

CITY OF EUREKA

Category: ADMINISTRATION

POLICIES & PROCEDURES

Subject: Historical Records Preservation Program

Date Adopted: March 4, 2008

File Number 1.17

POLICY OBJECTIVE

To establish a *Historical Records Preservation Program* for the management and preservation of the historical resources of the City retained by the office of the City Clerk.

SCOPE

The *Historical Records Preservation Program* covers all historical records, documents, instruments, books or papers, maps, exhibits, magnetic or paper tapes, photographic films and prints, and other resources determined to be of historical value retained by the office of the City Clerk on a permanent or indefinite basis.

ASSIGNED RESPONSIBILITY

The City Clerk shall administer the program for all historical records and resources of the City retained by the office of the City Clerk.

DEFINITIONS

The City's *Records Retention Program, Policy 1.10* incorporates the Secretary of State's *Local Government Records Management Guidelines* which provides some of the standard definitions listed here. Examples given are adapted to this policy.

Active Records – Records which are referred to at least once a month per cubic foot of records. Examples include general correspondence, recent agenda backup materials, and staff reports.

Archival Records – Records with enduring value because they reflect significant historical events, document the history and development of the City, or provide valuable research data. Examples include charters, charter amendments, ordinances, and minute books.

Historical Records – Records otherwise categorized as archival, permanent, indefinite or perpetual records which have enduring value to the City.

Inactive Records – Records which are still needed but are only accessed occasionally and generally have not reached their retention schedule expiration date. Examples include expired agreements, older agenda backup materials, and subject work-files.

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Non-records – Material not usually included within the definition of records, such as unofficial copies of documents kept only for convenience or reference, working papers, appointment logs, stocks of publications and processed documents, and library or museum material intended solely for reference or exhibition, rough notes, calculations or drafts.

Permanent Records – Records that are required in perpetuity, usually identified by statute or other written guidance such as the City's *Records Retention Policy*. Examples include agendas and resolutions.

Public records – any writing containing information relating to the conduct of the public's business prepared, owned, used, or retained by any state or local agency regardless of physical form or characteristics.

Records – All papers, maps, exhibits, magnetic or paper tapes, photographic films and prints, punched cards, and other documents produced, received, owned or used by the City, regardless of physical form or characteristics.

Records Retention Program – The City's adopted policy regulating the retention of public records.

Records Retention Schedule – A list of all record types produced or maintained by the City and the actions taken with regard to those records.

Retention Period – The length of time a record must be retained to fulfill its administrative, fiscal and/or legal function, after which the record should be disposed in accordance with the Records Retention Program.

Writing – any handwriting, typewriting, printing, photostating, photographing, photocopying, transmitting by electronic mail or facsimile, and every other means of recording upon any tangible thing any form of communication or representation, including letters, words, pictures, sounds, or symbols, or combinations thereof, and any record thereby created, regardless of the manner in which the record has been stored.

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HISTORICAL RECORDS PRESERVATION PROGRAM

Records which are kept in the ordinary course of City business are managed in accordance with the City's adopted *Records Retention Program*. Historical records shall be maintained in accordance with the *Historical Records Preservation Program*. For the purposes of this program, and in accordance with a determination of the State Archives' Historical Records Advisory Board, electronic or digital conversion of physical records are not considered a permanent form of preservation of historical records. The advisory board has determined that, until the electronic technology industry comes up with a long-term, non-proprietary format, conversion of electronic records to a digital format can not serve as a permanent solution for preservation purposes.

Inventory

In 2007, a California Historical Records Advisory Board (CHRAB) grant-funded project provided for an inventory the historical resources of the City Clerk's office to be conducted. In January 2008, a *Historical Records Preservation Needs Assessment* report was compiled by the City Clerk, under the guidance of and review by a Certified Archivist. A thorough and detailed inventory of all records and documents in the City Clerk's *basement archives room* and the *1st floor vault* was conducted. Materials that were deemed historical records of the city were assigned a permanent location and recorded in a corresponding database. The *Historical Records Preservation Program* is intended to continue the process and procedures followed during the initial inventory.

Location convention:

The City Clerk's department maintains use of the following physical areas for the storage of records and historical resources of the city. The rooms in which the historical records are stored are locked at all times, with access by authorized personnel only.

- The *basement archives room* (one of the *primary areas* in which historical records are stored);
- The *basement filing area* (yet to be inventoried inactive and/or historical records)
- The *1st floor vault* (the second of the *primary areas* of historical records storage);
- The *City Clerk's file room* in the City Clerk's office on the 2nd floor (for active and inactive records);
- The *City Clerk's office* (active records).

As each folder, document-type or artifact is examined, and if retained, it will be assigned a permanent location containing four data descriptors: *case, shelf, box, and file*.

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The *case* indicates the shelving unit in each of the storage rooms. Shelving units in the *basement archives room* are numbered respectively: 01, 02, 03, etc. Shelving and filing units in the *1st floor vault* are numbered V1, V2, V3, etc.

The second location descriptor, for the *shelf*, indicates the shelf on which the box or drawer is assigned. *Shelf* numbering starts at the bottom shelf and ascends in numbering to the top shelf, also using the 01, 02, 03, 04 and 05 format. Items may be added on top of the case unit as needed.

The third location descriptor indicates the *box* number, or location on the shelf. *Box* numbering begins on the left and ascends in numbering as boxes are placed in the row toward the right: 01, 02, 03, etc. On the 80-box units, *box* numbering on a shelf generally ascends starting in the front/bottom row on the shelf from left to right, next rear/bottom row from left to right, then front/top row from left to right, and finally top/rear row left to right.

The fourth and last location descriptor is *file*, and also follows the 01, 02, 03, format. Each folder or artifact should be stamped (*see Figure 1*), and marked with the permanent location for *case*, *shelf*, *box*, and *file*, and this data entered in the database with a description of the item and date or date range.

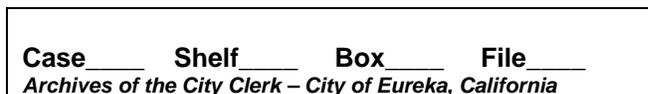
Procedures

Records which can be categorized as archival, permanent, indefinite or perpetual records with enduring value to the City may be determined to be historical records.

The contents of each folder, record, or set of related documents deemed of historical value should be examined and a description of the contents should be entered into the inventory database. Wherever possible, date or date range and any other useful data should be recorded in the appropriate fields.

The folder or record should be stamped with a blank stamp (*see Figure 1*) upon which the reviewer will mark the permanent location the item will fill within the *case*, *shelf*, *box*, and *file*. If the record does not present a likely and visible blank space upon which the stamp may be affixed, a 3” by 5” card should be stamped and completed for insertion into the record.

Figure 1:



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Each of the four location data-points (*case, shelf, box, and file*) should be entered into the database with the description of the item.

A printed report of the historical records inventory database, with description and location information, should be kept in a binder in each of the storage rooms.

Information will be provided to the public regarding the inventory list and procedures for requesting access to materials.

Collection management:

When a request is received to access materials preserved in the historical records inventory, procedures consistent with the *Public Records Request* policy and procedure memorandum (File No. 1.15) should be followed, including completion of a *Public Records Request Form*, if possible. The following additional procedures for retrieving, checking-out and re-filing shall also apply:

- A record of access to each item or set of items should be logged in the *Archives Access Journal* located in each storage room, including name, contact information, and signature of the researcher. Completed *Public Records Request Forms* should be retained in a file for that purpose;
- **Check-out procedure:** As materials are removed from location, staff should insert a “*Removal Slip*” in their place;
- Materials retrieved are for review in the office of the City Clerk only. Copies will be made on request upon payment of fees as required by the City’s annual fee schedule.
- **Check-in procedure:** As materials are re-filed, the *Removal Slip* should be retrieved and filed in a pocket of the *Archives Access Journal*;
- Staff should periodically review the *Archives Access Journal* for proper return of retrieved materials;
- The City Clerk will prepare an annual report of statistics relating to access of historical records and materials.