ASSESSMENT REPORT
An Agency of City and County of Denver
Information Systems Cybersecurity Assessment
September 2017

Office of the Auditor
Audit Services Division
City and County of Denver

Timothy M. O’Brien, CPA
Denver Auditor
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The Audit Committee is chaired by the Auditor and consists of seven members. The Audit Committee assists the Auditor in his oversight responsibilities regarding the integrity of the City’s finances and operations, including the reliability of the City’s financial statements. The Audit Committee is structured in a manner that ensures the independent oversight of City operations, thereby enhancing citizen confidence and avoiding any appearance of a conflict of interest.

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Brian Cather, Lead Consultant

You can obtain copies of this report by contacting us:

Office of the Auditor
201 West Colfax Avenue, #705
Denver CO, 80202
(720) 913-5000  •  Fax (720) 913-5247

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AUDITOR’S REPORT

A third party has completed an Information Systems Cybersecurity Assessment. The assessment found some areas of strength, and some areas that need improvement, which have been communicated to the City’s Technology Services department for further evaluation.

This assessment is authorized pursuant to the City and County of Denver Charter, Part 2, Section 1, General Powers and Duties of Auditor.

We extend appreciation to Technology Services and the personnel who assisted and cooperated with us during the assessment.

Denver Auditor’s Office

Timothy M. O’Brien, CPA
Auditor
An Agency of City and County of Denver
- Information Systems Cybersecurity Assessment

September 21, 2017
An Agency of City and County of Denver
Information Systems Cybersecurity Assessment

Background

Cornerstone Partners LLC (“Cornerstone”) was tasked by the Auditor to evaluate the Information Systems cybersecurity of an agency of the City and County of Denver (“City”) for Technology Services and the Auditor's Office. As part of deliverables, Cornerstone will present a report to the Audit Committee and findings will be sent to Technology Services. The results of the report will be limited to discussing any findings, vulnerabilities and risks found on an agency of the City and County of Denver.

A key to this improvement process is balancing the need for public access and transparency, while managing the implementation of both centralized and decentralized cybersecurity strategies. Currently, the City has a decentralized approach to information systems requirements, which affects how risk is approached and managed by the City.

When applying and evaluating the information systems cybersecurity for the agency of the City, one must weigh how the results of this assessment would influence the understanding of their overall risk levels and vulnerabilities. This understanding will help drive the allocation of valuable resources that are required for maintaining and actively improving its information system requirements and capabilities. The differing approaches to risk tolerance, levels of maturity between offices and departments, and the public facing requirement of the City affects the way they implement control measures and risk control processes.
Scope of Work

The scope of this engagement began with understanding the current posture of the agency of the City. The City's operating requirements of openness, transparency, and accessibility was crucial in understanding the scope of work. Cornerstone understands how the City must balance the public facing data requirements with the need to protect and ensure the confidentiality, integrity, and availability of data on its information systems.

This engagement focused on assessing the information systems cybersecurity of an agency of the City utilizing the National Institute of Science and Technology (NIST) Cybersecurity Framework (figure 1).

![Cybersecurity Framework](Image)

Figure 1

The Methodology

Cornerstone collected evidence and performed testing to enable an effective cybersecurity assessment of the agency of the City and County of Denver. The NIST methodology uses five key functional process areas of cybersecurity; however, the fourth and fifth key functional process areas, event response and event recovery, were not in scope during this engagement. The areas in scope included:

- **Risk Identification**: Tools, strategies, and techniques for the identification and tracking of potential risks, and the organization's willingness to accept cybersecurity risk.

- **Event Protection and Prevention**: Tools, strategies, and techniques used to safeguard and ensure delivery of critical information technology infrastructures and systems.

- **Event Detection**: Tools, strategies, and techniques used to detect potential and actual occurrences of a cybersecurity event taking place, or an event that has taken place.
The Results

The assessment incorporated three parts: wireless, application, and network security. Wireless security would include any WiFi Access Points or the configuration of wireless networks at the agency’s locations. The application security would include any configurations of applications that are critical to the agency’s mission. The network security would include any device, connection, or asset the agency’s employees could access.

Risk Identification

The risk identification function contains the basic ground work for understanding and managing cybersecurity risk to assets, data, and systems capabilities.

Event Protection and Prevention

The event protection and prevention function is focused on helping the organization develop and implement safeguards to reduce the impact of a potential cybersecurity event.

Event Detection

The event detection function is focused on assisting the organization on developing and implementing safeguards to detect the presence of a cybersecurity threat. By detecting cybersecurity events in a timely manner, the organization can reduce the potential impact the threat can have on the organization.

Conclusion

Cornerstone assessed the cybersecurity of an agency of the City and County of Denver for the Auditor and Technology Services. Cornerstone utilized the NIST Cybersecurity Framework and identified strengths and weaknesses using the three-aforementioned key functional process areas of cybersecurity. A combined assessment of strengths and weaknesses in these three process areas was communicated to Technology Services and the Auditor. Additionally, Cornerstone’s assessment of the agency of the City, along with the associated findings, were reported to Technology Services.