2021 PUBLIC DISCLOSURE REPORT

CITY CLERK'S OFFICE

A Year in Review

The City's public records request process is managed centrally by the City Clerk's Office (CCO) to ensure compliance with the Public Records Act, and to provide efficient and uniform service. CCO strives to provide records as quickly as possible. Our goal is to respond to "*Routine*" requests within five business days, and "*Complex*" requests are delivered to requestors in installments, with the first installment typically delivered two to three weeks after a request is made.
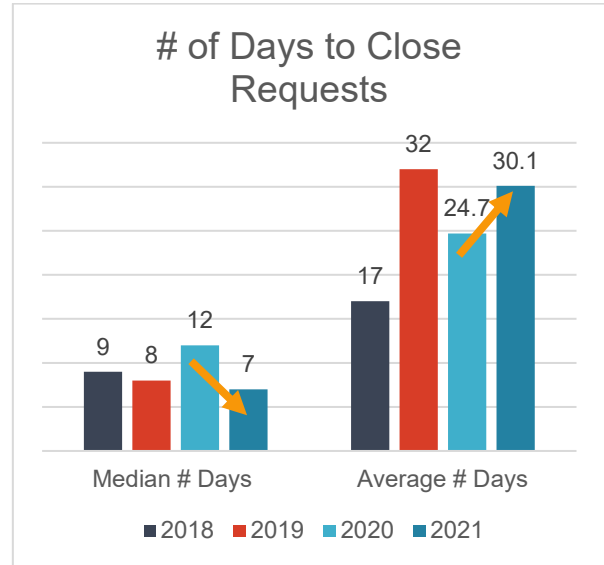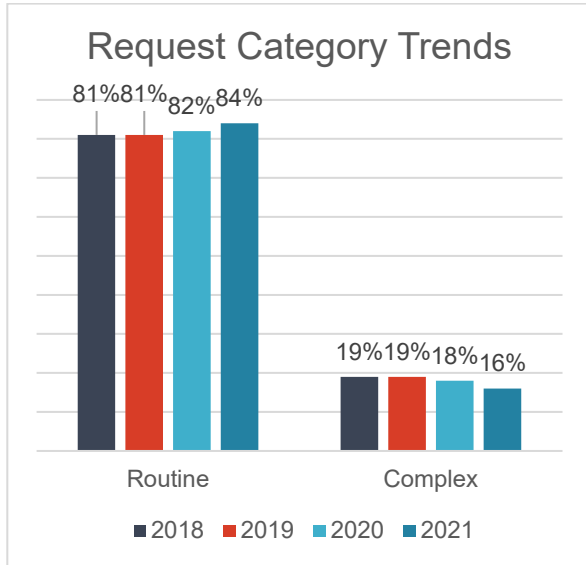
Routine requests were generally assigned by rotation to four CCO staff, and all *Complex* requests were assigned to the Public Disclosure Specialist. CCO staff work with Department Records Liaisons and other City staff to search for and produce non-email records, and CCO performs a central search for archived emails. The City estimates its total costs for fulfilling public records requests in 2021 was approximately $247,695, representing a 13% increase from 2020.

In 2021, the City received **491 requests** for public records. This is the highest number of public records requests ever received in one year, representing a 54% increase over the previous year. The following chart shows the number of requests received annually over the last ten years.
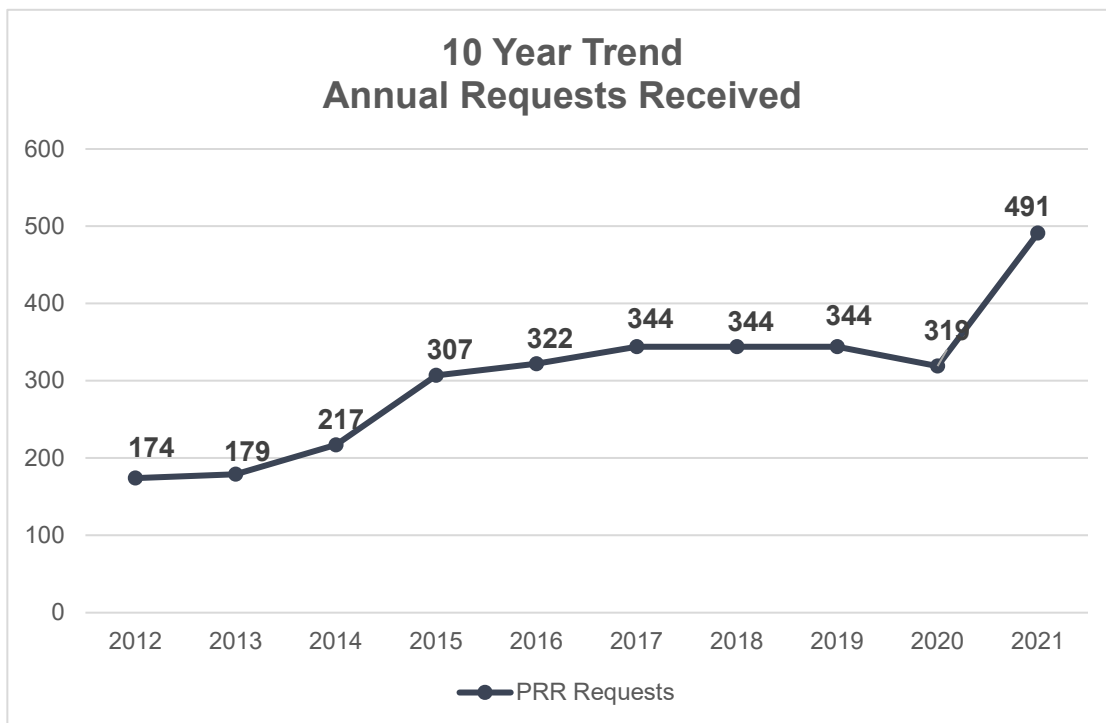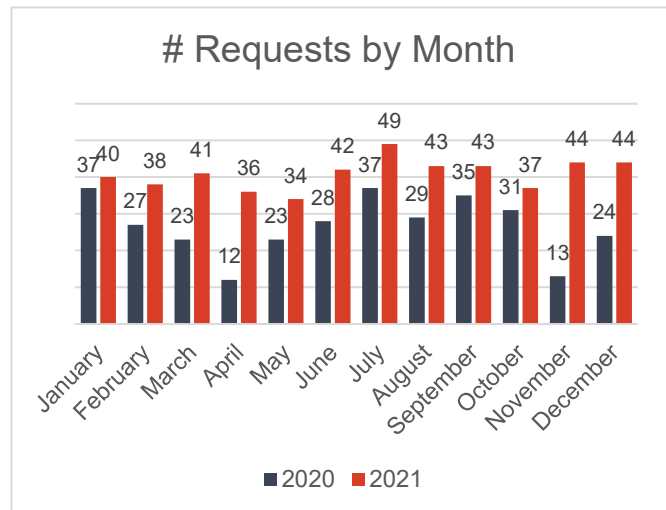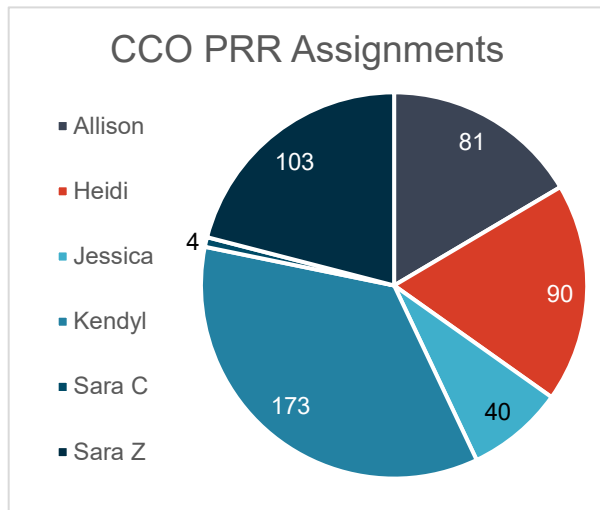
2021 Request Metrics

A total of 448 requests were closed in 2021 with 84% categorized as Routine and 16% categorized as Complex. The _median_ number of days to final disposition was 7 days, down 5 days from 2020; and the _average_ number of days to final disposition was 30.1 days, up 5 days from 2020. The increase in the average number of days can be attributed to only 4% (17) of the requests closed making up 48% of the total number of days to final disposition for all the requests closed in 2021.

Request Category Trends

Category	2018	2019	2020	2021
Routine	81%	81%	82%	84%
Complex	19%	19%	18%	16%

of Days to Close Requests

	2018	2019	2020	2021
Median # Days	9	8	12	7
Average # Days	17	32	24.7	30.1

53% (253) of _all_ requests closed in the reporting period were closed within 5 days. Note that CCO makes records available to even more requests within the first five days, but the # of Days to Close also includes the time it takes a requestor to pay an invoice and claim their records. The City collected $1,804 in copying fees in 2021; and 30% (143) of requests were fulfilled by the City but were never claimed by the requestor. For two consecutive years, the highest number of requests have been submitted in the month of July.

CCO PRR Assignments

- Allison: 81
- Heidi: 90
- Jessica: 40
- Kendyl: 173
- Sara C: 4
- Sara Z: 103

Requests by Month

Month	2020	2021
January	37	40
February	27	38
March	23	41
April	12	36
May	23	34
June	28	42
July	37	49
August	29	43
September	35	43
October	31	37
November	13	44
December	24	44

Permitting Records

CCO works with Planning & Community Development, Public Works, and the Code Enforcement/Customer Response Team to search for and disclose building and property records.

In 2021, property requests made up 43% (210) of the total number of all requests received (491) during the reporting period. Property requests have increased by 42% from 2020 (148), and 8% from 2019 (194).

Top 5 Requestors

In 2021, nearly a quarter of all requests received within the reporting period were from five individual requestors. In an effort to provide every requestor the "most timely possible action" to their request, when necessary, CCO places multiple requests from one requestor into its own queue. We process their earlier requests first and their subsequent requests are started after the previous request is complete. Requestors can prioritize their requests if desired.

Requestor	No. Requests in 2021	Topics
Kathleen Russell	41	Trees, development records, permit files, permit metrics reports.
Tom McCormick	26	Point Wells, 27th Avenue, beach access, Richmond Beach bridge, emails and text messages, railroad records, wastewater records, appeal records, various other property records.
Eglick/Whited	16	Permit and planning files and correspondence related to homes in Innis Arden community.
Braden Mineer	13	Issued building permits for residential and commercial properties.
April Brown	10	Code Enforcement against own property.

Public Disclosure Administration

Launch of GovQA

In April of 2021, CCO implemented a public records and enterprise workflow solution that allows requestors to submit, pay for, and view their requests through a public portal. CCO also uses the software to log and track requests, assign tasks to and communicate with staff, review records and perform redactions/produce a withholding log, correspond with requestors, and release records.

From January to April 2021, CCO spent a considerable amount of time updating its public disclosure templates and configuring the software's data fields and workflows. And there is continued work to ensure our processes are efficient and the software is performing optimally.

GovQA is capturing many request metrics that will make JLARC reporting in 2022 a more streamlined process and will provide additional performance measure information that we previously lacked the capability to collect.

Continued Issues with Email Archive

Halfway through 2020, the City's IT team was able to determine the root cause of the issues CCO was experiencing with the City's email archive system (CommVault) and CCO identified an interim search fix while we researched replacing the software with a new service. The issues with the archive resulted in CCO having to reprocess 34 requests that were affected by the error, which took through September of 2021 to fully complete.

September through December 2021, IT and Clerk's demoed four email archive solutions and in January of 2022 decided to move forward with M365 eDiscovery to manage email. This option requires engaging a consultant to migrate ten years of email from CommVault into M365. This work is expected to be completed in 2022.

While we are in the interim period, to perform an email search, CCO must run 5 individual searches in two different repositories and download 6 .pst files for each request. When the migration is complete, there should only be a need to perform one search that will download into one .pst file.

Public Records Act Violations

There were no public records lawsuits against the City in 2021.

The Clerk's Office now accepts card payments for copies of public records!

Customer Feedback

At the time a request is closed, CCO offers requestors the opportunity to complete a customer service satisfaction survey. Feedback from 8 requestors was received in 2021.

Over the last several years, the consistent complaint CCO received about its public disclosure service was that we only accepted cash or check for copies of public records and that we needed to accept card payments. With the launch of GovQA, CCO now accepts cards through the Internet, making the public disclosure process more convenient for requestors and efficient for staff.

The complete survey responses from 2021 are as follows:

How would you rate our process for handling your request?
Excellent =5   Very Good =2   Satisfactory =0   Poor =1

How courteous was your treatment by our staff?
Excellent =6   Very Good =1   Satisfactory =0   Poor =1

Other survey comments:

- I was pleased by the quick response and the clear communication of what the next steps were. The charge was minimal (under $2). Everyone was courteous and pleasant to talk to. I received what I requested without having to follow up. Although I am a reporter for the Shoreline Area News, this was a personal request with no intent to report on it and I was never questioned whether I was asking as a reporter. I would rate this as a 10 out of 10 possible points.
- The original response to my request ended up in spam. I had to call to connect with someone in the office. If there is a way to let people know that this might happen, it would improve the experience. Otherwise, the staff was very responsive and I received what I needed.
- Never had a real person. Was not able to access the information online. Said I had email account already when I tried to make a new account, password did not work, I know the password I used the same one for everything, I did not get the report that I requested.
- As always, service is quick, helpful with no complaints from me. If pizza and beer could be provided as part of the service, service ratings would be 10+100!!

Summary

In 2021, CCO implemented new technology, updated its processes, and received its largest number of annual requests it has ever received! We started 2021 with 26 open requests, received 491 requests during the 12-month reporting period, and closed 91% of all of them.

Attachments

JLARC Public Records Requests Report for Shoreline for 2021, initially submitted July 2022 and resubmitted in August 2022.

% of requests received in 2021 that were closed in 2021:

91%

Median number days to close request:

7

% records request received year-over-year Increase:

54%

Public Records Requests Report for Shoreline for 2021

Baseline data

The reporting period is for the calendar year (January 1st to December 31st). Click here for guidance related to Baseline data.

Baseline data
Total number of open public records requests at the beginning of the reporting period
26
Of the number of requests open at the beginning of the reporting period, how many were closed during the reporting period?
25
Total number of public records requests received during the reporting period
491
Of the requests received during the reporting period, how many were closed during the reporting period?
448

Metric 1

Total number of requests closed within five days. Click here for guidance related to Metric 1.

Number of requests closed within five days
Number of requests closed within five days
253
If your agency feels the data provided for this metric is unduly influenced by a small number of unusually large requests, you may provide additional explanation here

Metric 2

The number of requests where an estimated response time beyond five days was provided. Click here for guidance related to Metric 2.

Number of requests where an estimated response time beyond 5 days was provided
Number of requests where an estimated response time beyond five days was provided
238
You may provide additional explanation here for the data provided for this metric

Metric 3

Average and median number of days from receipt of request to the date of final disposition of request. Click here for guidance related to Metric 3.

Average and median number of days from receipt to final disposition

Number of requests with final disposition

473

Number of days to final disposition

14225

Median number of days to final disposition

7

Average number of days to final disposition (calculated)

30.1

If your agency feels the data provided for this metric are unduly influenced by a small number of unusually large requests, you may provide additional explanation here

Metric 4

Number of public records requests for which the agency formally sought additional clarification from the requester. Click here for guidance related to Metric 4.

Number of requests for which additional clarification was sought

Number of requests with additional clarification sought

36

You may provide additional explanation here for the data provided for this metric

Metric 5

Number of requests denied and the most common reasons for denying requests. Click here for guidance related to Metric 5.

Number of requests denied in part or in full.

Number of closed requests that were denied in full

0

Number of closed requests that were partially denied or redacted

54

Please provide the 5 to 10 most common reasons for denying requests during this reporting period

Reason 1

RCW 42.56.230(5) Financial Info

Reason 2

RCW 5.60.060(2)(a); RCW 42.56.070(1) Attorney-Client Privilege

Reason 3

RCW 42.56.240(2) Identity of Complainants, Witnesses and Victims

Reason 4

RCW 42.56.230(3) Privacy

Reason 5

RCW 42.56.230(4) Banking Information

Reason 6

RCW 42.56.070(1); 18 USC 2721 2725; RCW 42.56.590(10)(a) Driver's License

Reason 7

Reason 8

Reason 9

Reason 10

You may provide additional explanation here for the data provided for this metric

Metric 6

Number of requests abandoned by requesters. Click here for guidance related to Metric 6.

Number of requests abandoned by requesters
Number of requests abandoned by requesters
143
You may provide additional explanation here for the data provided for this metric

Metric 7

Number of requests, by type of requester. Click here for guidance related to Metric 7.

Number of requests, by type of requesters

Requester type	Individuals
Other (please explain)	
Total requests	305
Requester type	Law firms
Other (please explain)	
Total requests	41
Requester type	Organizations
Other (please explain)	
Total requests	71
Requester type	Insurers
Other (please explain)	
Total requests	1
Requester type	Governments
Other (please explain)	
Total requests	5
Requester type	Incarcerated persons
Other (please explain)	
Total requests	
Requester type	Media

Metric 8

Percent of requests fulfilled electronically compared to the percent of requests fulfilled by physical records. Click here for guidance related to Metric 8.

Percent of requests fulfilled electronically compared to percent fulfilled by physical records
Number of requests fulfilled electronically
309
Number of requests fulfilled by physical records
10
Number of requests fulfilled by electronic and physical records
24
Number of requests closed with no responsive records
130
Percent of requests fulfilled electronically (calculated)
65%
Percent of requests fulfilled by physical records (calculated)
2%
Percent of requests fulfilled by electronic and physical records (calculated)

5%

Percent of requests closed with no responsive records (calculated)

27%

You may provide additional explanation here for the data provided for this metric

Metric 9

Number of requests where one or more physical records were scanned to create an electronic version to fulfill disclosure. <u>Click here</u> for guidance related to Metric 9.

Number of requests where records were scanned
Requests scanned
42
You may provide additional explanation here for the data provided for this metric

Metric 10

Average estimated staff time spent on each public records request. <u>Click here</u> for guidance related to Metric 10.

Average estimated staff time spent on each request
Estimated total staff time in hours
4775
Average estimated staff time in hours per request (calculated)
9
If your agency feels the data provided for this metric is unduly influenced by a small number of unusually large requests, you may provide additional explanation here

Metric 11

Estimated total costs incurred by the agency in fulfilling records requests, including staff compensation and legal review and average cost per request. <u>Click here</u> for guidance related to Metric 11.

Estimated total costs incurred
Estimated total cost
$247,695
Average estimated cost per request (calculated)
$479.10
☑ **Our agency applied an overhead rate in our calculation of estimated costs.**
You may provide additional explanation here for the data provided for this metric
Salary and benefits were included in costs.

Metric 12

Number of claims filed alleging a violation of Chapter 42.56 or other public records statutes during the reporting period, categorized by type and exemption at issue (if applicable). Click here for guidance related to Metric 12.

Number of claims filed alleging a violation of Chapter 42.56 RCW
There were no claims filed alleging a violation of Chapter 42.56 RCW.
You may provide additional explanation here for the data provided for this metric

Metric 13

Costs incurred by the agency litigating claims alleging a violation of Chapter 42.56 RCW or other public records statutes during the reporting period, including any penalties imposed on the agency. Click here for guidance related to Metric 13.

Costs incurred litigating claims alleging a violation of Chapter 42.56 RCW
Total litigation costs
$0
You may provide additional explanation here for the data provided for this metric

Metric 14

Estimated costs incurred by the agency with managing and retaining records, including staff compensation and purchases of equipment, hardware, software, and services to manage and retain public records. Click here for guidance related to Metric 14.

Estimated costs incurred managing and retaining records
Cost of agency staff who manage/retain records
$256,438
Cost of systems that manage/retain records
$29,920
Cost of services purchased for managing/retaining records
$8,289
Total estimated cost for managing and retaining records (calculated)
$294,647
☑ **Our agency applied an overhead rate in our calculation of estimated costs.**
You may provide additional explanation here for the data provided for this metric
Salary and benefits were used in calculation

Metric 15

Expenses recovered by the agency from requesters for fulfilling public records requests, including any customized charges. Click here for guidance related to Metric 15.

Expenses recovered from requesters

Total Expenses Recovered	$1,804
Customized Service Charges	
Description of Service Charges	

You may provide additional explanation here for the data provided for this metric