



# Seattle Office of City Auditor

Arushi Thakorlal, Acting City Auditor

March 31, 2026

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

## 2025 Annual Report

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

### Message from the Acting City Auditor

For 33 years, Seattle's Office of City Auditor has provided the Seattle City Council, Mayor, City Departments, and the public with accurate information about City of Seattle (City) funded activities and with recommendations for improving City operations. We've made over 900 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). Since 2008, our office has also [passed five independent peer reviews](#) that assess our compliance with [Government Auditing Standards](#). 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 2025 through the following work:

- We completed work on important issues that the City faced, including [recommendations to better understand and address current gun violence patterns](#); [Comcast's adherence to the City's Cable Customer Bill of Rights](#); the Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections' [process of final inspections of buildings](#); the City's use of non-police [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 5).
- I am pleased to share that our February 2025 report on the [availability and cleanliness of restrooms in Seattle's parks](#) won a Knighton Award from ALGA for being one of the best performance audits of 2025 nationwide. Congratulations to the audit team: Melissa Allman, IB Osuntoki, and Sarah Bland!
- In 2026, we will continue our work on audits started last year, covering safety in City-funded housing, usage of non-police surveillance technologies, the City's oversight of commercial solid waste services billing, and Astound's adherence to the City's Cable Customer Bill of Rights.

2025 was also a year of transition and change for the office. Long-time City Auditor David Jones retired in December 2025, after working for the City for nearly 30 years. Over his 16 years as City Auditor, his name became synonymous across City departments with integrity, accountability, and servant leadership, and we wish him well in this new chapter! I am serving as the Acting City Auditor while the Seattle City Council works to permanently appoint a new City Auditor later this year.

Another long-time employee of the office, Marc Stepper, passed away unexpectedly in November 2025. Marc joined our office in 2012 as our first Utilities Auditor and brought his expertise as a Certified Public Accountant, Certified Fraud Examiner, and Certified Information Systems Auditor. Beyond his technical knowledge, we remember Marc fondly for his great sense of humor, genuine care for his coworkers, and deep love for his family.

We have important ongoing and planned work to accomplish in 2026 (see our work program on Page 7). I appreciate the commitment of our team to doing this work and the City Council's history of strong support for performance auditing in Seattle.

*Arushi Thakorlal*

Arushi Thakorlal, Acting City Auditor

## Highlights

### City Should Reassess Approach to Park Restroom Cleanliness and Availability

This audit was conducted in response to Seattle Park District Resolution 51 requesting the Office of City Auditor evaluate Seattle Parks and Recreation (SPR) restrooms to ensure they are open, clean, and safe year-round. This audit reviewed the cleanliness and maintenance of the 129 restrooms SPR manages across 97 parks in Seattle. We identified opportunities for SPR to improve restroom cleanliness targets, cleaning quality levels, restroom availability, and maintenance, as well as additional observations for management consideration. We made six recommendations to address these issues. SPR generally concurred with the findings and recommendations.

Link to Report: [City Should Reassess Approach to Park Restroom Cleanliness and Availability](#)

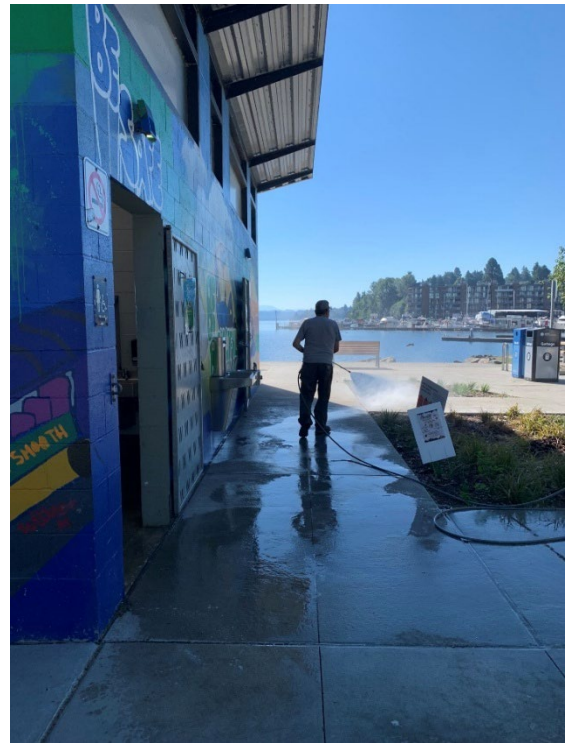


Image: SPR cleaning crew pressure washing outside of a restroom. Source: Office of City Auditor

### Four Recommendations to Better Understand and Address Current Gun Violence Patterns in Seattle



Image: A bullet casing at a crime scene in downtown Seattle. Source: Seattle Police Department Blotter

This audit regarding current patterns of gun violence in Seattle grew out of a request by Mayor Bruce Harrell and Seattle City Council President Sara Nelson. Gun violence in Seattle has increased significantly in the past decade, including a sustained post-pandemic increase in shootings. Our audit describes two approaches for potentially improving the City's approach to addressing gun violence: 1.) Use a systematic framework for reporting gun violence patterns, and 2.) Use problem analysis and an "all-hands-on-deck" approach to address gun violence. Our report offers four related recommendations, as well as an item for City Council consideration related to Seattle Police Department investigations.

Link to Report: [Four Recommendations to Better Understand and Address Current Gun Violence Patterns in Seattle](#)

## Audit of Comcast’s Compliance with Seattle’s Cable Customer Bill of Rights

Seattle City Councilmember Joy Hollingsworth and Mayor Bruce Harrell requested that our office assess the compliance of Seattle’s two cable television providers—Comcast and Astound—with the City’s Cable Customer Bill of Rights. This audit assessed Comcast’s compliance. We found that Comcast complied with 39 standards in policy and practice, complied with 4 standards in policy, and did not comply with 2 standards. We were unable to assess 7 standards and did not need to test 1 standard. We identified two issues relating to Comcast’s billing system and publicizing services for customers with disabilities and made two recommendations to address those issues. Comcast disagreed with one recommendation and partially agreed with the other.

Link to Report: [Audit of Comcast’s Compliance with Seattle’s Cable Customer Bill of Rights](#)



Image: Select Seattle Cable Customer Bill of Rights  
 Source: Office of City Auditor; see [Seattle Municipal Code 21.60](#) for the full description of the Cable Customer Bill of Rights.

## 2024 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 2024 Annual Surveillance Technology Usage Review includes one technology: Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) Traffic Cameras. The report includes a summary of the technology's uses and trends, data sharing, data management protocols, civil liberties impact, complaints and concerns, and costs. We concluded that SDOT is in partial compliance with the technology’s use pursuant to its Surveillance Impact Report and Seattle Municipal Code 14.18. We made eight recommendations to SDOT to address our findings in the report.

Link to Report: [2024 Annual Surveillance Technology Usage Review](#)

## Audit of the Process for Final Inspections of Buildings

This audit was conducted in response to Seattle City Councilmember Dan Strauss' request that we review the Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections' (SDCI) process for conducting final building inspections, to ensure it is clear, consistent, and timely. We found that SDCI is generally meeting their goals in conducting final building and final electrical inspections. However, we also learned that other departments must sometimes conduct inspections before SDCI can grant approval to occupy a building, so any delays experienced in those departments may be affecting SDCI's timeliness in granting approval. There are no new recommendations stemming from this audit. We believe that some of the open recommendations from our [2023 Permitting Audit](#), once implemented, would benefit the inspection process as well.

Link to Report: [Audit of the Process for Final Inspections of Buildings](#)

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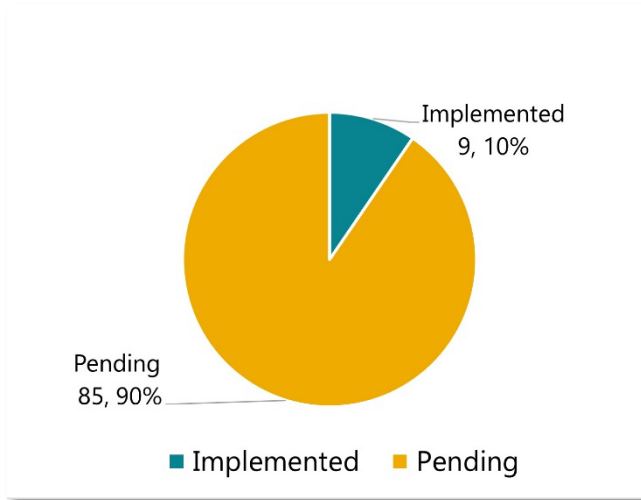
## Stay Out of Drug Areas (SODA) and Stay Out of Areas of Prostitution (SOAP) Ordinances Scoping Exercise Memorandum

In September 2024, the Seattle City Council passed Ordinances 127085 and 127086, which created the Stay Out of Drug Area (SODA) and Stay Out of Area of Prostitution (SOAP) zones. The SODA and SOAP ordinances require the Office of City Auditor to conduct phased evaluations of the ordinances' impacts. OCA initiated the first evaluation phase in January 2025, convening City department leaders from the Seattle Police Department, Human Services Department, Seattle Municipal Court, City Attorney's Office, and Mayor's Office. Our office created a draft timeline and started tracking the counts of SODA and SOAP orders. We calculated minimum sample sizes necessary for the evaluation to be 384 SODA orders and 384 SOAP orders. As of October 2025, the counts of SODA and SOAP orders were below the target sample sizes. We will continue to track the number of SODA and SOAP orders into 2026 and initiate the next phase of the evaluation if warranted.

## Audit Recommendation Progress

In 2025, we continued our annual practice of following up on open audit recommendations. As seen in the chart below, in 2025 departments implemented 10 percent of the 94 open recommendations made in our reports. Our 2025 status report and dashboard on departments' implementation of our audit recommendations will be published in Quarter 2 of 2026.

### Recommendation status as of December 31, 2025



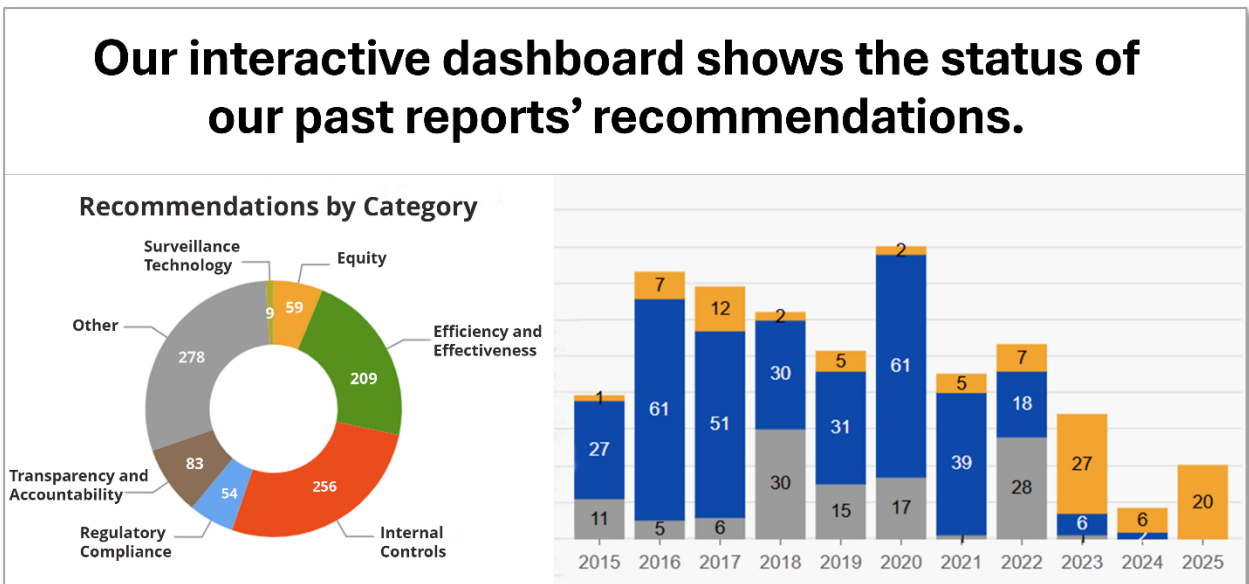
#### Status Categories:

**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.

## Recommendation Dashboard

Details on the status of individual recommendations are available on our interactive dashboard. Recommendations can be viewed by audit, department, category (such as Regulatory Compliance, Efficiency, or Equity), status, or year here: <https://www.seattle.gov/cityauditor/recommendations>.



A screenshot of the City Auditor dashboard of recommendations issued by year for 2015-2025.

## 2025 Completed Reports

### Performance Audits

- [City Should Reassess Approach to Park Restroom Cleanliness and Availability](#)
- [Four Recommendations to Better Understand and Address Current Gun Violence Patterns in Seattle](#)
- [Audit of Comcast's Compliance with Seattle's Cable Customer Bill of Rights](#)
- [2024 Annual Surveillance Technology Usage Review](#)
- [Audit of the Process for Final Inspections of Buildings](#)
- A cybersecurity audit

### Other Reports

- [Status Report on Implementation of Office of City Auditor Recommendations as of December 2024](#)
- Stay Out of Drug Areas (SODA) and Stay Out of Areas of Prostitution (SOAP) Ordinances Scoping Exercise Memorandum

## Seattle Office of City Auditor Staff

David G. Jones, City Auditor (Retired December 13, 2025)  
Arushi Thakoral, Acting 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 (2012 - 2025)

## Office of City Auditor Annual Work Program

Projects	Source	Estimated Completion Date
1. Office of City Auditor 2025 Annual Recommendation Follow Up Report	City Council Request	Q2 2026
2. Astound Cable Customer Bill of Rights Compliance	City Council President Hollingsworth	Q3 2026
3. SPU Commercial Solid Waste Audit	City Auditor	Q3 2026
4. Technical Assistance on Urban Tree Canopy Coverage Report	<a href="#">2026 Statement of Legislative Intent</a> , MO-001S-A	Q3 2026
5. 2025 Annual Surveillance Technologies Review	<a href="#">Ordinance 125376</a>	Q3 2026
6. Safety in City-Funded Housing	City Councilmember Rivera	Q4 2026
7. Utility Wildfire Management and Preparedness	City Councilmember Strauss	TBD
8. Evaluation of SODA and SOAP Ordinances	<a href="#">Ordinance 127085</a> and <a href="#">Ordinance 127086</a>	TBD
9. Office of the Inspector General Quality Assurance Review	Under the agreement between the City of Seattle and the Seattle Police Officers' Guild Appendix E – 3.29.125 (H), we the Office of City Auditor will 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

*Audit Work Program is as of April 1, 2026 and is subject to change.*