

Audit of the Police Department's Traffic Stop Practices: Audit Scope Proposal

Report# 2025/26-19|June 2026



City of
SACRAMENTO
Office of the City Auditor

Performance Audit Division

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Our Mission

To provide a catalyst for improvements of municipal operations and promote a credible, efficient, effective, equitable, fair, focused, transparent, and fully accountable City government.

Our Vision

To improve City services by providing independent, objective, and reliable information regarding the City's ability to meet its goals and objectives and establish an adequate system of internal controls, root out improper governmental activities (i.e., fraud, waste, or abuse), and address racial, gender, and ethnic inequities.

Suggest an Audit

The Office of the City Auditor conducts performance audits of the City of Sacramento's operations to determine whether these operations and programs are operating efficiently and effectively. If you would like to offer ideas for audits to save the City money, increase revenues, or improve the efficiency and effectiveness of City operations and programs, please fill out our online form:

https://forms.cityofsacramento.org/f/Suggest_an_Audit_Form

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In the interest of public accountability and being responsible stewards of public funds, the City has established a whistleblower hotline. The hotline protects the anonymity of those leaving tips to the extent permitted by law. The service is available 24 hours a day, 7 days week, 365 days per year. Through this service, all phone calls and emails will be received anonymously by third party staff.

Report online at <http://www.cityofsacramento.ethicspoint.com> or call toll-free: 888-245-8859.

The City of Sacramento's Office of the City Auditor can be contacted by phone at 916-808-1166 or at the address below:

915 I Street
MC09100
Historic City Hall, Floor 2
Sacramento, CA 95814

Introduction

On June 9, 2026, the City Council directed the City Auditor to conduct an audit of the Police Department's traffic stops. On June 16, 2026, the Budget and Audit Committee approved a revised Fiscal Year 2026/27 Work Plan to add the *Audit of the Police Department's Traffic Stop Practices*. The motion passed by the Budget and Audit Committee also incorporated direction to include the following in the final audit report:

- Assessment of Assembly Bill (AB) 2773 implementation;
- Assessment of traffic stop practices;
- Analysis of potential indicators of pretextual stops;
- Assessment of supervisory oversight and accountability;
- Assessment of complaint management processes;
- And recommendations for improving compliance, transparency, accountability, and public trust.

The attached revised Fiscal Year 2026/27 Work Plan adds the audit to the Work Plan and this Audit Scope Proposal details the City Council's request regarding the *Audit of the Police Department's Traffic Stop Practices*.

Objectives and Scope of Audit of the Police Department's Traffic Stop Practices

Background

AB 2773 became effective on January 1, 2024, and established requirements intended to increase transparency and accountability related to traffic enforcement practices. AB 2773 requires a peace officer making a traffic or pedestrian stop, before engaging in questioning related to a criminal investigation or traffic violation, to state the reason for the stop, unless the officer reasonably believes that withholding the reason for the stop is necessary to protect life or property from imminent threat. The Bill also requires the officer to document the reason for the stop on any citation or police report resulting from the stop. Concerns regarding pretextual traffic stops and disparate impacts on communities have prompted the City Council to request a performance audit of the Police Department's traffic stop activities and implementation of AB 2773.

Audit Objectives

Objective 1 – AB 2773 Implementation

Determine whether the Police Department adequately updated policies, procedures, training, supervision, data collection processes, and accountability mechanisms to comply with AB 2773 and support lawful and equitable traffic enforcement practices.

Objective 2 – Traffic Stop Practices

Determine whether the Police Department's traffic stops from January 1, 2024, through June 30, 2026, were conducted in accordance with applicable laws, departmental policies, and the objectives of AB 2773, and assess whether available evidence identifies indicators of potentially pretextual traffic stops.

Objective 3 – Supervisory Oversight and Accountability

Determine whether supervisors and command staff effectively monitor traffic enforcement activity to identify indicators of potentially pretextual or disparate enforcement and take appropriate corrective action when concerns are identified.

Objective 4 – Complaint Management Processes

Determine whether the Police Department appropriately received, investigated, tracked, and analyzed traffic-stop-related complaints and whether complaint trends identify areas warranting corrective action or additional review.

As mentioned during the Budget and Audit Committee meeting on June 16, 2026, there have been some preliminary discussions regarding the City Auditor's current authority to review certain Police Department documents, specifically those related to traffic stop complaints and investigations.

We are actively working with the City Attorney's Office to clarify these issues. Depending on the legal advice we receive, these objectives may need to be adjusted down the road to ensure compliance with applicable laws.

Audit Scope

The audit scope will include:

- All Police Department traffic stop data for stops conducted between January 1, 2024, and June 30, 2026.
- Police Department policies, procedures, directives, and practices related to traffic enforcement.
- AB 2773 implementation activities.
- Training provided to sworn personnel and supervisors.
- Supervisory review and monitoring activities.
- Traffic-stop-related complaints and investigations during the audit period.
- Body-worn camera videos for a sample of stops.
- Applicable state laws, regulations, and departmental requirements.

The audit will not evaluate disciplinary outcomes, assess criminal case outcomes, or determine the legality of individual traffic stops except as necessary to evaluate compliance, trends, and departmental practices.

Audit Reporting

This audit will be conducted in accordance with Generally Accepted Government Auditing Standards (GAGAS).

The final audit report will include an assessment of and findings related to the objectives listed above, as well as recommendations for improving compliance, transparency, accountability, and public trust.