

## **Assessment of the Effectiveness of Internal Controls – FY 2020**

It is the policy of the Authority to prepare its financial statements in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America as set forth by the Governmental Accounting Standards Board for proprietary funds. We accomplish this by adhering to the Development Authority's Accounting Manual which documents and outlines a system of internal controls which is developed to reduce fraud and abuse and to produce financial statements on a consistent basis.

The Development Authority of the North Country has developed an Accounting Manual which documents the principles, policies and procedures governing the Authority's accounting practices.

The principles, policies and procedures provide:

- A foundation for a system of internal controls
- Guidance in current financial activities
- Criteria for decisions on appropriate accounting treatment.
- Accounting staff with direction and guidance in connection with those accounting transactions, procedures, and reports that should be uniform throughout the Authority.

When consistently applied throughout the Authority, these principles and policies assure that the various financial statements issued by the Authority accurately reflect the results of the Authority's operations.

Internal controls provide a system of checks and balances intended to identify irregularities, prevent waste, fraud and abuse from occurring, and assist in resolving discrepancies that are accidentally introduced in the operations of the business. Examples of internal controls implemented at the Development Authority are as follows:

- Dual signatures are required for disbursements in excess of \$15,000
- Requisitions and purchase orders must be authorized prior to encumbering Development Authority funds. Invoices received must be authorized prior to payment.
- Employee reimbursements are appropriately documented, approved by the employee's supervisor and audited by Compliance staff prior to payment.
- Bank accounts are reconciled monthly and are reviewed and approved by the Chief Financial Officer.
- Accounting functions are divided among employees so that the work of one employee complements and acts as a check on the work of another.

The system of internal controls of the Development Authority are monitored on a continual basis by the Chief Financial Officer and audited by Compliance staff who report the results of such audits to the Executive Director.

On an annual basis, the financial statements of the Development Authority are audited by an independent CPA firm. While the auditors were not engaged to perform an audit of internal controls, the auditors did not identify any deficiencies in internal control that they considered to be a control deficiency, significant deficiency, or material weaknesses during the audit for the fiscal year ended March 31, 2020.

In summary, the present internal control structure of the Development Authority is sufficient to meet the internal control objectives that pertain to the prevention and detection of fraud, errors and irregularities in the financial reporting of the Development Authority.