City of Seattle
Edward B. Murray, Mayor

Finance and Administrative Services
Fred Podesta, Director

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Approved:
CPRA Program Sponsors

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City of Seattle Citywide Public Records Act Program

Rule CPRA-02-2016
Interim Citywide Fee Structure Framework for Providing Copies of Records in Response to PRA Requests

O.O BACKGROUND

Based on a 2014 Statement of Legislative Intent (SLI) 13-2-A-1, the Department of Finance and Administrative Services developed a Citywide Public Records Act (CPRA) Program consisting of sponsors from the Executive and Legislative Departments, an interdepartmental steering committee, an interdepartmental program management team and subject matter working groups – with the goal of making Public Records Act compliance a sustainable line of business for City agencies. Consistent with their mission, the CPRA Program Sponsors adopt this Interim Citywide Rule establishing the framework for charging for providing copies of records in response to requests under the Public Records Act – RCW 42.56 – with the intent that the City will follow this Rule as the CPRA Program continues its development of processes for providing records.

1.0 PURPOSE

The purpose of this rule is to provide a Citywide fee structure framework for copies as required by Director's Rule CPRA 01-2015 Interim Citywide Policy on Processing Public Disclosure Requests, Section 6.5.

2.0 DEFINITIONS

- **2.1 PRRC.** The City is in the process of implementing a central public disclosure website, known as the "City of Seattle Public Records Request Center (PRRC)," to include a process for providing records electronically over the Internet.
- **2.2 Records Center Download Fee.** This fee type covers the customer using the (PRRC) Public Records Request Center to download records.
- **2.3 Records Handoff Fee.** This fee type covers the cost of the media on which the records are provided.
- **2.4 Mailing Fee.** This fee covers postage and the cost of packaging when the customer prefers to have records mailed to them.
- **2.5 Copying Fee.** This fee is the cost of actual staff time spent copying the records for providing to the requestor.
- **2.6 Deposit.** Before beginning to make copies of records for a request or an installment, the City may require a deposit of up to 10 percent of the total estimated cost of copying the records or installment. The City may also require you to pay the remainder of the costs of copying before providing you all the records, or require you to pay the costs of copying an installment before providing you that installment. If you fail to pay for copies of any records or any installment of records within 30 days of receiving an invoice or request for payment for those records or installment,

or if you fail to pay a deposit within 30 days of notification by the City that it will require a deposit prior to processing a request or an installment, the City will deem your request abandoned and stop processing and close the request.

3.0 APPLICABILITY

This Rule is adopted by the CPRA Program with the intent that the City follow it, including boards and commissions and all others subject to the PRA, as the CPRA Program develops rules and regulations governing a Citywide approach to PRA requests. The (CPRA) Program expects all departments to charge for records in a similar manner.

4.0 RULE

4.1 General

- The City does not charge a fee for the inspection of records made available for inspection on City premises or on a City website.
- The City charges for records based on Washington state law which allows for four categories of fees:
    - Media to provide records - paper, DVD, CD etc.
    - Mailing – Postage & mailing supplies
    - Staff time directly incident to copying
    - Other costs directly incident to copying
    - Deposit
- The City will review and update the fees annually with a publicly available CPRA Program Fee Structure Policy.
- The City will post fees on a publicly available website.
- The City will base fees for staff time on documented time studies.
- The fees for copies of oversized records, color copies or other nonstandard media may be based on the use of outside vendors.
- The City may establish categories of fees where reasonable to assist in calculating costs such as a flat minimal fee for PRRC downloads.
- The City has the discretion for waiving fees in total or by fee type when doing so is in the best interest of the City. The fact that the City has waived copying fees for one request or requestor does not impose a duty on the City to waive fees for the same requestor for any other request or for any other requestor.

4.2 Fees

4.2.1 Records Center Download. The City is charged for the bandwidth of any download by a customer using the PRRC to receive records. The CPRA Fee Structure Policy will include recovering this as a cost directly incident of copying records.

4.2.2 Records Handoff. The CPRA Fee Structure Policy will include standard annually updated fees for the media and supplies used to provide records outside of the PRRC, including: envelopes, mailers, CD, DVD, paper, microfilm, thumb drives and other current and common media types.

4.2.3 Postage. The CPRA Fee Structure Policy will include standard annually updated postage rates for use in calculating mailing costs.

4.2.4 Cost of Copying. The CPRA Fee Structure Policy will include standard annually updated rates for the cost of staff time to include at a minimum: electronic transmission through the PRRC, copying to electronic media and devices, faxing, scanning, copying paper, copying microfilm.

4.2.5 Deposit. The Public Disclosure Officer has the discretion to request a deposit before beginning to make copies of records for a request or an installment as provided in 2.6.