



Agenda Report

Fullerton City Council

MEETING DATE: SEPTEMBER 21, 2021

TO: CITY COUNCIL

SUBMITTED BY: STEVE DANLEY, ACTING CITY MANAGER

PREPARED BY: LUCINDA WILLIAMS, CITY CLERK

SUBJECT: PUBLIC RECORDS REQUEST PROCESS

SUMMARY

Council Member Zahra requested, supported by Council Member Silva, that Council Members discuss the City's public records request process.

RECOMMENDATION

Provide direction to staff.

PRIORITY POLICY STATEMENTS

Not applicable.

FISCAL IMPACT

None.

DISCUSSION

On August 3, 2021, Council Member Zahra, supported by Council Member Silva, requested a City Council discussion of the City's public records request process.

The City Clerk's Office manually managed all public records requests received by the City before 2021. The City implemented a new software application called GovQA earlier this year to assist with management and coordination of public records requests which has significantly streamlined the workflow required to process these requests. The software also includes a public portal for making and viewing requests, which has increased customer service and efficiency.

The City Clerk's Office receives all public records requests on behalf of the City. Requestors may request documents directly through the GovQA public records portal. The portal directs requestors to the location of the requested records if the City has those

records available online or as part of an already posted public records request. The public may also call, email, mail or visit the City Clerk's Office to make a request, which City Clerk staff inputs into the GovQA system for processing.

City Clerk staff routes the request within GovQA to collect responsive records from departments. Before releasing records to the requestor, the City Clerk's Office reviews the request with the City Attorney and redacts any information not publicly disclosable. The system posts a summary of completed requests and responsive records in the public portal on the City's website. The City Clerk's Office releases electronic records through the public records portal and/or provides hard copy records at a cost of \$0.15 per page.

The City processes between 450 and 600 public records requests annually. The City Clerk's Office coordinates between 30 and 45 open requests at any time. The following table shows the number of requests received over the past five years:

Historic Public Records Request Activity*

Year	Number Requests Received
2017	479
2018	449
2019	490
2020	507
2021	570 as of September 1, 2021

*Does not include duplicate, incomplete or withdrawn requests.

The City received 570 public records requests between January 1, 2021 and September 1, 2021. The following table shows the number of requests delegated to each department:

2021 Public Records Requests By Department*

Department	Number Requests Received
Information Technology	2
Library	4
Airport	4
City Attorney's Office	7
Parks and Recreation	12
City Manager's Office	50
City Clerk's Office	69
Human Resources	72
Administrative Services	103
Fire	143

Public Works	242
Police	348
Community and Economic Development	415

*Some individual requests dispersed to multiple departments.

Staff will be available at the September 21, 2021 City Council meeting to answer further questions and take any direction provided by City Council at that meeting.