

City of Austin



**A Report to the  
Austin City Council**

**Mayor**  
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**Mayor Pro Tem**  
Sheryl Cole

**Council Members**  
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Mike Martinez  
Kathie Tovo  
Laura Morrison  
Bill Spelman

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RISK ASSESSMENT

# Risk Assessment of Citizen Safety at City Facilities

August 2013



REPORT SUMMARY

The results of our risk assessment identify the Parks and Recreation Department as the City department with the highest risks related to managing the safety of citizens at its facilities. As such, we propose including an audit in this area in the FY 2014 Strategic Audit Plan. In addition, the Animal Services Office, Austin Public Library, and Building Services Department were identified as departments with high risk indicators that should be considered in future audit plan development.

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

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**BACKGROUND** ..... 1

**OBJECTIVE, SCOPE, AND METHODOLOGY** ..... 1

**RESULTS** ..... 2

**Exhibit**

Exhibit 1: Risk Indicators for Potential Departments to Audit..... 2

**GOVERNMENT AUDITING STANDARDS COMPLIANCE**

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We conducted this performance audit in accordance with Generally Accepted Government Auditing Standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives.

**AUDIT TEAM**

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Niki Raggi, CGAP, CICA, CRMA, Assistant City Auditor  
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August 2013



## Audit Report Highlights

### Why We Did This Audit

This project was conducted as part of the Office of the City Auditor's (OCA) FY 2013 Strategic Audit Plan.

### What We Recommend

We propose including an audit of citizen safety at Parks and Recreation Department facilities in the OCA FY 2014 Strategic Audit Plan and other three departments be considered in future audit plan development.



For more information on this or any of our reports, email [oca\\_auditor@austintexas.gov](mailto:oca_auditor@austintexas.gov)

# RISK ASSESSMENT OF CITIZEN SAFETY AT CITY FACILITIES

Mayor and Council,

I am pleased to present this Risk Assessment of Citizen Safety at City Facilities.

## BACKGROUND

The City of Austin maintains hundreds of facilities that host millions of visitors annually. Due to the risks associated with managing facilities that are utilized by such a large number of people, an audit of citizen and visitor safety at City public facilities was placed on the Fiscal Year (FY) 2013 Strategic Audit Plan.

This risk assessment of citizen safety at City facilities is the first in a series of projects the Office of the City Auditor plans to undertake to examine safety issues that impact citizens and visitors within the City of Austin.

## OBJECTIVE AND SCOPE

The objective of this project was to identify City departments for future audit work based on risks and controls in place related to citizen safety at City public facilities.

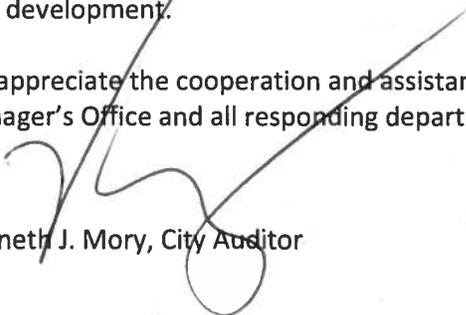
The project focused on the operations of 40 City departments during FY 2012 through the second quarter of FY 2013.

## WHAT WE FOUND

Based on the results of our risk assessment, we identified the Parks and Recreation Department (PARD) as the department with the highest risks related to managing the safety of citizens at its facilities. As such, we propose to include an audit in this area in our audit plan for FY 2014. High risk indicators include the high number of annual visitors, high number of incidents reported during the scope period, severity of incidents, large number and diversity of facilities PARD is responsible for maintaining, and outstanding claims regarding citizen safety incidents at PARD facilities.

Additionally, based on risks indicators such as the number of safety incidents, number of facilities, and the nature of the activities performed at the facilities, we identified the Animal Services Office, the Austin Public Library, and the Building Services Department as departments that should be considered in future audit plan development.

We appreciate the cooperation and assistance we received from the City Manager's Office and all responding departments.

  
Kenneth J. Mory, City Auditor

## **BACKGROUND**

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The City of Austin maintains hundreds of facilities that host millions of visitors annually. Due to the risks associated with managing facilities that are utilized by such a large number of people, an audit of citizen and visitor safety at City public facilities was placed on the Fiscal Year (FY) 2013 Strategic Audit Plan.

This risk assessment of citizen safety at City facilities is the first in a series of projects the Office of the City Auditor plans to undertake to examine safety issues that impact citizens and visitors within the City of Austin.

## **OBJECTIVE, SCOPE, AND METHODOLOGY**

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The Risk Assessment of Citizen Safety at City Facilities was conducted as part of the Office of the City Auditor's (OCA) FY 2013 Strategic Audit Plan, as presented to the City Council Audit and Finance Committee.

### **Objective**

The objective of this project was to identify City departments for future audit work based on risks and controls in place related to citizen safety at City facilities.

### **Scope**

The project focused on the operations of 40 City departments during FY 2012 through the second quarter of FY 2013.

### **Methodology**

To accomplish our objective, we performed the following steps:

- Conducted a survey of 40 City departments regarding safety and security actions related to citizen safety at departmental facilities; information gathered included the number of annual visitors, number of safety incidents at department facilities, and mitigation efforts put in place by departments
- Reviewed local media coverage related to citizen safety at City facilities
- Conducted interviews with City staff for higher risks departments
- Analyzed department policies, procedures, and internal reports related to citizen safety
- Reviewed relevant claims and lawsuits against the City
- Reviewed relevant customer assistance form (CAF) information
- Analyzed laws applicable to municipal liability
- Conducted a risk and vulnerability assessment and created risk categories utilizing information collected

## PROJECT RESULTS

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**Based on the results of our risk assessment, we propose including an audit of citizen safety at Parks and Recreation Department (PARC) facilities in the Fiscal Year 2014 Strategic Audit Plan.**

The Office of the City Auditor analyzed and compared department information related to the safety of visitors at department public facilities. The results of our risk assessment identify PARC as the department with the highest risks related to managing the safety of citizens at its facilities. High risk indicators include:

- High number of annual visitors to PARC facilities (including recreation centers, parks, and pools)
- High number of incidents occurred in the scope period
- Severity of incidents
- Large number and diversity of facilities that PARC is responsible for maintaining
- Outstanding claims regarding citizen safety incidents at PARC facilities

**In addition, the Animal Services Office, Austin Public Library, and Building Services Department were identified as departments that should be considered in future audit plan development.**

Additionally, based on risks indicators such as the number of safety incidents, number of facilities, and the nature of the activities performed at the facilities, we identified the Animal Services Office, Building Services Department, and Austin Public Library as departments that could benefit from an audit in this area, as shown below.

**EXHIBIT 1**  
**Risk Indicators for Potential Departments to Audit**

Department	Risk Indicators
Animal Services Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The nature of the activity visitors participate in at ASO facilities</li> <li>▪ Controls regarding facility access</li> <li>▪ Maintenance of facilities</li> </ul>
Austin Public Library	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ High number of annual visitors</li> <li>▪ High number of reported incidents</li> <li>▪ Vulnerable populations served</li> </ul>
Building Services Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Feedback reported in the citywide department survey</li> <li>▪ High number of annual visitors to facilities</li> <li>▪ Number of reported incidents</li> </ul>

**SOURCE:** Auditors' analysis, July 2013