



**OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL**  
*City of Chicago*



***REPORT OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL'S OFFICE:***

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***DESCRIPTION OF THE RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT OF  
THE STREET SWEEPER PHOTO ENFORCEMENT PROGRAM***

**MAY 2012**

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## OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

*City of Chicago*

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May 4, 2012

To the Mayor, Members of the City Council, the City Clerk, the City Treasurer, and the residents of the City of Chicago:

Following an April 2010 CBS 2 news story, the Inspector General's Office (IGO) initiated an investigation into whether funds were wasted during the research and development of the street sweeper photo enforcement program, which would involve mounting cameras on the City's street sweepers in order to automatically issue tickets for parked vehicles obstructing regularly scheduled street sweeping.<sup>1</sup>

During the investigation, the IGO interviewed current and former City employees involved in the development of program. The interviewees included a representative of the Department of Fleet Management (Fleet) responsible for procuring City vehicles and equipment, two representatives of the Department of Administrative Hearings (DAH) responsible for the adjudication of the parking violations issued via the street sweeper cameras, and a representative of the Mayor's Office who chaired project development meetings and ultimately contacted the representatives of the various departments developing the project, as well as a vendor hired to carry out the project, and informed them that the project was being put on hold.

The IGO is reporting out this information to ensure that the research and implementation efforts already expended by City departments and personnel are not lost should the City consider implementing this system in the future.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "J. Ferguson", written over a horizontal line.

Joseph M. Ferguson  
Inspector General  
City of Chicago

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<sup>1</sup> IGO case #10-0552. The IGO did not find evidence of wrongdoing during the investigation and City employees fully cooperated with the IGO throughout this investigation.

## **I. DESCRIPTION OF STREET SWEEPER PHOTO ENFORCEMENT PROGRAM**

### **A. Project Inception**

According to a representative of Fleet interviewed by the IGO, in approximately 2004, a public budget hearing was held at which residents could voice opinions regarding the budget. This hearing was attended by then-Mayor Richard M. Daley, the Commissioner of Fleet at the time, and other City staff members. An issue was raised regarding street sweeping, to which Mayor Daley responded that cameras would be placed on street sweepers to enforce street sweeping parking regulations and issue parking tickets. According to the Fleet representative, the Mayor's comments came as a surprise to Fleet, as there was no such technology in the market place. Fleet began doing research and conducted a feasibility study which consisted of mounting one camera on a street sweeper. After obtaining positive feedback from the Department of Revenue (DOR) and DAH regarding the results of the feasibility study, Fleet began developing contract specifications for the mounted cameras and the technology that would support the ticketing system.

Subsequent meetings regarding the project involved other interested departments, including the Department of Streets and Sanitation (DSS), the Department of Law (Law), and the Mayor's Office. Issues discussed at these meetings centered on the adjudication and enforceability of parking tickets issued by the street sweepers.

### **B. Contract Award & Initial Development**

On February 21, 2008, the City awarded Affiliated Computer Services, Inc. (ACS) a contract, Purchase Order (PO) 16865, to develop the street sweeper photo enforcement program. The initial award value of PO 16865 was set at a maximum of \$7,221,071. ACS agreed to mount cameras and equipment on City street sweepers, perform video analysis that records the positions of vehicles and posted signs on sweeping routes, and install a system to review and generate parking violations notices based on images received from the sweeper cameras.

PO 16865 contained a revenue generating provision for ACS. For every ticket issued by the sweeper cameras, ACS would receive \$1.48. This provision was intended to provide an incentive for ACS to work hard to get the street sweeper photo enforcement program operational.

After the award of the contract to ACS, the Office of Budget and Management (OBM) approved the purchase of six cameras to be mounted on DSS street sweepers. Fleet worked with ACS to develop the Street sweeper photo enforcement program so that it would generate tickets in a similar fashion to the City's red light photo enforcement system.

### **C. Change to the Municipal Code**

In July 2008, the City passed an ordinance authorizing the issuance of tickets using the street sweeper photo enforcement program and authorizing sweeper tickets to be mailed to offenders.<sup>2</sup>

## **II. LACK OF CAPITAL FUNDING CAUSED PROJECT TO BE TABLED**

In February 2010, DAH, and other interested departments were informed by the Mayor's Office that the project would be tabled for one year. The Mayor's Office representative interviewed by the IGO indicated that the primary reason the street sweeper photo enforcement program was tabled was a lack of capital funding. Prior to notifying department representatives and ACS in February 2010, the former Mayor's Office representative spoke with OBM, who agreed that it was cost prohibitive for the project to go forward. The City was in a poor fiscal position, so it was decided that the project would be readdressed after the City's budget for 2011 was in place.

According to the representative of the Mayor's Office, after running pilot tests, it was concluded that, if the program was to go forward, the use of the paper street sweeping notification signs should be discontinued. In order to pinpoint the location of street sweeper cameras as tickets were issued, it was ultimately determined that Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) tags should be attached to the back of permanent street sweeping signage that would be installed City-wide. The permanent signage and RFID tags would allow the City to actively track the location of street sweepers and enhance the legitimacy of tickets issued. The possibility of attaching RFID tags to the back of the temporary signage was discussed by the City personnel working on the project, but was determined to be unsatisfactory. However, there were concerns regarding the installation of permanent signage. Most importantly, the permanent signage and RFID tags would come at a significant cost, which the former Mayor's Office representative speculated would be between \$10 and \$30 million dollars.<sup>3,4</sup> Also, there were concerns regarding public confusion with the new permanent signage, which would be increased if the signage was rolled-out on a piecemeal basis.

## **III. CONCLUSION**

The IGO's investigation established that, after spending approximately \$395,193 on development, testing, and initial implementation of the street sweeper photo enforcement program, the project was tabled for one year in February 2010 at the behest of the Mayor's Office.

The IGO acknowledges that research and development costs are often inherent in the

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<sup>2</sup> City of Chicago Municipal Code, Chapter 9-105, accessed April 9, 2012, <http://www.amlegal.com/library/il/chicago.shtml>

<sup>3</sup> At roughly the same time that ACS was working with the City of Chicago to develop the sweeper photo enforcement program, ACS was also working with Washington, D.C. to develop a similar system. Instead of using the largely paper street sweeping notification signage that the City of Chicago uses to notify residents when street sweeping will occur, Washington, D.C. installed permanent notification signage.

<sup>4</sup> In an interview with the IGO, the Fleet representative recalled that ACS offered to cover some of the costs associated with installing permanent signs in the City of Chicago, but approval for the permanent signs was never granted.

introduction of new technology and new City systems. Furthermore, projects of this nature also often require communication and cooperation amongst interested departments on a broad scale. For instance, although Fleet is the listed “owner” of PO 16865, actual execution of the contract necessitated the input and cooperation of no less than seven other City departments, including OBM, DSS, DAH, DOR, Law, the Department of Procurement Services, and the Mayor’s Office.

In this case, the departments involved in the research and development of the sweeper photo enforcement program appear to have made a good faith effort to work collaboratively to evaluate the viability of a City-wide street sweeper photo enforcement program. However, based on the IGO’s investigation, the work remains unfinished, and any benefits that could be gleaned from implementation of the program remain unrealized. Although the ACS contract was allowed to expire on January 31, 2011, the City may wish to revisit the feasibility of a street sweeper photo enforcement program in the future, particularly if technological advances or programs implemented in other cities provide more evidence for cost-effectiveness. For example, the potential for reallocation of the valuable City resources currently used to enforce street sweeping parking rules, such as traffic enforcement personnel and Chicago Police Department patrol cars and officers, or any ancillary benefits from data gathered through the sweeper cameras, merits further analysis. Further possible benefits for consideration may include more targeted parking enforcement activity that may foster improved public perception of the City’s street sweeping program and quality of life.

**CITY OF CHICAGO OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL**

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<b>To Suggest Ways to Improve City Government</b>	Visit our website: <a href="https://chicagoinspectorgeneral.org/get-involved/help-improve-city-government/">https://chicagoinspectorgeneral.org/get-involved/help-improve-city-government/</a>
<b>To Report Fraud, Waste, and Abuse in City Programs</b>	Call the IGO's toll-free hotline 866-IG-TIPLINE (866-448-4754). Talk to an investigator from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday-Friday. Or visit our website: <a href="http://chicagoinspectorgeneral.org/get-involved/fight-waste-fraud-and-abuse/">http://chicagoinspectorgeneral.org/get-involved/fight-waste-fraud-and-abuse/</a>

**MISSION**

The Chicago Inspector General's Office (IGO) is an independent, nonpartisan oversight agency whose mission is to promote economy, efficiency, and integrity in the administration of programs and operations of City government. The IGO achieves this mission through:

- Administrative and Criminal Investigations
- Audits of City programs and operations
- Reviews of City programs, operations and policies

From these activities, the IGO issues reports of findings, and disciplinary and policy recommendations to assure that City officials, employees and vendors are held accountable for the provision of efficient, cost-effective government operations and further to prevent, detect, identify, expose and eliminate waste, inefficiency, misconduct, fraud, corruption, and abuse of public authority and resources.

**AUTHORITY**

The authority to produce reports and recommendations on ways to improve City operations is established in the City of Chicago Municipal Code § 2-56-030(c), which confers upon the Inspector General the following power and duty:

*To promote economy, efficiency, effectiveness and integrity in the administration of the programs and operations of the city government by reviewing programs, identifying any inefficiencies, waste and potential for misconduct therein, and recommending to the mayor and the city council policies and methods for the elimination of inefficiencies and waste, and the prevention of misconduct.*