



City of Arts & Innovation

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City of Riverside Makes Requesting Public Documents Easier Than Ever

Online public records portal allows public to request documents, track progress of requests

RIVERSIDE, Calif. – A new online public records portal makes requesting public documents from the City of Riverside easier than ever.

The portal is available by clicking on www.engageriverside.com and then clicking on the “Open Records” button. Visitors can file a records request, check the status of a request and see other requests that have been made, as well as the results of those requests once documents have been posted.

The Public Records Advocate in the City Clerk’s Office will manage the portal, which replaces the previous decentralized process in which public records requests often were handled by different departments around City Hall.

“The online public records portal is the next step in the ongoing effort to increase transparency within Riverside city government,” City Clerk Colleen J. Nicol said. “The portal enables anyone to file a public records request from their computer, phone or tablet, while also allowing the public to see what other documents are being requested.”

City Clerk Nicol, along with City Manager John A. Russo and City Attorney Gary Geuss, presented a group of open government initiatives to the City Council in mid-July. Among those was a proposal to automate public records requests.

A Request for Proposals netted three responses, and WebQA’s product most closely met the desired criteria. The company’s GovQA Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) application provides for online submittal of records requests, the ability for the requestor to track the status of their request and the ability for all members of the public to view all requests and responsive documents.

The software also provides tools for legal review and the ability to track time to identify and produce documents, staff costs, timeliness of request processing and other useful metrics.

“The City of Riverside is pleased to provide to its residents the most open government in Southern California,” Mayor Rusty Bailey said. “From posting meeting agendas 12 days in advance of scheduled meetings to the new online records portal, Riverside is setting the tone for transparency in government.”

For more information about the public records portal, contact Deputy City Clerk Dana Roa, who serves as the City of Riverside’s Public Records Advocate, at (951) 826-5557.