



Date: December 24, 2018

To: Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Patrick H. West, City Manager *T.H.W.*

Subject: **Public Records Request Statistics**

As part of ongoing efforts to improve City services through technology, the City Manager's Office launched the GovQA Public Records Request Management System (GovQA) on November 6, 2017. GovQA enables City staff to accurately and efficiently manage a large volume of public records requests in accordance with the California Public Records Act (PRA). GovQA serves as the City's central repository for all PRA requests, provides the public with an easy to use portal to submit PRA requests, and makes the management of PRA requests considerably more efficient for staff and the public through its automated features.

The City maintains two GovQA portals. One portal is managed by the City Manager's Office, where PRA requests are processed for 22 of the City's 23 departments. The Long Beach Police Department (LBPD) maintains a separate parallel GovQA portal given the nature of the sensitive investigative law enforcement records it manages. Three City Manager's Office staff and two LBPD staff manage PRA requests as part of their collateral duties.

Prior to GovQA, staff were unable to accurately track and process PRA requests received each year across City departments. In many cases, PRA requests were fielded, processed, responded to, and closed directly by departments using manual data entry methods devoid of a coordinated system to accurately review and record their status. Over time, procedures were put in place to improve Citywide coordination of PRA requests; however, effectively and accurately processing, tracking, and responding to requests remained difficult.

The substantial increase in the volume of PRA requests received Citywide over the last several years has resulted in a need for additional resources and staff to offset the operational impacts felt in each department. Furthermore, PRA requests require departments to dedicate hours of staff time responding to requests, including the retrieval and review of records, creating a backlog of work and increasing City costs.

In the one-year period since the launch of GovQA (November 6, 2017 to November 5, 2018), the City received 5,835 PRA requests. On average, it took staff 16.5 days to close out requests, and 5 days to respond to requesters with a status update of their request. The total number received does not take into account many PRA requests that seek multiple records in one request. For instance, the Development Services and Fire Departments regularly handle PRA requests that seek dozens of addresses or subjects in one request. Given the passage of Senate Bill 1421 set to take effect on January 1, 2019, staff expects the volume of PRA requests to significantly increase in the coming year, particularly those received by the LBPD. SB 1421 retroactively opens to the public internal investigations records currently exempt under the PRA pertaining to officer-involved shootings and other major uses of force, along with confirmed cases of sexual assault and lying while on duty.

**Public Records Requests Statistics
December 24, 2018
Page 2**

A chart with a breakdown of PRA requests received by each City department is attached. It should be noted that requests are occasionally directed to the wrong department in error or marked as "Other/Unknown" by the requester, which is the case for many PRA requests intended for the Offices of the Mayor and City Council.

For more information, please contact Assistant to the City Manager Andrew Vialpando at (562) 570-6782 or by email at Andrew.Vialpando@longbeach.gov.

Attachment

**CC: CHARLES PARKIN, CITY ATTORNEY
LAURA L. DOUD, CITY AUDITOR
TOM MODICA, ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER
KEVIN JACKSON, DEPUTY CITY MANAGER
ALL DEPARTMENT HEADS
REBECCA GARNER, ADMINISTRATIVE DEPUTY TO THE CITY MANAGER
ANDREW VIALPANDO, ASSISTANT TO THE CITY MANAGER**

Number of PRA requests received by Department

November 6, 2017 to November 5, 2018

DEPARTMENT	# RECEIVED	
Airport	23	
City Attorney	32	
City Auditor	12	
City Clerk	152	
City Manager	168	
City Prosecutor	14	
Civil Service	9	
Development Services	101	706
Development Services - Building	263	
Development Services - Code Enforcement	192	
Development Services - Planning	150	
Economic Development	24	
Energy Resources	14	
Financial Management	83	
Fire Department - Code Enforcement	99	1,088
Fire Department - CUPA	271	
Fire Department - General	269	
Fire Department – Medical	449	
Harbor	97	
Health and Human Services	42	77
Health and Human Services – Medical	35	
Human Resources	18	
Library Services	2	
Marijuana Oversight	20	
Mayor / City Council	34	
Other/Unknown (routed to City Manager's Office)	283	
Parks, Recreation, and Marine	20	203
Parks, Recreation, and Marine – Animal Care Services	179	
Parks, Recreation, and Marine - Maintenance	1	
Parks, Recreation, and Marine - Marinas	1	
Police Department	2,599	
Public Works	119	
Water Department	39	

Citywide Total: 5,835

Average Time to Close Out a PRA Request: 16.5 days

Average Time to Respond to Requester (i.e. status update, providing estimate of time, etc.): 5 Days