful tool to provide oversight to city programs and activities by monitoring management's progress towards implementing audit recommendations and the outcomes achieved. ARTS reports also provide the public with information about management's implementation of audit recommendations.

Between fiscal years 2015 and 2019, the City Auditor's Office issued 232 audit recommendations. Through the ARTS process, management has publicly reported to various City Council committees that they have implemented 67 percent of our audit recommendations made between fiscal years 2015 and 2019. The recommendations in these audits have an estimated potential *direct* financial impact of about \$24.6 million and a potential *indirect* financial impact of about \$415.9 million.

The primary benefits or impacts of our audit work include government accountability and transparency, reduced costs, increased revenues, strengthened controls and safeguards, and improved services. The value of these benefits/impacts can only come about through implementation of audit recommendations. The City Council's oversight of management's progress towards implementing audit recommendations is an important and sometimes critical element to help ensure agreed upon recommended changes and improvements occur.

  
Douglas Jones  
City Auditor

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# Why Monitor Progress Towards Implementing Audit Recommendations?

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## Potential Benefits/Impacts of Audit Recommendations

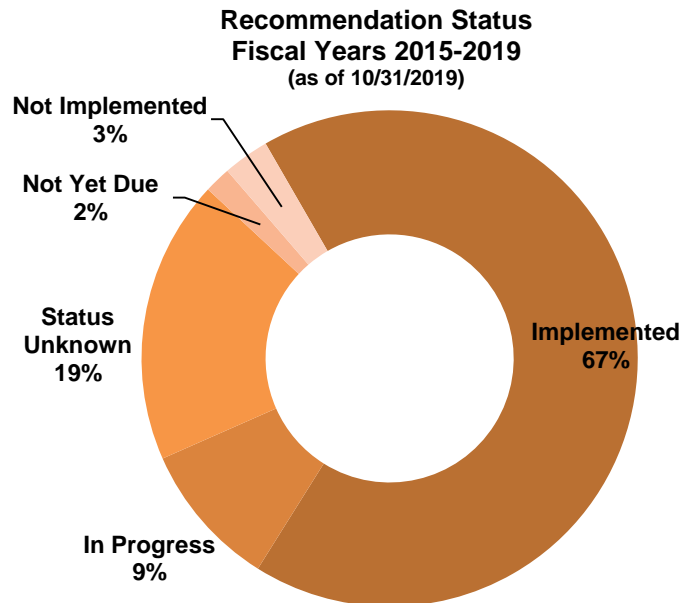
The primary benefits of audit recommendations include government accountability and transparency, reduced costs, increased revenues, strengthened safeguards, and improved services. Between fiscal years 2015 and 2019, the City Auditor's Office issued 232 recommendations.

The estimated potential *direct* financial impact (increased revenues or decreased costs) of audit recommendations we made between fiscal years 2015 and 2019 was about \$24.6 million. Our audits also have potential *indirect* financial impact by suggesting ways the city could improve the delivery of services to the public and employees, and ensure appropriate controls are in place to manage or protect about \$415.9 million in public monies or assets.

## Benefits/Impacts Can Only Be Gained by Implementing Audit Recommendations

Auditing alone does not directly produce benefits or impacts for the city; they only come from implementation of audit recommendations, which is dependent upon management agreeing to and ultimately implementing them. As of October 31, 2019, management has reported they have implemented 67 percent of the 232 audit recommendations we made between fiscal years 2015 and 2019.

Although management agreement and support is a step towards implementing recommendations, it is not a guarantee that recommendations can or will be implemented. The City Council's oversight is critical to ensuring that audit recommendations are implemented.

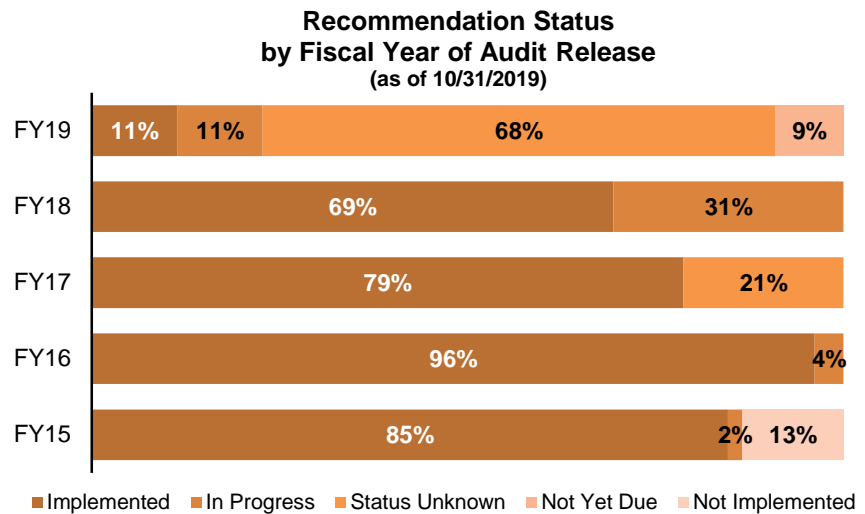


## The Audit Report Tracking System (ARTS) Process Monitors Progress Towards Implementing Audit Recommendations

The Code of Ordinances requires the city auditor to monitor implementation of audit recommendations and periodically communicate management’s progress toward implementing audit recommendations to the Mayor and City Council. City departments, boards, commissions or other offices of the city audited by the city auditor are required to submit a progress report to the city auditor every six months on the implementation of audit recommendations.<sup>1</sup> This reporting is accomplished through the Audit Report Tracking System (ARTS).

The ARTS process provides the Mayor and City Council with a useful tool to provide oversight to city programs and activities by monitoring management’s progress towards implementing audit recommendations and the outcomes achieved. ARTS reports also provide the public information about management’s efforts to implement audit recommendations.

The ARTS process begins six months after we release an audit and continues every six months until management has reported all recommendations as implemented or not implemented. Not all recommendations can be implemented immediately and as time passes following the release of the audit, the implementation rate should increase.



City management submits an ARTS report to the city auditor that indicates whether audit recommendations have been implemented, are in progress, or will not be implemented; summarizes the actions they have taken or will take; actual or expected timeframes for implementation; as well as any outcomes achieved. Although the City Auditor’s Office does not verify management’s responses, we review ARTS reports for clarity and whether the responses address the audit recommendations.

ARTS reports are publicly presented to the City Council committee that heard the original audit. Staff from the City Auditor’s Office briefly summarizes the audit for the committee then management presents their ARTS report outlining their efforts to implement the audit recommendations and outcomes achieved. This presentation gives councilmembers an opportunity to learn about management’s efforts and progress towards implementing audit recommendations as well as ask questions of management.

<sup>1</sup> Code of Ordinances, Kansas City, Missouri, Sec. 2-112(d).

**Status of Fiscal Year 2015 Recommendations**

In fiscal year 2015, we issued 52 recommendations. The recommendations had \$2.6 million in potential *direct* financial impact and about \$1.3 million in *indirect* financial impact. Management agreed with 91 percent of our recommendations.

Through the Audit Report Tracking System (ARTS), management has reported they have implemented 85 percent of the audit recommendations.

Audits Released in Fiscal Year 2015	Responsible Department(s)	We made recommendations to:	Recommendations	Implemented	In Progress	Not Implemented	Status Unknown	Not Yet Due	Direct Financial Impact	Indirect Financial Impact
Fire CAD System Preparedness (Oct 2014) <b>Closed Record</b>	Fire	Because this is a closed record under Sections 610.021 (18) and (21) RSMO, we cannot provide details about the recommendations.	12	10		2				
Kansas City Regional Police Academy: Are All Costs Included in Academy Fees? (Nov 2014)	Police	Strengthen the process for reviewing and recommending academy fees and expanding the fee policy to encourage consistent and transparent fee setting.	5	3		2				
City's Performance Under the HUD MOA (April 1, 2013 to April 30, 2014) (Dec 2014)	Neighborhoods & Housing Services	Ensure compliance with the MOA's development deadlines and the city's approval of subrecipients; ensure faster reimbursement of grant funds for city expenditures; and ensure the city is prepared to implement the new HOME regulations and reduce future HUD monitoring findings of noncompliance.	8	7		1				
Employees' Response to Phishing Email Put City Information Systems at Risk (Mar 2015)	General Services	Ensure that employees respond to phishing emails and other social engineering attacks appropriately and that cyber incidents are promptly identified, exploited weaknesses are mitigated, loss and destruction are minimized, and IT services are restored.	2	2						
Leasing City-Owned Property (Apr 2015)	General Services	Improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the lease program.	13	11		2				\$1,300,000

Audits Released in Fiscal Year 2015	Responsible Department(s)	We made recommendations to:	Recommendations	Implemented	In Progress	Not Implemented	Status Unknown	Not Yet Due	Direct Financial Impact	Indirect Financial Impact
Street-Related Permit Fees Need Review and Adjustment (Apr 2015)	Public Works, City Manager	Strengthen controls over street-related permit fees and ensure the city is charging the full amount of the fee it is authorized; clarifying into which fund revenues from street-related permits should be deposited; and referring street fee permit waiver requests that do not meet code-established criteria to the City Council.	8	7	1				\$2,614,020	
The City Should Follow Recommended Practices to Protect Personally Identifiable Information (Apr 2015)	City Manager	Improve the city's protection of personally identifiable information.	4	4						
<b>Totals</b>			<b>52</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>7</b>			<b>\$2,614,020</b>	<b>\$1,300,000</b>
<b>Percent</b>				<b>85%</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>13%</b>				

**Status of Fiscal Year 2016 Recommendations**

In fiscal year 2016, we issued 26 recommendations. The recommendations had \$10,000 in potential *direct* financial impact and about \$42.4 million in *indirect* financial impact. Management agreed with 100 percent of our recommendations.

Through the Audit Report Tracking System (ARTS), management has reported they have implemented 96 percent of the audit recommendations.

<b>Audits Released in Fiscal Year 2016</b>	<b>Responsible Department(s)</b>	<b>We made recommendations to:</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>Implemented</b>	<b>In Progress</b>	<b>Not Implemented</b>	<b>Status Unknown</b>	<b>Not Yet Due</b>	<b>Direct Financial Impact</b>	<b>Indirect Financial Impact</b>
The Accuracy and Validity of 311 Data Could be Improved ( <i>Jun 2015</i> )	City Manager	Improve the accuracy and validity of 311 data.	5	4	1					
Public Private Partnership: KC Streetcar ( <i>Oct 2015</i> )	City Manager	Amend the agreement as necessary to reduce the city's risk of conflicting with grant agreement requirements; make the streetcar budget process more transparent; and improve the city's ability to account for its revenues and track the project's performance in accomplishing goals and objectives.	5	5						\$37,100,000
City's Performance Under the HUD MOA (May 1, 2014 to April 30, 2015) ( <i>Nov 2015</i> )	Neighborhoods & Housing Services	Improve the city's monitoring of HOME multi-family rental projects and improve the city's administration of the CDBG program.	2	2						
City Could Strengthen Succession Planning Policy ( <i>Dec 2015</i> )	Human Resources	Strengthen the succession planning policy.	4	4						
Compliance with Street Plate Requirements Could Improve Ride Quality and Safety ( <i>Dec 2015</i> )	Public Works	Improve contractor knowledge of street plate requirements and offer Public Works a broader range of enforcement measures to ensure compliance.	2	2						
Enterprise Funds: Financial Condition Indicators ( <i>Jan 2016</i> )	Finance	Include financial condition ratio analysis and trend data for each of the city's enterprise funds in the Popular Annual Financial Report (PAFR).	1	1						



Audits Released in Fiscal Year 2016	Responsible Department(s)	We made recommendations to:	Recommendations	Implemented	In Progress	Not Implemented	Status Unknown	Not Yet Due	Direct Financial Impact	Indirect Financial Impact
Land Bank's Contract and Deed of Trust Monitoring Processes Should Be Strengthened (Apr 2016)	Land Bank	Improve Land Bank's monitoring practices.	7	7					\$10,000	\$5,300,000
<b>Totals</b>			26	25	1				<b>\$10,000</b>	<b>\$42,400,000</b>
<b>Percent</b>				96%	4%					

**Status of Fiscal Year 2017 Recommendations**

In fiscal year 2017, we issued 61 recommendations. The recommendations had about \$4.8 million in potential *indirect* financial impact. Management agreed with 91 percent of our recommendations.

Through the Audit Report Tracking System (ARTS), management has reported that 79 percent of the audit recommendations have been implemented.

<b>Audits Released in Fiscal Year 2017</b>	<b>Responsible Department(s)</b>	<b>We made recommendations to:</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>Implemented</b>	<b>In Progress</b>	<b>Not Implemented</b>	<b>Status Unknown</b>	<b>Not Yet Due</b>	<b>Direct Financial Impact</b>	<b>Indirect Financial Impact</b>
Changes to Police Take-Home Program Could Improve Vehicle Resource Management (May 2016)	Police	Improve the efficient use of department vehicle resources; ensure take-home vehicle program costs and usage are analyzed; reduce program costs; and improve the effectiveness of the take-home vehicle program.	11				11			\$1,500,000
Contract Accessibility Could Be Improved (Jul 2016)	City Manager	Improve the city's ability to meet the changing needs of the city's organizational structure and improve contract accessibility and transparency.	2				2			
Recommended Practices Would Strengthen Hotline Operations (Aug 2016)	City Manager	Strengthen the city's hotline program and increase the quality and timeliness of hotline investigations.	8	8						
Fire Department: Safeguarding Controlled Substances (Oct 2016)	Fire	Improve the physical security of drugs; improve the ability to detect inventory errors and loss; and establish and document appropriate employee roles and responsibilities.	7	7						\$11,828
Mobile Device Security Risks (Nov 2016)	General Services	Ensure city data accessed by and stored on mobile devices is more protected; mobile device security requirements are followed; and mobile device users understand the importance of mobile device security requirements and how to implement them.	7	7						\$943,270
Bike KC Inadequate to Achieve City Goals (Dec 2016)	City Manager	Improve Bike KC's guidance to staff to better meet city biking goals and improve public input.	2	2						\$1,600,000

Audits Released in Fiscal Year 2017	Responsible Department(s)	We made recommendations to:	Recommendations	Implemented	In Progress	Not Implemented	Status Unknown	Not Yet Due	Direct Financial Impact	Indirect Financial Impact
EEO Complaint Investigation Efficiency Can Be Improved Through Better Documentation and Data (Apr 2017)	Human Resources	Improve the EEO Office's investigation documentation, records, and communications, and the accuracy, completeness, and use of EEO data.	10	10						
Communicable Disease Prevention and Public Health Preparedness Division Performance Measures (Apr 2017)	Health	Improve the relevance and understandability of division performance measures and eliminate a measure that was not relevant to the division's goals and objections.	4	4						
Independence Avenue Community Improvement District Should Improve Accountability and Transparency (Apr 2017)	Independence Avenue CID Board	Improve IACID's accountability and transparency.	10	10						\$730,000
<b>Totals</b>			<b>61</b>	<b>48</b>			<b>13</b>		<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$4,785,097</b>
<b>Percent</b>				<b>79%</b>			<b>21%</b>			

**Status of Fiscal Year 2018 Recommendations**

In fiscal year 2018, we issued 49 recommendations. The recommendations had nearly \$17 million in potential *direct* financial impact and about \$184.5 million in *indirect* financial impact. Management agreed with 99 percent of our recommendations.

Through the Audit Report Tracking System (ARTS), management has reported that 69 percent of the audit recommendations have been implemented.

Audits Released in Fiscal Year 2018	Responsible Department(s)	We made recommendations to:	Recommendations	Implemented	In Progress	Not Implemented	Status Unknown	Not Yet Due	Direct Financial Impact	Indirect Financial Impact
Animal Health and Public Safety: Community Vision and Improved Management Oversight Needed (Aug 2017)	Neighborhoods & Housing Services	Ensure animal welfare and public safety by improving the working relationship between AHPS and KCPP; establishing a shared vision of animal care and control based on a consensus of city stakeholders; implementing policies and practices to consistently remediate animal code violations and document cases; analyzing performance data to provide accountability and assist in managing resources; and providing consistent and ongoing training.	17	15	2					
General Services' Payment Process Should Better Protect Public Resources (Oct 2017)	General Services	Better protect city resources; strengthen the payment review and approval process; and improve the timeliness of payments.	14	14					\$815,000	\$184,488,679
Arterial Street Impact Fee Ordinance Should Be Amended to Correct Structural Imbalance (Dec 2017)	Mayor, City Planning	Modify the Code of Ordinances to make the arterial street impact fee program sustainable.	2	2					\$16,173,374	
Timeliness of Land Development Plan Reviews Could Be Improved (Apr 2018)	City Planning, Water Services	Improve the timeliness of land development plan reviews by communicating recurring issues with submitted plans to developers and their design engineers; immediately returning deficient plans to design engineers; reducing reviewers' time performing clerical tasks; updating stormwater line GIS information; and reevaluating turnaround time goals.	5		5					

Audits Released in Fiscal Year 2018	Responsible Department(s)	We made recommendations to:	Recommendations	Implemented	In Progress	Not Implemented	Status Unknown	Not Yet Due	Direct Financial Impact	Indirect Financial Impact
Preserve and Restore Park Ecology with Sustainable Maintenance Approach (Apr 2018)	Parks & Recreation	Strengthen the department's sustainable maintenance of parkland natural resources by reducing mowing, planting native species, and systematically planting and maintaining trees; reducing or eliminating the use of inputs like water, fertilizers, and pesticides for parkland maintenance; incorporating sustainability into measurable goals, policies, plans, and manuals; utilizing existing plans, data, and resources to develop an environmental resource plan for parkland; and providing staff training on sustainable maintenance practices.	11	3	8					
<b>Totals</b>			<b>49</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>15</b>				<b>\$16,988,374</b>	<b>\$184,488,679</b>
<b>Percent</b>				<b>69%</b>	<b>31%</b>					

**Status of Fiscal Year 2019 Recommendations**

In fiscal year 2019, we issued 44 recommendations. The recommendations had nearly \$5 million in potential *direct* financial impact and about \$182.9 million in *indirect* financial impact. Management agreed with 97 percent of our recommendations.

Through the Audit Report Tracking System (ARTS), management has reported that 11 percent of the audit recommendations have been implemented.

<b>Audits Released in Fiscal Year 2019</b>	<b>Responsible Department(s)</b>	<b>We made recommendations to:</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>Implemented</b>	<b>In Progress</b>	<b>Not Implemented</b>	<b>Status Unknown</b>	<b>Not Yet Due</b>	<b>Direct Financial Impact</b>	<b>Indirect Financial Impact</b>
Control Gaps Leave Water's Storeroom Inventory Vulnerable to Errors, Loss, and Theft (Aug 2018)	Water Services	Improve Water Services' methods of recording inventory transactions and adjustments, conducting physical inventories, and strengthening IT and physical security.	10	5	5					\$7,900,000
City Should Incorporate Previously Recommended Contract Selection Practices into Written Procedures (Sep 2018)	City Manager	Fully incorporate into the city's written procedures contract selection recommendations previously made by the City Auditor's Office.	19				19			
Addressing IT Network Vulnerabilities (Nov 2018) <b>Closed Record</b>	General Services, City Manager	The objective of this audit was to determine whether the IT Division was addressing identified network vulnerabilities appropriately. Because this audit is a closed record under RSMo Section 610.021(21), we do not provide any details about our findings or recommendations.	3				3		\$5,000,000	
Parking Garage Investment Needs Planning, Coordination with Transportation Goals (Mar 2019)	City Manager	Incorporate city transportation policies and goals into parking garage development decisions; consolidate responsibility for parking management; and improve maintenance planning and budgeting for the parking garages the city owns or for which the city has long-term obligations.	8				8			\$175,000,000

Audits Released in Fiscal Year 2019	Responsible Department(s)	We made recommendations to:	Recommendations	Implemented	In Progress	Not Implemented	Status Unknown	Not Yet Due	Direct Financial Impact	Indirect Financial Impact
GOkc Sidewalk Repair Program Could Be Improved (Apr 2019)	Public Works	Improve the integrity, safety, and appearance of sidewalks, driveways, and ADA accessible curb ramps; and to improve the effectiveness of the inspection process and the sidewalk repair program.	4					4		
<b>Totals</b>			<b>44</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>		<b>30</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>\$5,000,000</b>	<b>\$182,900,000</b>
<b>Percent</b>				<b>11%</b>	<b>11%</b>		<b>68%</b>	<b>9%</b>		