



CITY OF KIRKLAND
Department of Finance & Administration
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MEMORANDUM

To: Kurt Triplett, City Manager

From: Michael Olson, Director of Finance and Administration
Kathi Anderson, City Clerk/Public Records Officer
Amy Robles, Public Disclosure Analyst

Date: July 13, 2015

Subject: PUBLIC DISCLOSURE SEMI-ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT

RECOMMENDATION:

City Council receives the semi-annual status report on the City's public records disclosure program pursuant to KMC 3.15.120.

BACKGROUND:

KMC 3.15.120 provides that, "no later than July 31 and January 31 of each year, the City Clerk will submit to the City Council a report on the city's performance in responding to public records requests during the preceding six months." This report presents the performance of the City's Public Disclosure Program during the first half of 2015.

Pursuant to KMC 3.15.120 the semi-annual public record disclosure report shall include: (1) number of open records requests at the beginning of reporting period; (2) number of records requests received during the reporting period; (3) number of records requests closed in the period; and (4) number of open requests at the end of the reporting period. This information is represented in Figure A.

Figure A

Mandatory Reporting Information	
Number of Requests Open at Start of Reporting Period	31
Number of Requests Received During Reporting Period	2,232
Number of Requests Closed During Reporting Period	2,221
Number of Requests Open at End of Reporting Period	42

The City has become more sophisticated and educated in the use of the software including the creation of reports and extraction of data. Prior reports were skewed slightly due to issues with general requests and requests missing categorization. This impacted data reports that were processed by category. The reports have been reprocessed taking this into account and the number of requests open at the start of this reporting period has been corrected from the previously

reported 16 to 31. This was limited to a reporting issue and did not impact the processing of requests.

In 2014, the City implemented its records portal (WebQA) to streamline the public records request process. Through use of the records portal, the City was able to track request processing and demonstrated the ability to promptly process requests. During the first half of 2015 continued attention was directed to refining the public records disclosure process through ongoing assessment of staff's needs with continued customization of the WebQA software.

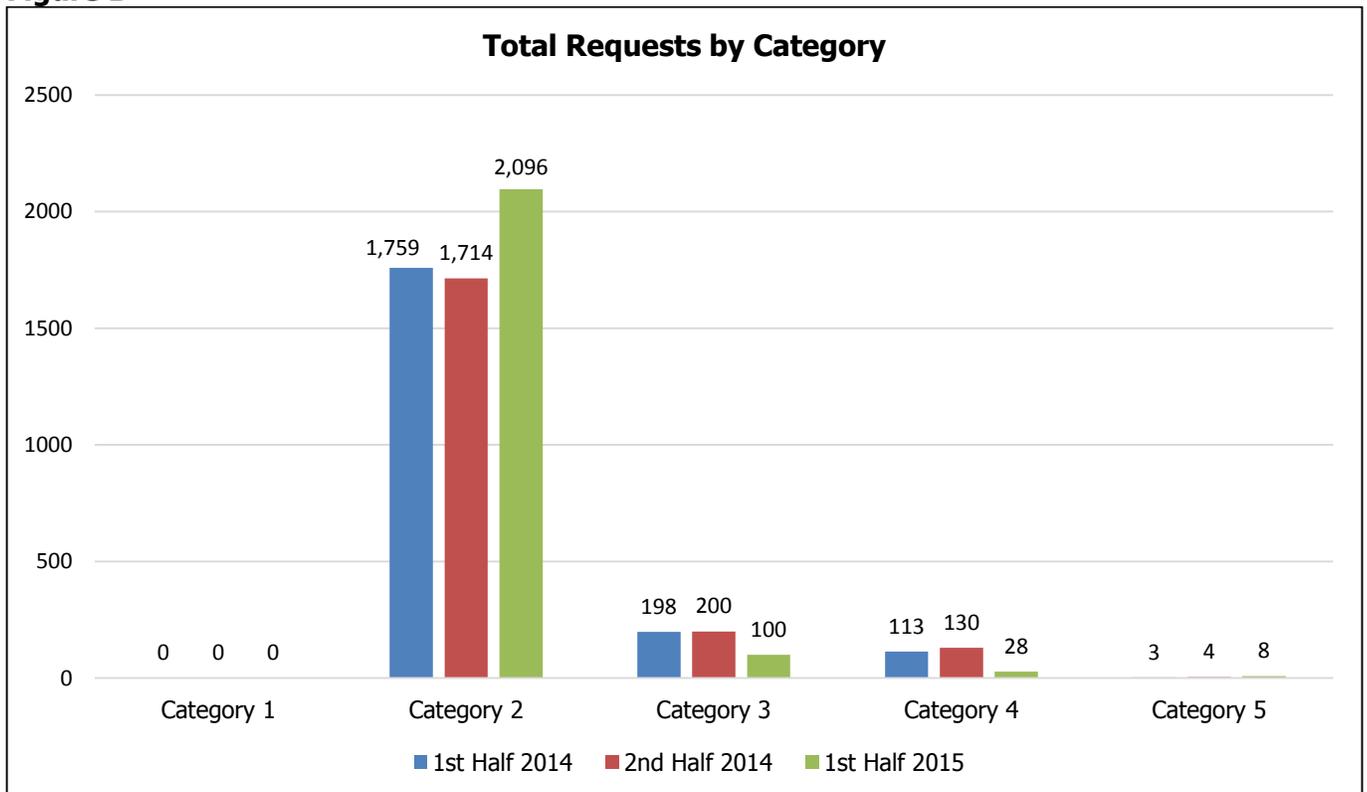
DATA-BASED ANALYSIS OF PERFORMANCE:

This report presents information reflecting the City's performance based on total requests received and evaluates performance in terms of processing time by category. Performance is presented as a comparison between the following three reporting periods: the first half of 2014, the second half of 2014, and the first half of 2015.

During the current reporting period, the City experienced an increase in the total number of requests received. The City received 2,073 requests in the first half of 2014. In the second half of 2014 the City received 2,048 requests. In contrast, the City received a total of 2,232 requests in the first half of 2015.

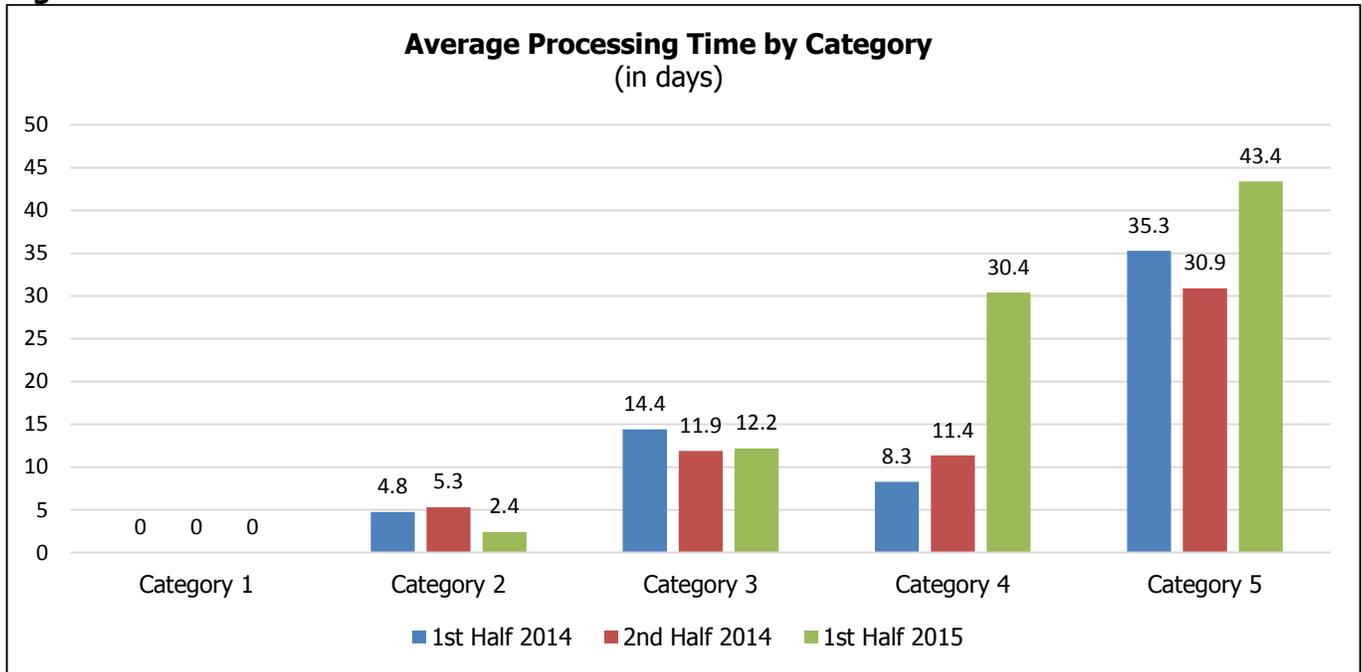
The City has also experienced an increase in the most complex category of requests. In the first half of 2014, three Category 5 requests were received. During the second half of 2014, four Category 5 requests were received. While in the first half of 2015, eight Category 5 requests were received. The comparison of requests by category between the three reporting periods is presented in Figure B.

Figure B



The following table is an evaluation of the City’s program by comparing the processing times for each category. Figure C presents data for the average processing time (in days) by category.

Figure C



The average processing time by category has changed, with a significant decrease in the average processing time for Category 2 requests. This represents a performance improvement in processing routine requests which account for the majority of the requests received by the City.

The increase in processing times for Category 4 and Category 5 requests is due to the increased complexity involving the amount of data encompassed by the requests and the level of review required prior to disclosure. An example of the complexity of Category 5 requests received during the current reporting period was a request for SMS/text messages. While the request was ultimately withdrawn, it drew attention to the City’s use and management of records in alternate technology formats.

An additional factor in 2014 was the City’s receipt of daily requests from a single requestor which were classified as Category 4 due to the volume of data involved and the required coordination between departments. Those daily Category 4 requests were able to be processed quickly as staff became increasingly familiar with the requested information. During the first half of 2015, those daily requests have ceased resulting in a decrease overall in the volume of Category 4 requests while the average processing time for this category has increased. An additional factor contributing to the variations between processing times for Category 4 and Category 5 requests was the vacancy of the Public Disclosure Analyst position for approximately one month during the first half of 2015.

While the processing times for Category 4 and Category 5 requests has increased, this has not impacted the processing time for Category 2 and Category 3 requests. All request categories are managed simultaneously with daily management of all categories of requests.

As a reminder, PRA Rule 080, establishes the following goals for standard response time periods (note that for categories 3, 4, and 5, the time is dependent on the nature and scope of the request):

- (a) Category 1 records requests - immediately or the next business day
- (b) Category 2 records requests - within five business days
- (c) Category 3 records requests - usually between 5 and 30 business days.
- (d) Category 4 records requests - may require several weeks to several months.
- (e) Category 5 records requests - may require several weeks to several months.

NEXT STEPS AND CONCLUSION:

The City has been steadily improving its ability to process public records requests; processing the majority of requests well within the parameters of the Public Records Act. The City has demonstrated performance improvement with a 2.6 day average reduction in the processing of routine requests. There has been an increase in the processing time of Category 4 and Category 5 requests due to the increased complexity of these requests. The processing time for Category 4 and Category 5 requests is expected to continue to fluctuate based on the character of these requests.

It is anticipated that the volume and complexity of public records requests will continue to increase. Focus on staff education and customization of the WebQA software will enable the City to continue to efficiently process public records requests.