



City of Long Beach – Public Records Act Program Update

Ethics Commission Meeting – September 13, 2023

Overview

- California Public Records Act – Overview
- Challenges
- Dedicated Resources
- New Efforts and Initiatives
- Progress Made

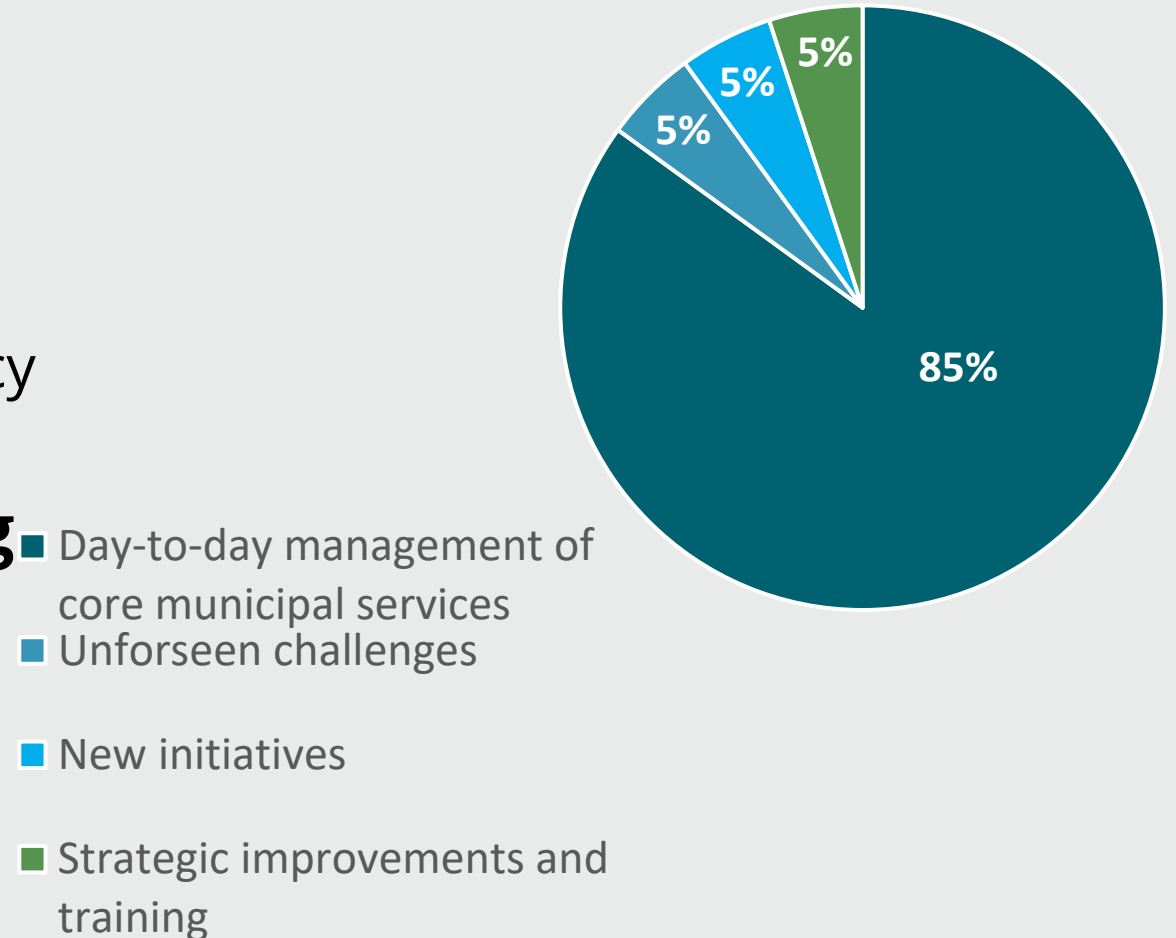
California Public Records Act (PRA)

- The purpose of the law is transparency - to give the public access to information that enables them to monitor the functioning of their government.
- The PRA's fundamental rule is that governmental records shall be disclosed to the public, upon request, unless there is a legal basis not to do so.
- Cal Gov Code 7922.535(a)
 - Each agency, upon a request for a copy of records, shall, **within 10 days from receipt of the request**, determine whether the request, in whole or in part, seeks copies of disclosable public records in the possession of the agency and **shall promptly notify the person making the request of the determination and the reasons therefor**. If the agency determines that the request seeks disclosable public records, the agency shall also state the estimated date and time when the records will be made available.
- Cal Gov Code 7922.530
 - Each local agency, upon a request for a copy of records that reasonably describes an identifiable record or records, **shall make the records promptly available to any person**.

Challenges

- **COVID-19**
- **Staff vacancies**
 - Staff turnover / transitions
- **Staff workloads and capacity**
 - Due to vacancies, turnover
 - High demands – core services, emergency responsiveness, projects and programs
- **Burnout followed by overwhelming nature of requests**
- **Understanding**

Typical Allocation of Management Staff's Time



Dedicated Resources

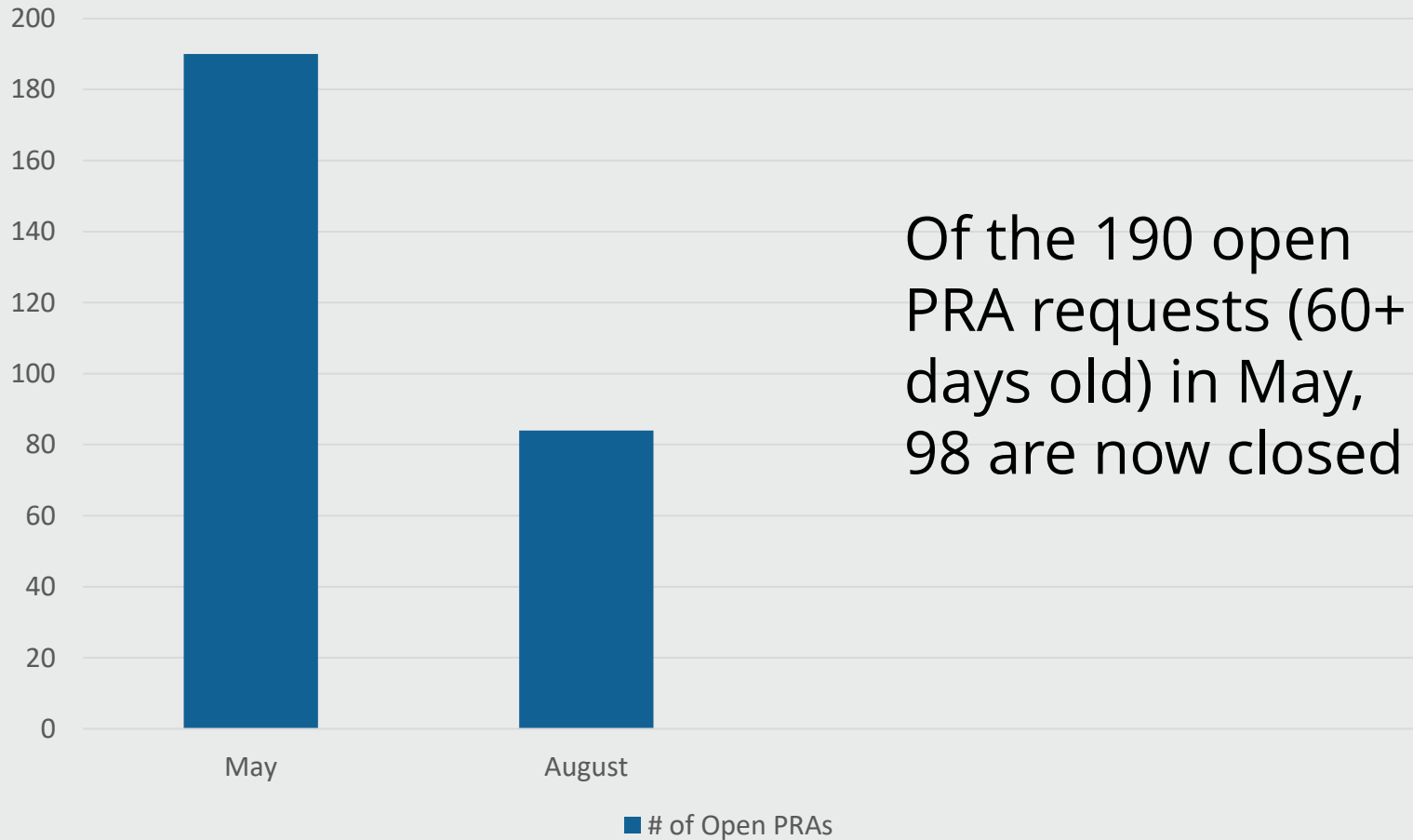
- **Office of Ethics and Transparency**
 - Deputy City Manager
 - Assistant Administrative Analyst (AAA)
 - Clerk Typist III
- **City Attorney Office**
- **Police Department**
 - **In Fiscal Year 2019, the City Council approved creating a PRA Division consisting of:** (1) Administrator, (1) Administrative Analyst III, (2) AAA, (6) Administrative Aide II
 - This group manages standard PRA requests and Critical Incident Requests which are more voluminous in nature.
- **Citywide – nearly 50 liaisons, including back-up support staff**

New Efforts and Initiatives

- Met with every Department's management team for PRA refresher
- Provide one-on-one virtual training via Teams with staff new to GovQA/PRA in lieu of just sending training materials and resources
- Standing monthly meetings with Mayor and Council Offices to discuss pending PRAs, address any questions or obstacles, provide support
- Utilizing new digital tools to create training materials
- Working with Liaisons in Departments for individualized/tailored approach to managing PRA requests given their operational needs
- Revamp training approach
- Create mini training guides to address common questions from staff as well as common PRA and GovQA issues

Progress Made

PRA Requests 60+ Days Open



PRA Activity: May - August 2023

- Average received per month: 375
- Average closed out per month: 343

Compared to same time period 2022:

PRA Activity: May - August 2022

- Average received per month: 346
- Average closed out per month: 296

2022 close-out rate: 85.5%

2023 close-out rate: 91.2%



Thank you

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