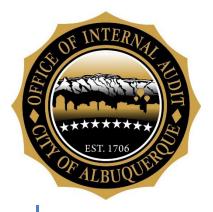
August 28, 2024



# **Performance Audit**

# Asset Management

# Citywide

**Report No. 23-101** 



# City of Albuquerque - Office of Internal Audit

Asset Management AUGUST 28, 2024

Performance Audit

Audit #23-101

# Executive Summary

The Office of Internal Audit (OIA) conducted a performance audit of the City of Albuquerque's Citywide Asset Management, covering the period from July 1, 2020, to June 30, 2023. The audit aimed to verify the proper approval and recording of asset purchases, ensure complete and accurate accounting of assets, assess the effectiveness of controls to safeguard assets, and confirm the accurate documentation of asset retirements or disposals.

OIA selected a total sample of 259 items, with an associated cost of \$3,418,916, from both capital and non-capital assets across 26 City departments, divisions, and offices (see details in Appendix A). The audit attempted to confirm the existence of these items through visual inspections at various City buildings and locations where the items were reported to be. Significant issues were identified, including the inability to locate or confirm nine (9) assets valued at \$110,113, improper tagging of 26 capital assets worth \$1,204,087, and non-compliance with asset transfer and disposal processes.

The audit also revealed a lack of awareness and training among some departments regarding asset management guidelines, and inadequate control over non-capital assets, which are more susceptible to loss or misuse. Recommendations include verifying the existence of unlocated items, revising asset management policies to include processes for items under \$5,000, requiring regular training for fiscal staff and fixed asset liaisons, ensuring proper tagging of all assets, and enhancing the year-end inventory process. Implementing these recommendations will strengthen the City's asset management practices, ensuring better control, accurate documentation, and reduced risk of asset loss or misappropriation.

#### Recommendations

# Department of Finance and Administration Service should:

- Ocommunicate with departments to verify the unlocated or unconfirmed items or have them update their asset documentation accordingly. Ensure to disposition these items in compliance with City administrative instructions and other applicable requirements.
- o Revise Administrative Instruction 6-4 Capitalization of City Assets to include requirements for all City departments to define processes and procedures for managing items purchased under \$5,000. Require that the fixed asset liaisons for the departments update and file these plans as part of the year-end inventory process.
- Coordinate with the Employee Learning Center to require asset management training for all City fiscal staff and fixed asset liaisons on a routine basis.
- Communicate with the departments whose items are untagged or improperly tagged to correct the tag for proper inventorying purposes.
- o Create a user group for the City's fiscal staff and fixed asset liaisons for the dissemination of information related to asset management, facilitation of knowledge transfer, and best practice discussion Citywide on a routine basis.
- Revise the year-end capital asset inventory process instructions to incorporate the recommendation that the fixed assets liaisons seek assistance from a colleague or another knowledgeable individual within their department when performing the yearend inventory.

DFAS concurs and partially concurs with all findings and recommendations. Their response is attached as an appendix. The OIA will work with the department to follow up every six months on the status of the open recommendations made in this report.

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# City of Albuquerque

Office of Internal Audit

August 28, 2024

Accountability in Government Oversight Committee P.O. Box 1293
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87103

Audit: Asset Management

Citywide

Audit No. 23-101

### INTRODUCTION

The Office of Internal Audit (OIA) conducted an audit of asset management processes and practices performed by individual departments within the City of Albuquerque (City). The audit was included in the approved annual audit plan for fiscal year 2023. The objectives were to determine that purchases are properly approved and recorded timely and accurately, assets are complete and accurately accounted for, controls are in place to safeguard assets from theft or unauthorized access, and asset retirements or disposals are timely and accurately documented. The audit scope included all asset purchases from July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2023. Information regarding the audit objectives, scope, and methodology can be found in **Appendix A**.

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## **BACKGROUND**

The City of Albuquerque (City) adheres to the New Mexico Administrative Code (NMAC) Section 2.20.1, "Accounting and Control of Fixed Assets" and Governmental Accounting Standards Board Statement (GASB) No. 34 that requires the City to maintain detailed records for capital assets by classification. Capital assets that are reported in the City's Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR) are referred to as being "capitalized."

According to GASB 34, capital assets include land, improvements to land, easements, buildings, building improvements, vehicles, machinery, equipment, infrastructure, and all other tangible or intangible assets that are used in operations and that have initial useful lives extending beyond a single reporting period. The cost of a capital asset should include capitalized interest and ancillary charges necessary to place the asset into its intended location and condition for use. Ancillary charges include costs that are directly attributable to asset acquisition such as freight and transportation charges, site preparation costs, and professional fees. Capital assets include those assets constructed by City personnel.

Infrastructure assets are long-lived capital assets that are normally stationary in nature and can be preserved for a significantly greater number of years than most other capital assets. Infrastructure assets also include those assets that are constructed by developers and have been dedicated and transferred to the City.

It is the policy of the City to charge all disbursement for capital assets to the appropriate capital outlay expenditure account (53XXXX accounts) using the following schedule per item (Table 1). Movable equipment items such as machinery, office equipment, vehicles, etc., are assigned a city asset tag by the Accounting Division of the Department of Finance and Administrative Services (DFAS) and recorded into the City's fixed asset tracking system. Items such as software, land and land improvements, building and building improvements, and infrastructure do not receive assigned tags. The capitalization of costs associated with construction projects will include other expenses such as professional or contractual fees and service costs incurred by the project.

	Item Type	Threshold	
•	Equipment, Vehicles	•	\$5,000
•	Internally Developed Software	•	\$10,000
•	Land and Improvement	•	\$50,000
•	Building and Improvement	•	\$100,000
•	Infrastructure	•	\$100,000

Table 1: Capital Asset Schedule

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Per Administrative Instruction (AI) 6-3 Establishment of Fixed Asset Liaisons and Property Accounting Procedures, fixed asset liaison are established in each department or division for the proper control of fixed asset inventories. The responsibility of the fixed asset liaison is to ensure that property control procedures are adequately followed within the department or division. This includes following the proper transfer of assets process when moving assets from one department to another, disposing of items that are damaged beyond economic repair by sending them to the City's surplus yard, and filing police reports for items that are lost or stolen. Those individuals assigned as the department or division's fixed asset liaisons are reported to the City Controller.

Towards the end of the fiscal year, at the beginning of June, the year-end inventory process begins. DFAS provides training to all fiscal managers and fixed asset liaisons. DFAS makes this training available on the DFAS SharePoint site along with other guidance. Annual inventory lists are provided to the fixed asset liaisons for their departments or divisions; the liaisons then must perform inventory themselves and update the listing over the course of approximately six to eight weeks. This updated listing is then provided back to DFAS in mid-July, and DFAS then submits all listings to auditors external to the City for their annual audit.

Capital assets costing less than the thresholds listed in Table 1 above are charged to operating expense general ledger account 522099 (or other 52XXXX accounts) and are not tagged and recorded into the City's fixed asset tracking system. These items tend to be smaller in size and, as a result, may be more attractive to loss, theft, or misuse. As these items are typically mobile, they may be easier to replace without raising a suspicion. Such items include computers, laptops, shop tools, electronics, tablets, cameras, televisions, and video equipment. Per AI 6-4 *Capitalization of City Assets*, "departments, however, should exercise control over their non-capitalized assets by establishing and maintaining adequate control procedures." Additionally, "departments are required to maintain an inventory of all computer equipment in their control regardless of the cost of the individual item."

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### **FINDINGS**

# OPPORTUNITIES EXIST TO STREGTHEN ASSET MANAGEMENT PRACTICES CITYWIDE

For a total sample of 259 items selected with an associated cost of \$3,418,916, OIA selected from both capital and non-capital items across 26 City departments, divisions, and offices (see details in Appendix A), OIA attempted to confirm the existence of these items through visual confirmation at various City buildings and locations where the items were stated to be. This required OIA to work with the fiscal staff and fixed asset liaisons responsible for the selected assets. If the items could not be immediately found, OIA worked with staff to track the items that may have been in use, transferred, or disposed of. During this process, OIA noted deviations in maintaining items purchased, such as being unable to locate the items and confirm their existence, lack of or improper tagging of items, failure to ensure assets are secured, and non-compliance with the transfer of assets or disposal process. OIA noted the following issues below:

- Inability to locate four (4) capital and five (5) non-capital assets for a total of nine (9) items associated with five (5) City departments (two departments failed to respond to OIA's inquiry or inspection) with a cost totaling \$110,113 (see Table 2);
- Failure to properly tag 26 capital assets with a cost totaling \$1,204,087<sup>1</sup> (see Table 3);
- Failure to follow the transfer of asset process, as OIA noted three (3) vehicles were transferred to other departments without the proper protocol;
- Non-compliance with the disposal process, as one (1) television was not disposed of per City requirements; and
- Lack of securing one (1) desktop, as OIA located it in the trunk of a City vehicle that OIA rented while performing fieldwork.

<sup>1</sup> This is the amount for which the items were purchased by the City, as recorded in the general ledger accounts.

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Asset – Description <sup>2</sup>	Capital Asset	Non-Capital Asset	Capital Purchase Cost	Non-capital Purchase Cost
Video Network	×		\$15,196	
DVR MUX Triplex	×		\$21,722	
1000GB Expansion				
2023 Ford F150	×		\$48,188	
2016 Ford Fusion	×		\$16,687	
HP EliteBook		×		\$472
Kona Shield Bicycle		×		\$3,168
Unknown laptop		×		\$1,289
Ram 1500-Radar		×		\$417
Think Pad		×		\$2,974
		Total	\$101,793	\$8,320

Table 2: Assets Unlocatable or Unconfirmable

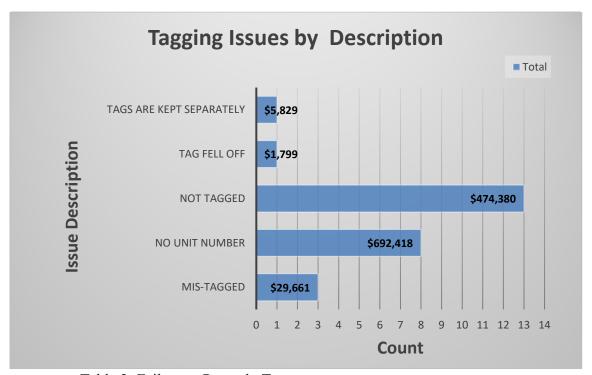


Table 3: Failure to Properly Tag

<sup>2.</sup> These descriptions are input directly by fiscal staff into Peoplesoft.

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#### Criteria

The City has many administrative instructions, policies, and regulations which outline the requirements for the control of City assets. Per AI 6-3, "It is the responsibility of all Fixed Asset Liaisons in each department or division to control fixed asset inventories properly. Fixed assets consist of equipment, vehicles, and furniture. The responsibility of the Fixed Asset Liaison is to see that property control procedures are adequately followed within the department/division and that periodic property inventories are carried out." Additionally, AI 6-4 states that not only capital assets should be properly maintained, as it requires that "Public-sector managers must maintain adequate control over all assets to minimize the risk of loss or misuse," and further states that "Departments should control their non-capitalized assets by establishing and maintaining adequate control procedures."

If items meet the thresholds noted in Table 1, according to AI 6-4, "These items are assigned a city tag number(s), where appropriate, by the Accounting Division of DFAS and recorded into the City's fixed asset tracking system."

If assets need to be transferred to another department, requirements are detailed in AI 6-3 stating that "All transfers of fixed assets from one administrative unit to another shall be processed through the submission of a transfer form, available on the Accounting Division SharePoint site, to the Accounting Division. This form shall be prepared by the unit transferring the assets within five working days from the date of physical transfer. The transfer form will identify the division to which the assets are transferred, the department ID number of that division, a description of the property, the general condition of the property, the model and serial number, if available, and the property tag number. The transfer form shall be signed by the transferor department Fixed Asset Liaison and the Department Director (or designee) as well as the transferee department Fixed Asset Liaison and that Department Director (or designee)."

If items are "beyond economic repair, lost or stolen, submission of a disposal form to the Accounting Division is required" with the same information detailed in the above paragraph along with the reason for disposal. If items are determined to be surplus, salvage, or scrap property, per AI 6-2 "Each department shall ensure that Surplus Property, Salvage Property, and Scrap Property is properly disposed of in accordance with this Administrative Instruction." Additionally, per City Code of Ordinances Article 5, "Public Purchases," "Salvage property is tangible personal property of the city of any value which has been determined to no longer be functional in the state of original intent but retains value. Scrap property is tangible personal property of the city which has been determined as amended to be surplus plus and determined to be of no value. Surplus property is tangible personal property of the city of any value and amended to functional but no longer required or needed for use."

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#### Cause

DFAS has training policies and procedures that pertain to fixed capital assets. An email containing a detailed listing of the departments' assets, the asset management training, and a link to the SharePoint site maintained by DFAS for asset management guidance is sent to all fiscal staff to review and complete at fiscal year-end. However, according to a survey OIA sent out to  $27^3$  City departments or divisions, two (2) departments stated they were unaware of the Fixed Asset Guidelines. An additional two (2) departments, for a total of four (4) departments, stated they were unaware that asset management training is provided. OIA noted that two (2) departments or divisions failed to respond to the survey at all. Additionally, fixed asset liaisons perform their own year-end inventory and self-certify that they have complied with inventory requirements without independent confirmation.

AI 6-4 does not require the tagging and inventorying of capital assets under \$5,000 or other non-capital assets that may be more attractive to loss, theft, or misuse such as computers, laptops, shop tools, electronics, tablets, cameras, televisions, and video equipment. While the City has requirements for properly securing and tracking all assets documented in AI 6-4, that information is not necessarily incorporated into training and guidance materials for reference by City fiscal staff and fixed asset liaisons. As a result, not all departments have control procedures for capital assets under \$5,000 and other non-capital assets. From the same OIA survey responses, 15 departments stated that they do not maintain an inventory listing for assets under \$5,000. However, OIA noted that two (2) departments (Fire & Rescue and Planning) have asset software to track assets, while a further eight (8) departments track assets utilizing Microsoft Excel.

In reference to the tagging process, various reasons were provided to OIA as to why assets were untagged or improperly tagged. Examples included being unaware that a director's or a supervisor's vehicle needed to have an affixed unit number (tag), not understanding that buses under contract to an outside vendor still needed to have affixed unit numbers (tags), or not understanding the need to fix damaged or missing tags. Additionally, while one (1) department did have tags for the assets, they were hesitant to affix them to the assets as they might be in a location where the tags could be "peeled off."

For the situations in which items were not transferred properly, it appeared that asset liaisons were unaware of the formalized process to transfer assets to another department. Additionally, a television that was disposed of did not follow the disposal process as it was disposed of during the COVID-19 pandemic, which impacted the process, according to the associated fixed asset liaison.

<sup>3</sup> In the survey sent out to the City departments and divisions, the Office of Civil Rights was included in Legal. However, they did not have any individual sample items. Please note that the asset liaison is the same for both.

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Finally, there was no known reason why a desktop was left in the trunk of a City vehicle. However, OIA did return the item to the Technology and Innovation Department.

#### **Effect**

There have been lapses in asset management practices Citywide that have created a situation in which assets costing \$110,113 cannot be confirmed for existence and assets that were identified were not readily traceable as City property, with a total cost of \$1,204,087. Improperly tracking and inventorying both capital and non-capital assets increases the risk of asset misappropriation and loss of their benefit of use for the City and its constituents. Additionally, inadequate tracking of all assets increases the City's exposure to liability risk if these items result in harm, benefit another business, are used for an individual's gain, or result in the exposure of sensitive or proprietary information. These issues stress the importance of effective training for all City fiscal staff and fixed asset liaisons, adherence to the City's requirements regarding asset management, and the development and implementation of robust internal controls to safeguard City assets and ensure accurate financial reporting.

### Recommendations:

The Department of Finance & Administrative Services should.

- 1. Communicate with noted departments regarding the unlocated or unconfirmed items and have those departments verify the existence of those items or update their asset documentation accordingly. Ensure to disposition these items in compliance with City administrative instructions and other applicable requirements.
- 2. Revise existing Administrative Instruction 6-4 *Capitalization of Assets* to include requirements for all City departments to define processes and procedures for managing items purchased under \$5,000. Require that the fixed asset liaisons for the departments update and file these plans as part of the year-end inventory process.
- 3. Coordinate with the Employee Learning Center to require asset management training for all City fiscal staff and fixed asset liaisons on a routine basis.
- 4. Communicate with the departments whose items are untagged or improperly tagged to correct the tag for proper inventorying purposes.

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- 5. Create a user group for the City's fiscal staff and fixed asset liaisons for the dissemination of information related to asset management, facilitation of knowledge transfer, and best practice discussion Citywide on a routine basis.
- 6. Revise the year-end capital asset inventory process instructions to incorporate the recommendation that the fixed asset liaisons seek assistance from a colleague or another knowledgeable individual within their department when performing the year-end inventory.

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# **CONCLUSION**

By implementing the recommendations detailed in this report, the City can improve its ability to effectively administer, manage, and monitor its asset management process. DFAS response to the recommendations made is included in Appendix B of the report. We greatly appreciate the assistance of all asset liaisons throughout this audit who made both their staff and requested documents readily available, as well as the involvement and cooperation of the various departments and divisions within the City.

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Accountability in Government Oversight Committee Chairperson

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#### APPENDIX A

## **OBJECTIVE**

The audit objectives were to determine that purchases are properly approved and recorded timely and accurately, assets are complete and accurately accounted for, controls are in place to safeguard assets from theft or unauthorized access, and asset retirements or disposals are timely and accurately documented.

### SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS

The audit scope covered the City's duties and responsibilities for the period July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2023.

This report and its conclusions are based on information taken from a sample of financial records, systems, and users and does not represent an examination of all related financial records, systems, and users for the health inspection programs. The audit report is based on our examination of functions and activities through the completion of fieldwork in May 22, 2024 and does not reflect events after that date. City management is responsible for establishing and maintaining effective internal control and complying with laws and regulations.

In performance audits, a deficiency in internal control exists when the design or operation of a control does not allow management or employees, in the normal course of performing their assigned functions, to prevent, or detect and correct (1) impairments of effectiveness or efficiency of operations, (2) misstatements in financial or performance information, or (3) noncompliance with applicable laws, regulations, standards, guidelines, and/or best practices. A deficiency in design exists when (a) a control necessary to meet the control objective is missing or (b) an existing control is not properly designed so that, even if the control operates as designed, the control objective is not met. In the performance audit requirements, the term significant is comparable to the term material as used in the context of financial statement engagements. A deficiency in operation exists when a properly designed control does not operate as designed, or when the person performing the control does not possess the necessary authority or qualifications to perform the control effectively.

Our consideration of internal control was for the limited purpose described in our audit objectives and was not designed to identify all deficiencies in internal control. Therefore, unidentified deficiencies may exist. Accordingly, we do not express an opinion on the effectiveness of Citywide internal controls. As part of the performance audit, we tested the Citywide departments and or divisions compliance with applicable laws, requirements, and regulations. Noncompliance with these requirements could directly and significantly affect the objectives of our audit. However,

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opining on compliance with all provisions was not an objective of our performance audit, and accordingly, we do not express an opinion.

We conducted this performance audit in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards for performance audits, as prescribed in *Government Auditing Standards*, 2018 revision, issued by the Controller General of the United States. 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. Our department is independent per the GAGAS requirements for internal auditors.

### **METHODOLOGY**

Methodologies used to accomplish the audit objectives include but are not limited to the following.

- Interviewed management and staff regarding the City's asset management process.
- Gained an understanding of internal controls, relevant laws, and regulations of the asset management process.
- From the Fixed Asset Listing for fiscal year 2023, OIA selected a sample of 31 items (11 items with in-service dates prior to July 2020, 10 with in-service dates of July 2020 and later, and 10 with no locations associated) with a cost of \$1,944,591 and performed the following procedures:
  - Observed items visually for confirmation of existence.
  - Verified that assets were properly tagged and recorded.
  - Ensured that assets were appropriately categorized to the correct general ledger account.
  - Verified assets that are grant-funded adhered to contract requirements.
  - Determined that assets that met disposal and surplus requirements were appropriately dispositioned.
  - Ascertained that asset transferred to another department followed the transfer process.
- From a Decision Support System (DSS) Query generated by OIA that identified purchases of assets between July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2023, OIA selected 228 items with a cost of \$1,474,324 and performed the following procedures.
  - Ensured that assets were properly approved and recorded.
  - Ensured that assets were appropriately categorized to the correct general ledger account.
  - Observed items visually for confirmation of existence.

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- Verified that assets were properly tagged and recorded, if applicable.
- Verified assets that are grant-funded adhered to contract requirements.
- Traced the amounts from the general ledger to the invoice for accuracy.
- Determined that assets that met disposal and surplus requirements were appropriately dispositioned.
- Evaluated the risk of fraud, waste, and abuse regarding activities related to our objectives.
- Other methodologies as needed.

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# APPENDIX B

# Recommendations and Responses

For each recommendation, the responsible agency should indicate in the *Department Response* column whether it concurs, does not concur, or partially concurs and provide a brief explanation. If it concurs with the recommendation, it should indicate the expected implementation date and implementation plan. If the responsible agency does not concur or partially concurs, it should provide an explanation and an alternate action plan to address the identified issue.

Recommendation	Responsible Party	Department Response	OIA Use Only Status Determinati
The Department of Finance & Administrative Services should:  1. Communicate with noted departments regarding the unlocated or unconfirmed items and have those departments verify the existence of those items or update their asset documentation accordingly. Ensure to disposition these items in compliance with City Administrative Instructions and other applicable requirements.	Department of Finance & Administrative Services		X Open ☐ Closed ☐ Contested

Recommendation	Responsible Party	Department Response	OIA Use Only Status Determinati
2. Revise existing Administrative Instructions 6-4 Capitalization of Assets to include requirements for all City Departments to define processes and procedures for managing items purchased under \$5,000. Require that the fixed asset liaisons for the departments update and file these plans as part of the year-end inventory process.	Department of Finance & Administrative Services	DFAS concurs with this recommendation. DFAS Fixed Asset subject matter experts will work with City Controller and Deputy Controller to revise the existing AI 6-4 language. Once the revisions are completed and approved, corresponding requirements and instructions can be changed on the year-end fixed asset inventory process to require Departments to submit these plans at the time the fixed asset inventory documentation is submitted. Finally, language can be added to the required Director's memo to certify that each Department is properly managing and tracking non-capital assets.  ESTIMATED COMPLETION DATES  June 30, 2025	X Open ☐ Closed ☐ Contested
3. Coordinate with the Employee Learning Center to require asset management training for all City fiscal staff and Fixed Asset Liaisons on a routine basis.	Department of Finance & Administrative Services	DFAS concurs with this recommendation. Once the necessary updates are completed to AI 6-4, DFAS can update current training materials to incorporate new instructions and guidelines and provide the training to ELC. DFAS can work with ELC on the asset management training materials and would recommend making this training a requirement for Fixed Asset Liaisons, but recommended for other fiscal staff, with annual updates.  ESTIMATED COMPLETION DATES  December 31, 2025	X Open ☐ Closed ☐ Contested

Recommendation	Responsible Party	Department Response	OIA Use Only Status
	1 41 0,		Determinati
4. Communicate with the departments whose items are untagged or improperly tagged to correct the tag for proper inventorying purposes.	Department of Finance & Administrative Services	DFAS partially concurs with this recommendation. Pages 5 and 6 of the report detail 26 separate tagging issues with five different causes. DFAS can communicate with Departments about items that are not tagged, mis-tagged, or where previously issued tags have fallen off of assets. DFAS can communicate with the Department regarding the asset where the tag was kept separate from the asset. However, DFAS does not provide unit numbers, Fleet/GSD does, so Departments must contact Fleet/GSD regarding these items to correct this issue. DFAS will need OIA to provide corresponding asset IDs and Department contact information for the items in question.  ESTIMATED COMPLETION DATES	X Open ☐ Closed ☐ Contested
		June 30, 2025	
5. Create a user group for the City's fiscal staff and fixed asset liaisons for the dissemination of information related to asset management, facilitation of knowledge transfer, and best practice discussion Citywide on a routine basis.	Department of Finance & Administrative Services	Concur Do Not Concur Partially Concur  DFAS concurs with this recommendation. DFAS can work with DTI to create a Fixed Asset Liaison email user group where users can be added or removed as changes are made.	X Open  ☐ Closed ☐ Contested
		ESTIMATED COMPLETION DATES  June 30, 2025	

Recommendation	Responsible Party	Department Response	OIA Use Only Status Determinati
6. Revise the year-end capital asset inventory process instructions to incorporate the recommendation that the fixed assets liaisons seek assistance from a colleague or another knowledgeable individual within their department when performing the year-end inventory.	Department of Finance & Administrative Services	DFAS concurs with this recommendation. DFAS Fixed Asset subject matter experts will revise the year-end fixed asset inventory process instructions to include a recommendation that Departments have the most knowledgeable individuals, including the Fixed Asset Liaison, conduct the fixed asset inventory.  ESTIMATED COMPLETION DATES  June 30, 2025	X Open ☐ Closed ☐ Contested