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## Audit Update: Cannabis Program improved data management, communication

News Article



This is a two-year follow-up to our 2020 report, "Cannabis Program: Management fundamentals needed to improve regulation of emerging industry."

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#### Translate this Page

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Our 2020 audit found that the City's new Cannabis Program did not have basic management fundamentals to effectively regulate the cannabis industry in Portland. Since then, the Cannabis Program launched a licensing system to track information and report program and industry information and developed a three-year strategy.

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[审计更新: 大麻计划改进了数据管理、通讯](#) (Chinese)

## Two recommendations in process



- **We recommended Civic Life implement a data management system to track data consistently and accurately on licensing, complaints, and enforcement. This data should be used to manage program resources, adjust licensing fees, and report program performance.**

Civic Life launched a beta version in April of Civic Portal, an online system where cannabis business owners can initiate and manage licenses. The Cannabis Program was using the system to track its compliance and enforcement activity. The program manager planned to tailor the system to help with performance reporting and anticipated the new technology would be fully implemented by the end of 2022.

Complaints about cannabis businesses have dropped since the early days of recreational cannabis legalization, so tracking complaints from the public has not been a high priority, according to the program manager. Most complaints currently are received by email. The program manager wants to allow public access to Civic Portal for comments and complaints in the future.

- **We recommended the program develop a monitoring report or other communication tools for program performance and information about the cannabis industry. The report should inform Council and the public about cannabis regulation and be used by the program to revise and update strategy as needed.**

The program developed fact sheets and presentations and redesigned its website to share information about cannabis rules and regulations, the Cannabis Program, and available grant and emergency funding. The Cannabis Policy Oversight Team, an advisory body to the Office of Community & Civic Life, released three annual reports with insights about the evolving cannabis industry and policy recommendations for the City and state.

When Civic Portal is fully operational, the program manager anticipates having additional performance information. The manager would like future reports to include program and industry performance measures. The program hired a limited-term Research & Data analyst to help with measurement and reporting.

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## One recommendation implemented



- **We recommended Civic Life develop and communicate a strategy for the Cannabis Program, including coordination with other City bureaus to streamline the licensing and enforcement process and focus the work of the Cannabis Program.**

The Cannabis Program developed a three-year strategic plan in 2020. It focuses the work of the program on the restorative and reparative potential of cannabis decriminalization and equitable regulation. The program reorganized the following year to align resources with its new strategy. The reorganization helped staff increase communication and collaboration with the Oregon Liquor and Cannabis Commission and other City bureaus and launch its online licensing and compliance system. Program staff next plan to develop objectives and strategy for 2023-2026.

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View the [2020 audit report and recommendations](#) and our [1-year follow up report](#).

Visit our online dashboard to track the status of recommendations from other reports

**Audit Team: Jenny Scott, Performance Auditor III**