



Office of the Washington State Auditor
Pat McCarthy

Accountability Audit Report
Benton-Franklin Council of
Governments

For the period January 1, 2017 through December 31, 2017

Published September 17, 2018

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**Office of the Washington State Auditor
Pat McCarthy**

September 17, 2018

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 independent audit report on the Council's compliance with applicable requirements and safeguarding of public resources for the areas we examined. We appreciate the opportunity to work with your staff and we value your cooperation during the audit.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Pat McCarthy".

Pat McCarthy
State Auditor
Olympia, WA

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AUDIT RESULTS

This report describes the overall results and conclusions for the areas we examined. In those selected areas, Council operations complied with applicable state laws, regulations, and its own policies, and provided adequate controls over the safeguarding of public resources.

About the audit

This report contains the results of our independent accountability audit of the Benton-Franklin Council of Governments from January 1, 2017 through December 31, 2017.

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.

This audit was conducted under the authority of RCW 43.09.260, which requires the Office of the State Auditor to examine the financial affairs of all local governments. 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, based on our risk assessment for the year ended December 31, 2017, the areas examined were those representing the highest risk of fraud, loss, abuse, or noncompliance. The following areas were examined during this audit period:

- Payroll – leave accruals
- General disbursements
- Accounts receivable

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. That report is available on our website, <http://portal.sao.wa.gov/ReportSearch>.

Federal grant programs

We evaluated internal controls and tested compliance with the federal program requirements, as applicable, for the Council's major federal program, which is listed in the Schedule of Findings and Questioned Costs section of the separate financial statement and single audit report. That report is available on our website, <http://portal.sao.wa.gov/ReportSearch>.

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. Council's focus is on economic development, community development, and transportation planning.

The Council is governed by delegates from members of the counties, cities and districts that benefit from the Council. In 2017, the Council's operating expenditures were \$1.1 million. The Council has a component unit, the Columbia Regional Economic Development Trust (CREDiT), which is a separate organization they established. CREDiT is governed by the eleven-member board appointed by the Benton-Franklin Council of Governments 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.

Contact information related to this report	
Address:	Benton-Franklin Council of Governments P.O. Box 217 Richland, WA 99352
Contact:	Brian Malley, Executive Director
Telephone:	509-943-9185
Website:	www.bfcog.us

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.

Contact information for the State Auditor's Office	
Public Records requests	PublicRecords@sao.wa.gov
Main telephone	(360) 902-0370
Toll-free Citizen Hotline	(866) 902-3900
Website	www.sao.wa.gov