

Workforce Development Follow-Up



Background

The City of Austin provides workforce development programs to assist community members with literacy, adult basic education, job readiness, and occupational training. The City provides these programs both directly and through contracted entities. The Office of the City Auditor conducted an audit of these workforce development efforts as part of our Fiscal Year 2016 Audit Plan. The objective of that audit was to determine if City workforce development contracting efforts were effectively achieving outcomes and preparing employees for jobs that match the needs of the Austin job market.

The audit found the City did not have a comprehensive workforce development plan, did not have sufficient data to determine the effectiveness of workforce development programs, and did not prioritize contracts to meet City goals or the needs of local employers.

The 2017 Workforce Development Audit issued six recommendations with implementation due dates of May 2018.

Objective

The objective of this special report was to follow up on the City's actions to implement recommendations from the 2017 Workforce Development Audit.

What We Learned

We verified the City implemented two of the six recommendations we issued in the Workforce Development Audit.

Status of Recommendations



Two Recommendations
Implemented



Four Recommendations
Underway

SOURCE: Auditor's analysis of the City's actions to address prior audit recommendations, December 2021

The City Manager implemented one recommendation by appointing the Economic Development Department (EDD) as the lead department over the City's workforce development efforts. Austin Public Health (APH) implemented another recommendation by using documentation to verify contract outcomes and creating a tool that tracks performance measures.

To implement the remaining recommendations, the City Manager and EDD still need to do the following:

- Develop Citywide goals and performance expectations for workforce development
- Ensure workforce development contracts train individuals in high-demand sectors
- Develop clear performance measures that measure program impact
- EDD should enhance workforce development contract monitoring.

EDD and City Management recently started developing a Citywide workforce development strategy to implement their recommendations. However, EDD needs to enhance its process for monitoring workforce development contracts because it still does not meet City standards.

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Additional Observation

In the original audit, we noted contractors reported results that were not tied to City funding and they did not have complete information on program outcomes. This issue has still not been addressed. Following the audit, EDD and APH worked with service providers and determined that it is not feasible for contractors to provide the City with more complete information without additional funding.

Implementation Status of Recommendations

Recommendations	Implementation Status
Recommendation 1: The City Manager should name a lead department to oversee and coordinate workforce development programs and collaborate with regional partners to better target City workforce development investments towards programs that meet the needs of local employers.	Implemented
Recommendation 2: The City Manager should work with the lead department to establish Citywide goals and performance expectations relating to workforce development.	Underway
Recommendation 3: When workforce development contracts are renegotiated, the City Manager should work with the lead department to review the needs of area employers and ensure new contracts are designed and implemented so that future workforce development programs align with goals and train individuals in high demand areas.	Underway
Recommendation 4: The City Manager should work with the lead department to ensure that future contracts include clear and consistent performance measures that can be used to measure the impact of these programs. Further, the City Manager should consider whether contractors should be fully or partially paid based on performance.	Underway
Recommendation 5: The Director of Austin Public Health should enhance monitoring of contractors and ensure that program data maintained is complete, accurate, and reliable.	Implemented
Recommendation 6: The Director of the Economic Development Department should enhance monitoring of contractors and ensure that program data maintained is complete, accurate, and reliable.	Underway