

# Illegal Dumping

Scope Statement – September 13, 2021

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## Background

The Public Works Solid Waste Division is responsible for the city's illegal dumping operation program. The program addresses garbage, rubbish, yard waste, or large debris dumped in public places, such as public buildings, sidewalks, streets, right-of-way, Land Bank properties, or dumped on private properties without the consent of the owner. The program has a budget of about \$2.1 million in fiscal year 2022 for 6 investigators, 15 administrative and clean-up staff, and contractors.

In March 2021, the Mayor and City Manager announced the city's priority of reducing blight, improving the city's efforts of cleaning up trash and illegal dumping sites, and encouraging community engagement in the clean-up efforts.

## Why audit the city's illegal dumping program?

Addressing illegal dumping is important to the city's residents. Residents expressed concerns to the City Auditor's Office about city efforts to deal with illegal dumping in Kansas City and suggested we audit those efforts.

Resident satisfaction with the city's efforts to clean-up illegal dump sites is at its lowest level (20%) in six years. During the same period, residents ranked illegal dumping as the solid waste service that should receive significantly more emphasis.

The current Citywide Business Plan includes strategies to address illegal dumping. Those strategies are developing an anti-illegal dumping campaign tied to health and environmental impact; and developing communication and other strategies to increase compliance with solid waste ordinances, with particular attention to enforcement.

## Audit objectives

Our objectives are to answer the following questions:

- How can the city improve community engagement efforts to reduce illegal dumping?
- How long does it take the city to respond to illegal dumping complaints and clean-up illegal dump sites?

## Audit methods

We will interview city staff, analyze relevant response data, review program plans, goals, and results, visit illegal dump sites, review our prior audit work, and review professional literature to identify recommended practices related to the audit objectives. The audit will not address illegal dumping in city parks, dumping near waterways, or illegal dumping prosecution efforts.

## Anticipated release date

We plan to issue the audit report in January 2022.