



# AUDIT HIGHLIGHTS

## Fire & Life Safety Inspections

November 2, 2018

Audit Report No. 1908

### WHY WE DID THIS AUDIT

This audit was included on the Council-approved FY 2018/19 Audit Plan to review controls and recordkeeping for Fire Marshal Inspection activities. With a departmental reorganization, the Fire & Life Safety Division now performs this function.

### BACKGROUND

The Fire & Life Safety Division of the Scottsdale Fire Department is responsible for reviewing plans and inspecting structures for compliance with the City's Fire Code. Two Deputy Fire Chiefs oversee the division and inspectors are available 24-hours a day.

The division performs inspections for commercial, community and residential sites, safety surveys, special permits and homeowner-requested reviews. The division coordinates with the City's Planning and Development Services department to complete the fire inspections for construction and remodels. Third-party contractors provide the department with copies of sprinkler, alarm system and cooking hood inspections they have performed for property owners.

### City Auditor's Office

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### WHAT WE FOUND

**Departmental inspection goals for target and other properties are not being achieved.**

Fire & Life Safety has not been meeting its goal of inspecting higher-risk sites annually and other sites once every three years.

**Program performance can be improved through more effective information management and performance measures.**

- The Fire Prevention System has not been validated for completeness and contains mislabeled, duplicate information. Fire inspection results must be manually entered into both FPS and the Community Development System.
- Some system reports are not accurate and third-party fire inspection reports were typically not recorded or retained.
- A timeframe has not been established for re-inspections after an initial inspection finds noncompliance, and the Fire & Life Safety performance measure in the Budget Book is not a meaningful indicator of performance.

**Program administration can be improved.**

- Some users have more FPS access than needed.
- Refunds were not documented in accordance with City requirements.
- The third-party inspection fee should be submitted for Council approval.

### WHAT WE RECOMMEND

We recommend the Fire & Life Safety division:

- Evaluate inspectors' schedules to ensure that the higher-risk target sites receive annual inspections and determine if the goal of reviewing non-target sites every three years is realistic.
- Develop an accurate and complete database of sites and inspection data and establish reinspection policies and monitoring.
- Ensure system access is controlled, refunds are documented, and fees are approved.

### MANAGEMENT RESPONSE

The department generally agreed with the recommendations, noting work that is underway to improve data, scheduling and results.