



OFFICE OF THE CITY AUDITOR COLORADO SPRINGS, COLORADO

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26-03 Review of Concerns Involving an Elected Official

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Purpose

The purpose of this review is to examine a report involving an elected official.

Highlights

Our review focused on a Fraud, Waste, and Abuse Hotline (Hotline) report that raised allegations about an elected official. For purposes of the City's personnel policies that apply to employees, elected officials are not considered City employees. To make City governance more consistent and transparent, we suggest adopting clearer policies for how elected officials use City resources.

The Office of City Auditor operates a Hotline, providing a confidential and accessible way for employees, vendors, citizens, and other stakeholders to report suspected fraud, misconduct, or unethical behavior. Individuals can use the Hotline without fear of retaliation.

Authority

City Code 1.2.703: Ensure Public Accountability: The City Auditor shall ensure that administrative officials are held publicly accountable for their use of public funds and the other resources at their disposal. The City Auditor shall investigate whether or not laws are being administered in the public interest, determine if there have been abuses of discretion, arbitrary actions, or errors of judgment, and shall encourage diligence on the part of administrative officials. (Ord. 11-18)

Summary of Allegations

The Hotline report contained two actionable allegations:

1. The elected official's security detail was completing tasks on behalf of the official.
2. The elected official used their City-issued vehicle for personal use.

Findings

Use of security detail:

We identified five instances in 2025 in which the elected official was accompanied by a member of their security detail. These included:

1. The elected official picked up their children from school, and all individuals proceeded to the City Administration Building.
2. The elected official attended child's elementary school graduation and then attended a City event.
3. After attending a City event, the elected official picked up the child from school and then proceeded to another City event.

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4. Between City events, the elected official and the security detail picked up dry cleaning.
5. Before attending a City event, the elected official and security detail picked up dry cleaning.

The personal stops observed were incidental to official travel. We did not find evidence that the security detail was directed to perform standalone administrative or personal errands on behalf of the elected official.

Personal use of a City-owned vehicle

City Finance records showed that between May and June, 2025, a City-owned vehicle was used by the elected official's spouse for 152.5 miles. Finance records confirmed that the use was subsequently reported and the appropriate IRS fringe benefit reporting was completed.

Audit Committee Recommendation

The Audit Committee strongly recommends that the administration for the City of Colorado Springs establish a clear and enforceable policy governing "elected officials" use of City resources, specifically including police detail and use of City vehicles, to ensure transparency, accountability, and consistency.