MEMORANDUM OF TRANSMITTAL



To: Stephanie Herdocia, City Clerk

Claudio Rosado, Police Support Services Manager

From: George J. McGowan, CPA

Director, Office of Audit Services and Management Support

Date: November 28, 2022

Subject: Follow-up Review of Public Records Process Improvements (Report No. 23-03)

Attached is a summary of the status of recommendations as determined from our follow-up review of the Public Records Process Improvements (Report No. 22-01), issued October 12, 2021.

This review consisted of inquiries of City personnel and examinations of supporting documentation. It is substantially less in scope than an audit. The evidence obtained provided a reasonable basis for our conclusions; however, had an audit been performed, other matters may have come to our attention that would have been reported to you and our conclusions may have needed to be modified.

We are pleased to report that most of the recommendations contained in the original report are implemented or partially implemented. We ask management to review and reconsider the recommendations not implemented for viability and utility.

We would like to thank the management of the City Clerk's office and the Police Support Services section for their cooperation during this follow-up review.

GJM

Attachment

C: The Honorable Buddy Dyer, Mayor
Jody Litchford, Deputy City Attorney
Heather Fagan, Chief of Staff
Kevin Edmonds, Chief Administrative Officer
Eric Smith, Police Chief
James Young, Police Deputy Chief
Natasha Williams, Chief Assistant City Attorney

Natasha Williams, Chief Assistant City Attorney Alexander J. Karden, Chief Assistant City Attorney Betsaida Maldonado, Police Records, ID and Citation Supervisor

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	Recommendations	Concur	Partially Concur	Do Not Concur	Action Plan	Date	Current Status	Comments	
1a	Records Management should continue to monitor PRR volume as compared with staffing resources. During our testing period of 10/1/2020 through 3/31/2021, the City was receiving unprecedented volumes of PRRs and Records Specialists were working large numbers of requests each day. In March 2021, the City Clerk's office added a third Records Specialist to address this sustained PRR volume.	X			We agree with the auditor's comment and will continue to quantify workload to anticipate need and allocation of future resources.	Continuous	Implemented	Staffing continues to be acceptable. The Storekeeper position was reclassified to a Records and Archives Supervisor to appropriately assist with Record Management initiatives. PRR due dates are monitored and tailored as necessary to department needs or emergency situations. Available resources are adequate to maintain queue.	
1b	Records Management should enhance departmental staff understanding of public records law requirements and City PRR processes by developing procedural documentation for departmental staff to include guidance for timeliness of responses, input of staff time, redaction requirements, legal review, how to estimate costs, and who to contact with questions.	X			We agree with the auditor's comment. Records Management has updated Next Request training material to include more public records content. Records Management is in the process of updating resources available to City staff.	End of 2021 calendar year	Partially Implemented	Next Request/PRR monthly training schedule has been established. Topic based training will commence Jan 2023.	
1c	Records Management should quarterly communicate with Next Request users with any updated expectations and refreshers regarding policy changes and common errors noted by Records Specialists.	X			We agree with the auditor's comment and will look at utilizing communication tools to provide updates.	End of 2021 calendar year	Partially Implemented	Currently there are standing meetings scheduled with departments that receive large amounts of PRR's. Comprehensive communication will commence Jan 2023	
2a	Records Management should develop Citywide policies for systemic records organization and retention encouraging digital formats, scanning of historical records, and use of central records depositories for paper records.	X			We agree with the auditor's comment and are in the process of revising and proposing policy changes.	First Quarter 2022 Calendar Year	Partially Implemented	Continued implementation of Laserfiche: staff completed records retention training to properly guide City-wide policy for digital retention. Records Management software implementation remains on track.	

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2b	Records Management should collaborate with City Departments to identify additional tools/resources Records Specialists can use to ensure PRRs are in the City's jurisdiction and are sufficiently specific. Procedures should be developed to identify duplicate requests or multiple requests for the same records, and respond to these requests with records already provided by the department.	X			We agree with the auditor's comment.	First Quarter 2022 Calendar Year	Implemented	Records Management has continued to use available resources. IT consulted to confirm that no additional resources are available to confirm jurisdiction of nonspecific addresses. Process remains to review with departments. We continue to follow business processes to identify similar requests. Note: Response to this question should reflect original audit response "We disagree with the auditor's comment as this is not always feasible. Records Specialists use the City's locator tool when provided a complete address. However, some requestors provide intersections or a range of areas that cannot be identified or located with the City's locator tool. These must be routed to the departments to determine jurisdiction and assist with responding."
2c	Records Management should collaborate with departmental staff to develop information collection forms for requests that require specific data to perform records searches.	X			We agree with the auditor's comment and in some instances, such as technology services, have already implemented this format.	On-going collaboration/a s-needed	Implemented	This is a continuous effort. One instance so far-Records Management has adjusted information collected when calls for service reports are requested.
2d	Records Management should continue efforts in its proof of concept electronics records project (limited roll-out of LaserFiche) and, should it prove successful, dedicate resources for a more extensive implementation. Implementation of a City-wide electronic document management system would result in efficiencies in the PRR response as well as efficiencies across many other City processes.	X			We agree with the auditor's comment and have been implementing Laserfiche.	Target dates proposed and working towards are Records Management Plan – end of 2021 Calendar Year, Laserfiche buildout – FY 2021-2022, Digitizing/Pres ervation – FY 2022-2023	Implemented	Plan is in effect and on target.

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3a	Records Management should consider other open data models for public self-search data tools including, but not limited to building plans and permitting in addition to their present development of public search tools for GIS utilities and code enforcement data.	X			We agree with the auditor's comment.	On-going as identified	Implemented	Records Management continues to look for opportunities to collaborate with departments.
3b	Records Management should consider other PRR process applications, such as GovQA. Four of six cities benchmarked use GovQA for PRR processing and praised this system for creating efficiencies through automated workflows, redaction tools, and robust reporting. Additionally, prior to and in concert with b. above, Records Management should work with the City IT Department to investigate Next Request performance issues and determine if system configurations can be adjusted to optimize Next Request performance.	×			Future discussions on this topic should be considered. Records Management has been in contact with IT to investigate Next Request issues. IT has deployed changes in August 2021 to improve performance.	Evaluation of IT resources and records management applications will be an ongoing process	Not Implemented	Currently not experiencing any issues at this time. Still open to considering other PRR process applications.
3c	Records Management should consider working with City Management to develop a Records Liaison position at City Departments.	X			We agree with the auditor's comments and are including this within the Records Management Plan.	Propose plan outline 1st quarter 2022 Calendar Year		Records Liaison position has been identified as part of the Records Management Plan.
3c	Records Management should consider working with City Management to develop a Records Liaison position at City Departments.	X			We agree with the auditor's comments and are including this within the Records Management Plan.	Propose plan outline 1st quarter 2022 Calendar Year	Implemented	Same as above

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4a	OPD Management should investigate tools and applications to make it easier to scan documents in the field or initiate investigative and incident records in electronic format. Repeat Finding Report No. 20-05, #1	Concur	Parti		OPD management has created a Technology Committee to enhance the digitization of the Department. This committee is looking into the process of making most forms into electronic forms through the Mobile program, as well as the ability to electronically sign and notarize such documents. This includes initial police reports, supplemental reports, witness statements, with the potential to add additional forms, such as victim's rights forms, trespass authorization and notice, etc.	September 2022	Current Status	Comments Concur. Records Management has assisted with the proposal to utilize their microfilm. Records Management has provided training to OPD Records staff regarding microfilm reader machine.

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4b	OPD Management should investigate the establishment of central file storage systems for media and documents not stored in LERMS.	X			All OPD records should be stored in LERMS. OPD users currently have the ability to store all electronic records in LERMS, but are only limited by the current levels of security, server space, and user acceptance. As a benefit to continuing the use of LERMS, the City of Orlando controls the servers for this application, and as such, only has to incur the actual costs of storage, rather than be subjected to price increases or long-term control of evidence when utilizing third parties, such as Tyler Technologies or Axon. To that end, OPD management recommends that a study be conducted to determine the additional server requirements for LERMS to become a fully centralized storage solution.			
4c	OPD Management should enhance current policies requiring timely and consistent upload of all records of the investigation to central secure file storage.	X			See response to 4b above	FY 2022/23		

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5a	OPD Management should begin tracking walk-in PRRs to determine the volume of requests fulfilled outside of Next Request.	×			Currently, OPD Records is prepared to implement a change in procedure requiring that all requests generated outside the NextRequest Portal (walk-in, phone, email, fax, U.S. mail) be entered into NextRequest and then closed immediately upon production of the responsive records. This action requires coordination with the City Clerk's Office to provide account authority to OPD Records staff the ability to close all such requests.	January 2022		Walk-in process proposal was provided to OPD Records August 2021
5b	Based on the volume of requests processed, OPD Management should collaborate with the City Clerk's office to determine if walk- in PRRs should be recorded in Next Request.	X			See response to 5b above	January 2022		Walk-in process proposal was provided to OPD Records August 2021

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6a	OPD Management should create work schedules and responsibility assignments that promote continuity and efficiency of PRR fulfillment.	X			OPD Proposes exploring the idea that a dedicated Records Manager be hired or assigned to the records unit. The current Records Manager has multiple other assignments and priorities and therefore is unable to be involved in the day-to-day operations of OPD Records. The appointment of a dedicated Records Manager with either legal or records management expertise would allow the unit to be reorganized in a more efficient manner in line with the skills and experience of current staff. (see full report for complete response)			August 2021, Records and Cemetery Manager and OPD Records Supervisor collaborated to streamline PRR responses through one OPD Staff assistant. OPD Records Supervisor implemented October 2022
6b	OPD Management should consider: • Dedicating employees to Next Request queue work or having employees take ownership of PRRs and work the requests from initiation to fulfillment. • Adding staff and/or redistributing workload for OPD Records staff.	X			See response to 6a above.	FY 2022/23		August 2021, Records and Cemetery Manager and OPD Records Supervisor collaborated to streamline PRR responses through one OPD Staff assistant. OPD Records Supervisor implemented October 2022

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6c	OPD Management should consider creating or reclassifying a position to create a Records Liaison position(s) within OPD to coordinate between OPD (Records, Media Relations, Legal, investigative staff, Internal Affairs, Forensics, and other departments that generate public records) and the City Clerk's office. The Records Liaison will need expertise in records management, public records law, and police procedure. The Records Liaison would own the PRR process from initiation to fulfillment, and provide final approval for the release of records.	×		See response to 6a above.	FY 2022/23		
7a	OPD management and the City Clerk should collaborate to add these self-service options (and related links) to the City's PRR web page.	X		OPD Management proposes that the City's website be updated to clarify self-service access points, including links to partner agency's records unit when they may be the most efficient source of information for the requester.	March 2022		

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<i>7</i> b	OPD management should set up self-service kiosks in the lobby of the police department to enable requestors to input PRRs in Next Request and access self-service options for public records.				OPD Management believes a dedicated records kiosk in the lobby of OPD may assist requesters who are unaware that they may make requests online for public records. By creating a dedicated kiosk for this process, it may alleviate the need for OPD staff to manually enter the request into NextRequest, as well as provide quick service when the Office Assistant who is handling the window is otherwise unavailable. This proposal requires an expenditure of funds, which will likely reoccur periodically as hardware gets outdated or otherwise can no longer perform its functions. they may be the most efficient source of information for the requester.			

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1a	Records Management should continue to monitor PRR volume as compared with staffing resources. During our testing period of 10/1/2020 through 3/31/2021, the City was receiving unprecedented volumes of PRRs and Records Specialists were working large numbers of requests each day. In March 2021, the City Clerk's office added a third Records Specialist to address this sustained PRR volume.	X			We agree with the auditor's comment and will continue to quantify workload to anticipate need and allocation of future resources.	Continuous	Implemented	Created spreadsheet to better track all PRRs. Two additional records specialist positions have been created to focus on PRRs related to Body Worn Camera (BWC) and other video records. OPD is working with HR on the job classification and posting.
1b	Records Management should enhance departmental staff understanding of public records law requirements and City PRR processes by developing procedural documentation for departmental staff to include guidance for timeliness of responses, input of staff time, redaction requirements, legal review, how to estimate costs, and who to contact with questions.	×			We agree with the auditor's comment. Records Management has updated Next Request training material to include more public records content. Records Management is in the process of updating resources available to City staff.	End of 2021 calendar year	Implemented	Created a full time PRR Liaison within OPD Records Unit. Two additional records specialist positions have been created to focus on PRRs related to Body Worn Camera (BWC) and other video records. OPD is working with HR on the job classification and posting. OPD continues to review the records volume to determine if additional staff resources are needed to fulfill requests and will reevaluate after the two additional records specialists have been deployed.
1c	Records Management should quarterly communicate with Next Request users with any updated expectations and refreshers regarding policy changes and common errors noted by Records Specialists.	X			We agree with the auditor's comment and will look at utilizing communication tools to provide updates.	End of 2021 calendar year	Implemented	Records Unit Supervisor schedules and attends weekly PRR meeting to ensure prompt response and update pending records with City Records Staff. The weekly meetings has enhance OPD Records response and expectations.
2a	Records Management should develop Citywide policies for systemic records organization and retention encouraging digital formats, scanning of historical records, and use of central records depositories for paper records.	X			We agree with the auditor's comment and are in the process of revising and proposing policy changes.	First Quarter 2022 Calendar Year	Planned for Implementation	OPD Records is working to redevelop our Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) as it relates to the organization, retention, and access of our public records system. Additionally, OPD is waiting on the TRaCS System to be fully implemented. TRaCS is currently in the testing phase.

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2b	Records Management should collaborate with City Departments to identify additional tools/resources Records Specialists can use to ensure PRRs are in the City's jurisdiction and are sufficiently specific. Procedures should be developed to identify duplicate requests or multiple requests for the same records, and respond to these requests with records already provided by the department.	X			We agree with the auditor's comment.	First Quarter 2022 Calendar Year	Partially Implemented	OPD records is working on a process to train staff assistants to gather, review, and redact records related to their specific area of concern. A pilot for this process is currently being explored within Traffic Homicide to train their Staff Assistant in PRR process and to act as a liaison to records for the unit.
2c	Records Management should collaborate with departmental staff to develop information collection forms for requests that require specific data to perform records searches.	X			We agree with the auditor's comment and in some instances, such as technology services, have already implemented this format.	On-going collaboration/a s-needed		OPD records has scheduled meetings with specialized units staff to develop internal checklists to determine the types of records that are associated with types of cases and with potential redactions (e.g., active criminal) for the unit to determine.
2d	Records Management should continue efforts in its proof of concept electronics records project (limited roll-out of LaserFiche) and, should it prove successful, dedicate resources for a more extensive implementation. Implementation of a City-wide electronic document management system would result in efficiencies in the PRR response as well as efficiencies across many other City processes.	X			We agree with the auditor's comment and have been implementing Laserfiche.	Target dates proposed and working towards are Records Management Plan – end of 2021 Calendar Year, Laserfiche buildout – FY 2021-2022, Digitizing/Pres ervation – FY 2022-2023		OPD is working on additional SOPs to improve efficiency relating to the uploading and labeling of documents to ease retrieval and accountability.
3 a	Records Management should consider other open data models for public self-search data tools including, but not limited to building plans and permitting in addition to their present development of public search tools for GIS utilities and code enforcement data.	×			We agree with the auditor's comment.	On-going as identified	Not Implemented	OPD has no plans to purchase additional costly Records Management System. OPD remains open to exploring this option in the future as resources allow.

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3b	Records Management should consider other PRR process applications, such as GovQA. Four of six cities benchmarked use GovQA for PRR processing and praised this system for creating efficiencies through automated workflows, redaction tools, and robust reporting. Additionally, prior to and in concert with b. above, Records Management should work with the City IT Department to investigate Next Request performance issues and determine if system configurations can be adjusted to optimize Next Request performance.	X			Future discussions on this topic should be considered. Records Management has been in contact with IT to investigate Next Request issues. IT has deployed changes in August 2021 to improve performance.	Evaluation of IT resources and records management applications will be an ongoing process	Not Implemented	Next Request continues to be our primary PRR system. Other platforms will be evaluated upon the expiration of the NextRequest cycle.
3c	Records Management should consider working with City Management to develop a Records Liaison position at City Departments.	X			We agree with the auditor's comments and are including this within the Records Management Plan.	Propose plan outline 1st quarter 2022 Calendar Year	Implemented	Records Unit has created a Liaison within City Clerk Staff to track and process PRRs. The PRR Liaison attends weekly meetings with City Hall Staff on updates.
4a	OPD Management should investigate tools and applications to make it easier to scan documents in the field or initiate investigative and incident records in electronic format. Repeat Finding Report No. 20-05, #1	X			OPD management has created a Technology Committee to enhance the digitization of the Department. This committee is looking into the process of making most forms into electronic forms through the Mobile program, as well as the ability to electronically sign and notarize such documents. This includes initial police reports, supplemental reports, witness statements, with the potential to add additional forms, such as victim's rights forms, trespass authorization and notice, etc.	September 2022	Not Implemented	IT Security Concerns on electronic devices on the field. Officers will continue to upload records in Mobile and scan at respective Substations.

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4c	OPD Management should enhance current policies requiring timely and consistent upload of all records of the investigation to central secure file storage.	X			See response to 4b above	FY 2022/23	Planned for Implementation	OPD Records is working on an SOP to address the timely and consistent upload of records into LERMS. Additional secure options are being explored for potential future implementation.

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5a	OPD Management should begin tracking walk-in PRRs to determine the volume of requests fulfilled outside of Next Request.	X			Currently, OPD Records is prepared to implement a change in procedure requiring that all requests generated outside the NextRequest Portal (walk-in, phone, email, fax, U.S. mail) be entered into NextRequest and then closed immediately upon production of the responsive records. This action requires coordination with the City Clerk's Office to provide account authority to OPD Records staff the ability to close all such requests.		Implemented	All requests are now logged into NextRequest and added to a speadsheet for tracking.	
5b	Based on the volume of requests processed, OPD Management should collaborate with the City Clerk's office to determine if walk- in PRRs should be recorded in Next Request.	X			See response to 5b above	January 2022	Implemented	See above.	

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6a	OPD Management should create work schedules and responsibility assignments that promote continuity and efficiency of PRR fulfillment.	X			OPD Proposes exploring the idea that a dedicated Records Manager be hired or assigned to the records unit. The current Records Manager has multiple other assignments and priorities and therefore is unable to be involved in the day-to-day operations of OPD Records. The appointment of a dedicated Records Manager with either legal or records management expertise would allow the unit to be reorganized in a more efficient manner in line with the skills and experience of current staff. (see full report for complete response)	FY 2022/23	Partially Implemented	OPD records has created a designated an individual to be the primary point of contact for request that came in through NextRequest to streamline the process and thereby promoting continuity within the records request process. This has freed up other staff to respond to other request modes (e.g. email, phone calls, walk-ins, etc.) Additionally, two additional records specialists have been approved to be hired to handle the increased volume of BWC requests.
6b	OPD Management should consider: • Dedicating employees to Next Request queue work or having employees take ownership of PRRs and work the requests from initiation to fulfillment. • Adding staff and/or redistributing workload for OPD Records staff.	X			See response to 6a above.	FY 2022/23	Implemented	Records Unit has created a Liaison within their Staff to track and process PRRs. The PRR Liaison attends weekly meetings with City Hall Staff. This new position has received approvals from City Hall Records Management and has improved response to record request. OPD has requested reclassification, but this has not been implemented at this time due to budget considerations.

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600	OPD Management should consider creating or reclassifying a position to create a Records Liaison position(s) within OPD to coordinate between OPD (Records, Media Relations, Legal, investigative staff, Internal Affairs, Forensics, and other departments that generate public records) and the City Clerk's office. The Records Liaison will need expertise in records management, public records law, and police procedure. The Records Liaison would own the PRR process from initiation to fulfillment, and provide final approval for the release of records.	▽			See response to 6a above.	FY 2022/23	Partially Implemented	OPD has requested reclassification, but this has not been implemented at this time due to budget considerations.	
78	OPD management and the City Clerk should collaborate to add these self-service options (and related links) to the City's PRR web page.	X			OPD Management proposes that the City's website be updated to clarify self-service access points, including links to partner agency's records unit when they may be the most efficient source of information for the requester.	March 2022	Not Implemented	This has not been able to be created at this time due to IT considerations. Additional options may be explored in the future.	

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7b	OPD management should set up self-service kiosks in the lobby of the police department to enable requestors to input PRRs in Next Request and access self-service options for public records.				OPD Management believes a dedicated records kiosk in the lobby of OPD may assist requesters who are unaware that they may make requests online for public records. By creating a dedicated kiosk for this process, it may alleviate the need for OPD staff to manually enter the request into NextRequest, as well as provide quick service when the Office Assistant who is handling the window is otherwise unavailable. This proposal requires an expenditure of funds, which will likely reoccur periodically as hardware gets outdated or otherwise can no longer perform its functions. they may be the most efficient source of information for the requester.			OPD is not Budgeted for additional Information Technology Systems (Kiosk). A balancing of IT risks for such a terminal vs. the potential value added has made implementation infeasible at this time.