



CITY OF ATLANTA

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ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30303-0300

TEL (404) 330-6100

ANDRE DICKENS
MAYOR

May 16, 2024

Ms. Shannon Manigault, OIG
City of Atlanta
Atlanta, GA 30303

Dear Ms. Manigault,

In response to your letter dated May 9, 2024, please know that one of the pillars of Mayor Andre Dickens's administration is effective, efficient, and ethical government. We take allegations of wrongdoing very seriously, especially if it involves a leader of the organization.

We have reviewed the report regarding allegations that Commissioner Tarlesha Smith abused the power of her position regarding her daughter's employment, retaliated against her daughter's supervisor, and directed the personnel-related activities of another agency to benefit her immediate family member. Based on the initial review, we know that a conflict of interest was created when personnel matters involving her relative were not escalated to the Mayor's Office or City Law for resolution and to prevent even the appearance of impropriety.

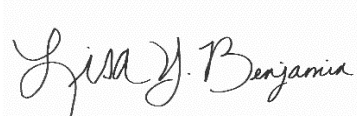
We have assigned the matter to City Law for an independent investigation. As your report indicated, there were several employees that you were unable to interview, and we want to ensure we have a comprehensive review of the facts. We have placed Commissioner Tarlesha Smith on administrative leave pending the outcome of the investigation and additional actions for other employees may be forthcoming.

Immediately, we requested that City Law develop recommendations and an updated citywide policy related to immediate family members to ensure there is no conflict of interest in the execution of duties. To the extent that the organization's authority extends beyond their department, specifically for those entities that provide internal services such as the Department of Human Resources we are also identifying an escalation process for matters involving related parties.

We believe that the OIG and other compliance organizations should conduct investigations in partnership with the administration to ensure the safeguarding of records. This administration has been in discussions with you on the process to access information that allows for timely response and safeguards those records in accordance with the law and best practices.

We appreciate your partnership in ensuring that the city maintains strong integrity.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lisa Y. Benjamin". The signature is written in a cursive style with a light grey rectangular background behind it.

Lisa Y. Benjamin
Chief Operating Officer

C: Honorable Mayor Andre Dickens
Odie Donald, Chief of Staff
Patrise Perkins Hooker, City Attorney
Raines Carter, Solicitor
LaChandra Burks, Deputy Chief Operating Officer
Jason Ingram, Deputy Chief Operating Officer



CITY OF ATLANTA
Office of the Chief Operating Officer

ANDRE DICKENS
Mayor

55 Trinity Avenue, S.W., Suite 2400
Atlanta, GA 30303
404-330-6100

LISA Y. BENJAMIN
Chief Operating Officer

May 22, 2024

Ms. Shannon Manigault, OIG
City of Atlanta
Atlanta, GA 30303

Dear Ms. Manigault,

Please accept this correspondence as an update on the administration's actions and response to your letter dated March 29, 2024, to the Commissioner of Public Works and Chief Procurement Officer who report to the Mayor's Office. The matter identified relates to a former employee of Public Works with an allegation of collusion with a vendor on a contract. The report identifies that there was no financial benefit to the employee. Additionally, this **activity primarily occurred between 2014-2021** under previous administrations.

We want to also bring to your attention that the most recent procurement and legislation for contracting related to this vendor provides a summary of OIG Findings, Review/Conclusions, and Proactive Steps of the administration with no findings. **Attached are the June, 2022 legislation which you will note as a completed iPro Report with no findings, and the subsequent Feb, 2023 contract for A/E vendors.**

Given the nature of the allegations and that much of the alleged behavior occurred close to a decade ago, the City Law Department has initiated an investigation and the employee who now works in another department has been placed on administrative leave. Once the investigation concludes, a determination of actions necessitated by the findings will occur.

We appreciate your partnership in ensuring that the city maintains strong integrity and the opportunity to respond to your report.

Sincerely,

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Lisa Y. Benjamin
Chief Operating Officer

C: Honorable Mayor Andre Dickens
Odie Donald, Chief of Staff
Patrise Perkins Hooker, City Attorney
LaChandra Burks, Deputy Chief Operating Officer