



OFFICE OF THE CITY AUDITOR COLORADO SPRINGS, COLORADO

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23-20 City of Colorado Springs Procurement System Process Improvement Review

October 2023

Purpose

The purpose of this review was to facilitate a process review of the City of Colorado Springs's (City) new procurement application to increase users efficiency and effectiveness utilizing the tool.

Highlights

We conclude improvements can be made to increase user efficiency and effectiveness when working with the procurement application. We identified three opportunities for improvements in user training, process guidance, and other topics. See page two for details. Because the procurement application touches on all City departments, improvements will benefit a large number of users.

The City implemented a new procurement application in March 2022. The new application changed all procurement process tasks. Responsibility for initiating and managing most procurement tasks is decentralized across all departments of the City. Upon sampling feedback from multiple department users, the Office of the City Auditor (OCA) identified themes of lack of understanding of new processes and inability to view transaction status. The Procurement and Finance teams experienced an increased workload assisting users in utilizing the application.

OCA hosted a group of 45 users representing various departments for a one day procurement process review. Teams worked to map the processes of the procurement tasks and identified areas for improvement. The team's suggested improvements were grouped into three categories that align with the three opportunities for improvement on page two.

We commend the collaboration and team building that occurred as a result of the process improvement activity. Bringing together representatives from across the City for the process improvement event helped users and management stakeholders better understand the challenges being faced by various departments. Within each team we observed a high level of cooperation and team building to improve conditions for all users. The activity encouraged interaction, resulting in a better appreciation of the responsibilities and needs of different user groups.

Management Response

Management was in agreement with our recommendations.

Recommendations

1. Procurement, Accounting, and Accounts Payable departments should work toward identified improvements in training materials and presentation of training materials. The OCA should finalize and prepare the process flow chart for publication as a training aid.
2. Accounts Payable and Procurement departments should work toward identified improvements to address purchase order processing and maintenance.
3. Accounts Payable and Accounting departments should work toward the identified improvements in application functionality, reporting, and other topics.

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23-20 CITY OF COLORADO SPRINGS PROCUREMENT SYSTEM PROCESS IMPROVEMENT REVIEW

Opportunity 1

Procurement application training materials were needed for specific topics and needed to be more accessible to users. Nineteen (19) improvement recommendations related to training materials and their presentation.

Examples included publication of a glossary of terms, combining 1,000 pages of available user guidance into a single, searchable PDF, and linking user training and how-to guidance to an interactive flow chart to be published on the City's intranet site.

Management Response

Management agrees and has begun work to implement the recommendations. We plan to implement most of the recommendations by July 30, 2024.

Recommendation

Procurement, Accounting, and Accounts Payable departments should work toward identified improvements in training materials and presentation of training materials. The OCA should finalize and prepare the process flow chart for publication as a training aid.

Opportunity 2

Management and maintenance of purchase orders through the life cycle of an acquisition required specific process definitions and sharing of training materials with users. Five (5) accepted recommendations related to the purchase order process.

Examples included defining the year end purchase order close and roll over processes and providing user guidance.

Management Response

Management agrees and has begun work to implement the recommendations. Improvements are underway to address year end processes and purchase order maintenance. We anticipate full implementation of these recommendations by September 30, 2024.

Recommendation

Accounts Payable and Procurement departments should work toward identified improvements to address purchase order processing and maintenance.

Opportunity 3

Two (2) other recommendations were accepted to address improvements in application functionality, reporting, or topics not covered elsewhere.

Management Response

Management agrees and has begun work to implement the recommendations. These recommendations should be implemented by September 30, 2024.

Recommendation

Accounts Payable and Accounting departments should work toward the identified improvements in application functionality, reporting, and other topics.