



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

**Accountability Audit Report**  
**Whatcom Transportation Authority**

**For the period January 1, 2018 through December 31, 2018**

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

May 16, 2019

Board of Directors  
Whatcom Transportation Authority  
Bellingham, 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 Authority 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 Authority'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,

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, Authority 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 Whatcom Transportation Authority from January 1, 2018 through December 31, 2018.

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 Authority'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, 2018, 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 – gross wages, overtime, leave balances and accruals, benefit deductions, retirement contributions, and board compensation
- Vanpool receipting – billing, adjustments and collections

## RELATED REPORTS

### **Financial**

Our opinion on the Authority's financial statements is provided in a separate report, which includes the Authority's financial statements. That report is available on our website, <http://portal.sao.wa.gov/ReportSearch>.

### **Other reports**

During the current audit period, the State Auditor's Office issued a report on agreed-upon procedures performed at the Authority. That report is available on our website, <http://portal.sao.wa.gov/ReportSearch>.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE AUTHORITY

The Whatcom Transportation Authority, created in 1983, serves approximately 210,000 Whatcom County residents. The Authority provides fixed route and vanpool services, as well as transportation services for the elderly and disabled.

A nine-member Board of Directors governs the Authority which is comprised of elected officials from Whatcom County jurisdictions that benefit from the Authority. The Authority has approximately 275 employees and operating expenses of approximately \$34.2 million for fiscal year 2018 and \$32.7 million for fiscal year 2017.

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*Information current as of report publish date.*

### **Audit history**

You can find current and past audit reports for the Whatcom Transportation Authority 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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