



**Washington State Auditor's Office**

**Troy Kelley**

**Integrity • Respect • Independence**

## **Accountability Audit Report**

# **Benton-Franklin Council of Governments**

**Benton County**

**For the period January 1, 2012 through December 31, 2013**

**Published October 30, 2014**

**Report No. 1012848**





## Washington State Auditor Troy Kelley

October 30, 2014

Board of Directors  
Benton-Franklin Council of Governments  
Richland, Washington

### Report on Accountability

Thank you for the opportunity to work with you to promote accountability, integrity and openness in government. The State Auditor's Office takes seriously our role of providing state and local governments with assurance and accountability as the independent auditor of public accounts. In this way, we strive to help government work better, cost less, deliver higher value and earn greater public trust.

Independent audits provide essential accountability and transparency for Council operations. This information is valuable to management, the governing body and public stakeholders when assessing the government's stewardship of public resources.

The attached comprises our report on the Council's compliance and safeguarding of public resources. Our independent audit report describes the overall results and conclusions for areas we examined. We appreciate the opportunity to work with your staff and we value your cooperation during the audit.

Sincerely,

TROY KELLEY  
STATE AUDITOR

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## AUDIT SUMMARY

### Results in brief

In the areas we audited, Council operations complied with applicable requirements and provided adequate safeguarding of public resources. The Council also complied with state laws and regulations and its own policies and procedures in the areas we examined.

### About the audit

This report contains the results of our independent accountability audit of the Benton-Franklin Council of Governments from January 1, 2012 through December 31, 2013.

Management is responsible for ensuring compliance and adequate safeguarding of public resources from fraud, loss or abuse. This includes the design, implementation and maintenance of internal controls relevant to these objectives.

Our audit involved performing procedures to obtain evidence about the Council's uses of public resources, compliance with state laws and regulations and its own policies and procedures, and internal controls over such matters.

In keeping with general auditing practices, we do not examine every transaction, activity or area. Instead, the areas examined were those representing the highest risk of fraud, loss, abuse, or noncompliance. The following areas were examined during this audit period:

- Disbursements
- Credit card transactions
- Payroll
- Employee reimbursements

## RELATED REPORTS

### **Financial**

Our opinion on the Council's financial statements and compliance with federal grant program requirements is provided in a separate report, which includes the Council's financial statements.

### **Federal grant programs**

We evaluated internal controls and tested compliance with the federal program requirements, as applicable, for the Council's major federal programs, which are listed in the Federal Summary section of the financial statement and single audit report.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE COUNCIL

The Benton-Franklin Council of Governments was established in 1966. The organization is structured as a regional planning commission, a council of governments and a regional transportation planning organization under state law and as a metropolitan planning organization and an economic development district under federal laws. The Council's focus is on economic development, community development and transportation planning.

The Council has a component unit, the Columbia Regional Economic Development Trust (CREDiT), which is a separate organization the Council established. CREDiT is governed by an 11-member board appointed by the Council's Board. CREDiT's sole purpose is to supplement the activities of the Council's regional revolving loan fund program within the rural areas of Benton, Franklin, Walla Walla and Columbia counties.

The Council is governed by delegates from members of the counties, cities and districts that benefit from the Council. In 2013 the Council's expenditures were approximately \$1.365 million.

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*Information current as of report publish date.*

## Audit history

You can find current and past audit reports for the Benton-Franklin Council of Governments at <http://portal.sao.wa.gov/ReportSearch>.

## ABOUT THE STATE AUDITOR'S OFFICE

The State Auditor's Office is established in the state's Constitution and is part of the executive branch of state government. The State Auditor is elected by the citizens of Washington and serves four-year terms.

We work with our audit clients and citizens to achieve our vision of government that works for citizens, by helping governments work better, cost less, deliver higher value, and earn greater public trust.

In fulfilling our mission to hold state and local governments accountable for the use of public resources, we also hold ourselves accountable by continually improving our audit quality and operational efficiency and developing highly engaged and committed employees.

As an elected agency, the State Auditor's Office has the independence necessary to objectively perform audits and investigations. Our audits are designed to comply with professional standards as well as to satisfy the requirements of federal, state, and local laws.

Our audits look at financial information and compliance with state, federal and local laws on the part of all local governments, including schools, and all state agencies, including institutions of higher education. In addition, we conduct performance audits of state agencies and local governments as well as [fraud](#), state [whistleblower](#) and [citizen hotline](#) investigations.

The results of our work are widely distributed through a variety of reports, which are available on our [website](#) and through our free, electronic [subscription](#) service.

We take our role as partners in accountability seriously, and provide training and technical assistance to governments, and have an extensive quality assurance program.

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