

Memorandum



CITY OF DALLAS

DATE: July 29, 2005

TO: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

SUBJECT: Follow-up audit of the September 12, 2003, *Performance Audit of Street Pothole Repairs and Related Issues*- Report #395

We conducted this follow-up audit of the Efficiency and Effectiveness of the Street Cut Repair Process under the authority of Chapter IX of the City Charter and according to applicable government auditing standards. We included tests of records and reviews of program guidelines and procedures that we considered necessary in the circumstances. Our objective was to determine whether management had implemented the audit's original recommendations or had taken other acceptable actions to remedy the control weaknesses identified in the original audit report.

The original audit report **(A14)** contained five findings with 13 related recommendations. Management has implemented nine of the recommendations, partially implemented three of them, and has not implemented one of them.

The following details the original audit findings and recommendations and shows the status of implementation.

1. Some resources are not used efficiently or effectively.

We recommended that the Director of the Street Services Department (SSD):

- A. Procure/repair pothole patch vehicles to minimize the use of dump trucks for pothole and level up repairs. To increase the effectiveness of using dump trucks for pothole repairs (when necessary), ensure that proper equipment is available on the dump trucks and provide staff training specific to using dump trucks for repairs.

*We found that SSD has purchased several new pothole repair trucks and has equipped and trained its crews to use them **(Implemented)(B1)**.*

- B. Reduce the number of daily trips to the asphalt plant by picking up more material initially.

We found that these new trucks have a larger capacity, so that more material is carried and trips are reduced (Implemented)(B2).

- C. Reevaluate the number of trips required to assess and complete repairs.

We found that Management, rather than completely reevaluating the steps taken to assess and repair potholes, is focusing on obtaining more accurate initial reports of the holes in order to reduce trips (see finding 4, recommendation C) (Partially implemented).

2. Efficiency and effectiveness are difficult to measure due to inconsistent and unreliable methodologies.

We recommended that the Director of the SSD ensure that all district personnel receive training relative to asphalt street repair. The training should cover:

- A. Standardized method(s) for classifying and reporting repair types, as well as periodic supervisory verification of reported repair types.

We found that personnel were trained in June 2004 in classifying and reporting repair types (Implemented)(C).

- B. Standardized instruments for measuring productivity, including using tape measures or other standardized measuring instruments and recording the initial measurement in square yards rather than in square feet. Formalized procedures should include monitoring of calculations, and a mechanism that easily allows crews to convert square feet to square yards (e.g., develop a chart that goes from one square foot to 200 square feet and show the equivalent measurement in square yards: one square foot = .33 square yards, two square feet = .67 square yards).

We found that personnel were trained in the use of standardized instruments and formalized procedures (Implemented)(C).

3. Work crews did not follow various departmental safety requirements.

We recommended that the Director of the SSD require:

- District managers to ensure that all personnel assigned to pothole repair crews attend periodic formalized, department-wide training classes that include safety issues appropriate to their level of responsibilities.

We found that the department training coordinator ensures that district monthly team safety meetings are held (Implemented)(D1).

- Each repair crewmember to sign an acknowledgement stating that he/she are aware of the safety requirements and agree to adhere to each. The SSD should develop the form, and each employee should be required to sign a new form no less often than annually.

We found that personnel, while attending training (see bullet one above), do not sign forms annually acknowledging awareness of safety requirements (Not implemented)(D).

- Supervisors to monitor crewmembers for compliance with applicable safety and other requirements and take appropriate action as needed.

We found that supervisors monitor crewmembers for compliance with safe practices and take action as needed when they see violations (Implemented)(D2).

4. The CRMS does not provide information needed to adequately assess efficiency of the pothole repair process.

We recommended that the Director of the SSD coordinate with Communication and Information Services personnel to:

- A. Ensure that the CRMS is reevaluated and upgraded to provide needed performance measurement information on individual street repair types (e.g., potholes) within any group.

We found that changes made to CRMS provide performance measures for the various items within the types of street repairs (Implemented)(E).

- B. Provide enhancements that allow the work completion date to be shown as the work order completion date within CRMS.

We found that CRMS still requires 311 personnel to manually enter repair close out dates, but that they can and now do close out repairs the day they are notified by Streets of completion; and if volume is extremely heavy, 311 closes out the requests on the night shift, back dating the close out if necessary (Implemented)(E).

- C. Pursue enhancements to the current system to provide all information for hazardous pothole repairs in one summarized total for each performance measure.

We found that the Service Request Statistical Reports now summarize all information for hazardous pothole repairs (Implemented)(E).

5. Current agreements with DART have not been implemented or consistently monitored.

We recommended that the Director of Public Works and Transportation (PWT):

A. In consultation with the City Council, submit a Citywide project to DART's Street Repair Program as appropriate. All funding programs should include mechanisms to eliminate the loss of purchasing power caused by inflation.

We found that PWT selects projects for DART's Street Repair Program based on the opportunities and priorities available at the time, including balancing projects among city council districts. It appears that PWT is not figuring inflation into project costs (Partially implemented)(F1).

B. Ensure that all agreements with DART are identified and that contract provisions are being adhered to.

We found that PWT is ensuring that all agreements with DART are identified but is not taking any new steps (other than the Senior Engineer contacting DART representatives) to ensure contract provisions are being adhered to (Partially implemented)(F2).

We commend management for their work in addressing issues related to the 13 original audit recommendations.

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