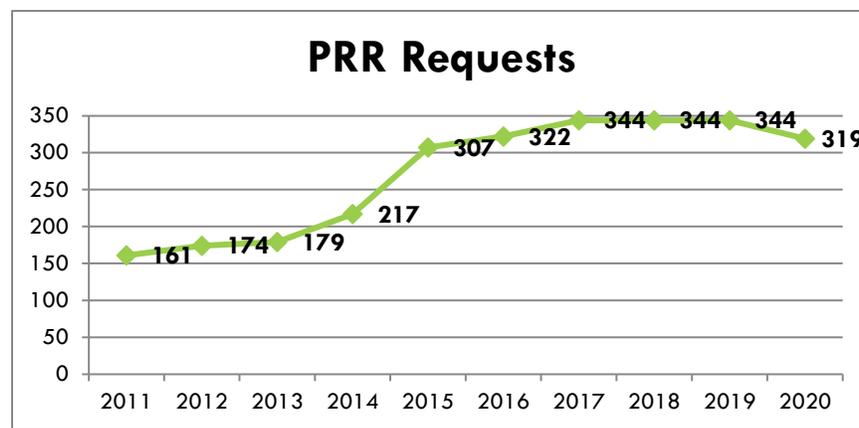


## CITY CLERK'S OFFICE ~ 2020 PUBLIC DISCLOSURE REPORT

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. The 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 weeks after a request is made.

Routine requests were generally assigned by rotation to three CCO staff, and all Complex requests were assigned to the Public Disclosure Specialist. CCO staff then work with Department Records Liaisons and other City staff to search for and produce records. The City estimates its total costs for fulfilling public records requests in 2020 was approximately \$219,957.

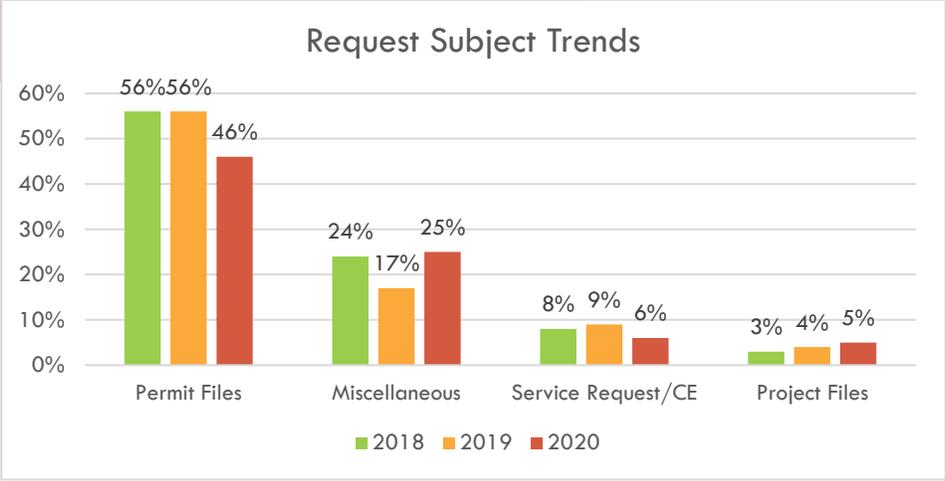
In 2020, the City received **319 requests** for public records. The following chart shows the number of requests received annually over the last ten years:



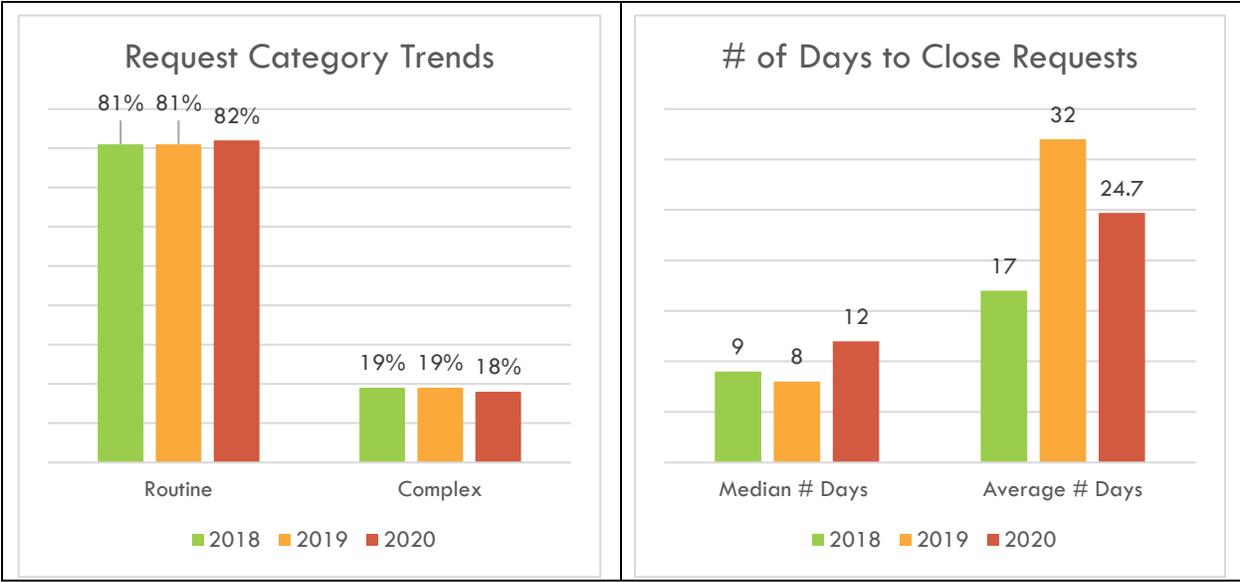
### 2020 In Review

Out of the 319 requests received, 82% were categorized as *Routine*, and 18% were categorized as *Complex*. The requests can be further broken down into the following Subjects:

As-Builts	17	5%	Licensing	1	<1%
Bids/RFPs	8	3%	Litigation	2	<1%
CIP/Streets/Transportation	3	<1%	Meeting Records	1	<1%
Contracts	8	3%	Miscellaneous	80	25%
Correspondence/Email Only	4	1%	Permit Files	148	46%
Financial Data	11	3%	Project Files	15	5%
GIS Data/Maps	2	<1%	Service Request/Code Enforcement	19	6%



A total of 318 requests were closed over the reporting period and the median number of days to final disposition was 12 days, which was up 4 days from 2019. The average number of days to final disposition was 25 days, which was down 7 days from 2019 due to several complex requests being closed the year prior and therefore not affecting 2020 averages.



It is important to note that 2020 brought significant challenges to the City’s Public Disclosure Program, with the COVID-19 pandemic and issues with the City’s email archiving software impacting response time.

On March 23, 2020, Governor Inslee issued the Stay at Home Stay Healthy Proclamation that required all non-essential businesses to close and allowed only the employees who supported essential work to continue to report to work. Due to this Order, for the 10-week period from March 24 to May 31, the City Clerk’s Office resources dedicated to responding to public disclosure went from 1.09 FTE down to .4 FTE. The City had 20 open requests in progress at the onset of this period and subsequently received an additional 39 more. Governor Inslee issued

Proclamation 20-28, suspending the five-business day response requirement, which helped manage workload during the first few months into the pandemic.



The second major impact on the City's response time was due to a failure of the City's email archive technology. In late 2019, the Clerk's Office started noticing discrepancies in email searches and engaged with its software vendor. It wasn't until May of 2020 that the root issues were fully identified, at which time we learned the issues went back to May of 2019. This resulted in the Clerk's Office having to identify and reprocess all the affected requests over a 12-month time period.

There were 34 requests affected by the issue that required a new search to be performed resulting in a significant amount of additional work. As of July 2021, 22 of the 34 affected requests have been reprocessed and closed.

### **Public Records Violations**

On March 16, 2020, the City received a Summons and Complaint for violations of the Public Records Act. The Plaintiff asserted the City did not provide all responsive records related to a request they made for records related to the Ronald Wastewater District Audit. The City asserted the Complaint was made past the statute of limitations set forth in RCW 42.56.550(6) and the Plaintiff agreed to dismiss. The order to dismiss was issued on May 18, 2020.

## **Summary**

Despite the effects of the pandemic on the community, the number of Public Records Requests in 2020 remained fairly steady, with only a 7% drop from last year. The City started 2020 with 25 open requests; received 319 more requests over the course of the year; started the process of re-processing 34 requests; and still ended up closing a total of 318 requests during the 12-month reporting period. At the beginning of 2021, there were only 26 requests open (the same level we started off with in 2020).

## **Customer Feedback**

At the time a request is closed, CCO offers requestors the opportunity to complete a customer service satisfaction survey; and feedback from 12 requestors was received. Overall, the themes were: CCO is timely and professional, and there is still a desire to pay by credit card. (As of June 28, 2021, the City accepts card payments for public records requests.) The complete survey responses are as follows:

### **How would you rate our process for handling your request?**

Excellent =7    Very Good =5    Satisfactory =0    Poor =0

### **How courteous was your treatment by our staff?**

Excellent =9    Very Good =2    Satisfactory =0    Poor =0    Not Answered= 1

### **Was there something else we could have done to provide better service?**

- “Obtain King county records for Shoreline property dating prior to Shoreline being incorporated.”
- “This was an easy request, most of the requests I send involve a nominal payment on the order of \$5 to \$10, it sure would be great if there was a way to pay on line rather than having to send a courier to city hall to pay cash to release electronic files.”
- “Nothing, exceptional job!”
- “Nope. I’m lucky that the documents were electronic. Otherwise, if they were not, the only thing I would have wished for would be not to have to pay for the large drawing set file to be copied (originally quoted around \$1,000). Instead, since they were electronic, it was only \$1.88 for the same information.”
- “Nope.”
- “no, perfect fast complete service.”
- “I was quite amazed to be able to access information for the decommissioning of an oil tank from 2001. This is a great service and was required by the real estate agents for the sale of our home. Many thanks to your professional team.”

- “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.”

**Other comments**

- “Allison has been very communicative and helpful. Thanks for responding quickly and helping me with everything!”
- “It would be helpful if possible to pay for the records online with credit card”
- “Thanks for your help and prompt response!”

**Attachment**

JLARC Public Records Requests Report for Shoreline for 2020, submitted June 2021

# Public Records Requests Report for Shoreline for 2020

## 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**

25

**Of the number of requests open at the beginning of the reporting period, how many were closed during the reporting period?**

20

**Total number of public records requests received during the reporting period**

319

**Total number of public records requests closed during the reporting period**

298

**The number of public records requests closed prior to the Governor's declared public health emergency (March 23, 2020)**

84

## 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**

126

**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**

Although only 126 (out of 318) requests were closed within 5 days; the City made records available to requestors within five days for 201 (out of 318) requests.

## 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**

101

**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

318

##### Number of days to final disposition

7840

##### Median number of days to final disposition

12

##### Average number of days to final disposition (calculated)

24.7

**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**

The Covid-19 pandemic affected staffing levels and essential priorities in 2020.

## 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

25

**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

29

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

##### Reason 1

Financial Information - RCW 42.56.230(5)

##### Reason 2

Attorney Client - RCW 42.56.070/RCW 5.60.060(2)(a)

Reason 3

Reason 4

Reason 5

Reason 6

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

52

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	Organizations
Other (please explain)	
Total requests	114
Requester type	Law firms
Other (please explain)	
Total requests	23
Requester type	Individuals
Other (please explain)	
Total requests	181

<b>Requester type</b>	Governments
<b>Other (please explain)</b>	
<b>Metric 8</b>	1

Percent of requests fulfilled electronically compared to the percent of requests fulfilled by physical records. [Click here](#) for guidance related to Metric 8.  
**You may provide additional explanation here for the data provided for this metric**

<b>Percent of requests fulfilled electronically compared to percent fulfilled by physical records</b>
<b>Number of requests fulfilled electronically</b>
228
<b>Number of requests fulfilled by physical records</b>
10
<b>Number of requests fulfilled by electronic and physical records</b>
26
<b>Number of requests closed with no responsive records</b>
54
<b>Percent of requests fulfilled electronically (calculated)</b>
72%
<b>Percent of requests fulfilled by physical records (calculated)</b>
3%
<b>Percent of requests fulfilled by electronic and physical records (calculated)</b>
8%
<b>Percent of requests closed with no responsive records (calculated)</b>
17%
<b>You may provide additional explanation here for the data provided for this metric</b>
8 of the 54 requests we identified as no responsive records were withdrawn requests (where we don't know what the format would have been if the request would not have been withdrawn).

## Metric 9

Number of requests where one or more physical records were scanned to create an electronic version to fulfill disclosure. [Click here](#) for guidance related to Metric 9.

<b>Number of requests where records were scanned</b>
<b>Requests scanned</b>
35
<b>You may provide additional explanation here for the data provided for this metric</b>

## Metric 10

Average estimated staff time spent on each public records request. [Click here](#) for guidance related to Metric 10.

#### Average estimated staff time spent on each request

##### Estimated total staff time in hours

3476

##### Average estimated staff time in hours per request (calculated)

10

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. [Click here](#) for guidance related to Metric 11.

#### Estimated total costs incurred

##### Estimated total cost

\$219,957

##### Average estimated cost per request (calculated)

\$639.41

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

## 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

Claim violation types	Failure to complete a thorough search
Other type	
Exemptions	
Other exemption	
Total claims	1

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

\$489

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

Court dismissed with no costs awarded

## 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

\$196,930

#### Cost of systems that manage/retain records

\$17,855

#### Cost of services purchased for managing/retaining records

\$7,623

#### Total estimated cost for managing and retaining records (calculated)

\$222,408

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

## 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

<b>Total Expenses Recovered</b>	\$847
<b>Customized Service Charges</b>	
<b>Description of Service Charges</b>	

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