



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

# **Accountability Audit Report**

## **City of Cheney**

**For the period January 1, 2019 through December 31, 2019**

**Published August 27, 2020**

**Report No. 1026834**





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

August 27, 2020

Mayor and City Council  
City of Cheney  
Cheney, Washington

**Report on Accountability**

Thank you for the opportunity to work with you to promote accountability, integrity and openness in government. The Office of the Washington State Auditor 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 City operations. This information is valuable to management, the governing body and public stakeholders when assessing the government's stewardship of public resources.

Attached is our independent audit report on the City'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

***Americans with Disabilities***

*In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, we will make this document available in alternative formats. For more information, please contact our Office at (564) 999-0950, TDD Relay at (800) 833-6388, or email our webmaster at [webmaster@sao.wa.gov](mailto:webmaster@sao.wa.gov).*

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# AUDIT RESULTS

## Results in brief

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

In keeping with general auditing practices, we do not examine every transaction, activity, policy, internal control, or area. As a result, no information is provided on the areas that were not examined.

## About the audit

This report contains the results of our independent accountability audit of the City of Cheney from January 1, 2019 through December 31, 2019.

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 obtaining evidence about the City's use of public resources, compliance with state laws and regulations and its own policies and procedures, and internal controls over such matters. The procedures performed were based on our assessment of risks in the areas we examined.

Based on our risk assessment for the year ended December 31, 2019, the areas examined were those representing the highest risk of fraud, loss, abuse, or noncompliance. We examined the following areas during this audit period:

- Self-insurance for unemployment compensation
- Accounts payable – advance travel expenditures and electronic fund transfers
- Payroll – electronic fund transfers
- Compliance with interfund loan terms

## RELATED REPORTS

### **Financial**

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

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE CITY

The City of Cheney was incorporated in 1883 and currently serves approximately 12,500 Spokane County residents. It provides public safety, Municipal Court, fire protection, emergency medical, building code enforcement, street improvement, parks and recreation and general administrative services. The City also provides utility services including water, sewage collection and disposal, light and sanitation.

An elected, seven-member Council with a separately elected Mayor governs the City. The Mayor oversees the City's daily operations as well as approximately 100 employees. The Council sets policy, budget and utility rates. For fiscal year 2019, the City operated on a total annual budget of approximately \$30.7 million.

| <b>Contact information related to this report</b> |  |
|---|--|
| Address:  | City of Cheney<br>609 2nd Street<br>Cheney, WA 99004           |
| Contact:  | Cynthia L. Niemeier, Finance Director                          |
| Telephone:  | (509) 498-9215   |
| Website:  | <a href="http://www.cityofcheney.org">www.cityofcheney.org</a> |

*Information current as of report publish date.*

### **Audit history**

You can find current and past audit reports for the City of Cheney 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.

| <b>Contact information for the State Auditor's Office</b> |  |
|---|--|
| <b>Public Records requests</b>                            | <a href="mailto:PublicRecords@sao.wa.gov">PublicRecords@sao.wa.gov</a> |
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| <b>Toll-free Citizen Hotline</b>                          | (866) 902-3900   |
| <b>Website</b>  | <a href="http://www.sao.wa.gov">www.sao.wa.gov</a>                     |