



Guidelines for Selection of Records for Transfer to the City Archives, New Orleans Public Library

For additional information, please contact
Archivist, Louisiana Division/City Archives, NOPL
archivist@neworleanspubliclibrary.org | 504.596.2610

INTRODUCTION:

The purpose of the City Archives is to permanently retain any city records that have or will have administrative or historical value either to city government itself or to researchers, scholars, political scientists, urban specialists, and other interested members of the public. These records should be retained by the creating agencies for any legally mandated period or as long as they are administratively useful. Once their legal retention period has expired and/or they are no longer needed for the day-to-day operation of the agency, the permanently valuable records should be transferred to the City Archives.

We have attempted to list below the general types of records that often are created and kept by city departments which are generally considered to have permanent administrative or historical value. By no means is this list exhaustive. Should you have any questions about specific records or groups of records, you should consult the archivist in the City Archives at NOPL.

More detailed record retention schedules, tailored to specific types of records held in individual City of New Orleans departments, do not currently exist. Until such time as the city is able to embark on a professional records management and retention program, please consult with the archivist before discarding records or transferring them to the City Archives.

RECORDS OF PERMANENT HISTORICAL OR ADMINISTRATIVE VALUE:

Correspondence (including e-mail)

Policy and program development -- letters and memorandums pertaining to the formulation, planning, enactment, implementation, modification, or redefinition of the policies, programs, services, or projects of the New Orleans city government.

Administrative -- letters and memorandums pertaining to and arising from the normal and routine administrative functioning of the policies, programs, services, or projects of the New Orleans city government.

General Subject Files

Organization and planning files -- administrative directives, policy studies, reports of task forces and management review committees, and similar records documenting the formulation, planning, enactment, implementation, modification, or redefinition of the policies, programs, services, or projects of the New Orleans city government.

Procedural files -- administrative announcements, statements, reports, and other records.

NOTE: In general, only the correspondence and subject files of the **director of each city department** are to be considered of permanent value and suitable for transfer to the Archives. Any desired exceptions to this rule should be discussed with the Archivist.

Audits

Annual, biennial or cumulative audits (internally or externally produced), including periodic audits of a program, fund, department or account, if not included in the cumulative audit.

Bond Records

Bond administrative records consisting of preliminary studies, proposals and prospectuses, authorizations and certifications for issuance or cancellation, and related policy correspondence.

Budgets

Annual budgets and Special budgets, including budgets for capital improvement projects, grant-funded projects, or other projects prepared on a special or emergency basis and not included in an annual budget. (Note: We do not want working papers created for the preparation of budgets, including budget requests, budget change documentation, etc.)

Code Books

Any published codes (city code, building codes, fire code, etc.)

Construction Project Files

Records concerning the planning, design, construction, conversion, or modernization of local government-owned facilities, streets, structures, and systems, including feasibility, screening, and implementation studies; topographical and soil surveys and reports; architectural and engineering drawings, elevations, profiles, blueprints, and as-builts; inspection and investigative reports; laboratory test reports; environmental impact statements; construction contracts and bonds; correspondence; and similar documentation.

Easement and right-of-way files

Documentation relating to the granting of access and right-of-way by property owners for public works or for other municipal purposes, and releases from the city to citizens for previously granted easements and rights-of-way.

Financial Reports

Annual financial reports, long range fiscal planning reports, capital improvement reports.

General ledgers

Ledgers or similar records in which receipts, disbursements, and other municipal financial transactions are posted in summary form.

Grant proposals

Final proposals to the State and Federal governments for grant funds and any supporting documentation that serves to modify the proposal during the life of the grant.

Judgments rendered in litigation case files

Final judgments in court proceedings or quasi-judicial proceedings involving any city department.

License logs and permits

Logbooks, registers, or other summary records providing a listing of any category of permit or license issued by any city department.

Maps

City maps, current and outdated, showing roads, streets, zoning, parks, flood plains, subdivisions, and other geographical aspects of city government, produced by or for any city department.

Minutes and Permanent Agendas

Accounts of the proceedings and actions of any city board, commission, advisory committee, task force, or similar body which meets on a regular or ad hoc basis.

Minutes -- supporting documentation

Reports, studies, requests for action, and other documents presented to any city board, commission, advisory committee, task force, or similar body which meets on a regular or ad hoc basis.

Photographs

Photographs (prints, negatives, or digital images, photograph scrapbooks, and slides that document the history and development of any city department or program.

Published Reports

Any published reports, studies, proposals printed by or for a department for distribution to the public; special reports or studies prepared by order or request of the City. (*Note: See Section 94.40 of the City Code, which states: "At least two copies of all printed publications issued by or prepared for any department shall be filed with the city archives at the time of publication or distribution."*)

Records transfer lists

Lists of records transferred from any city department to the city records retention warehouse or other storage facility.

Resolutions and motions

Originals of resolutions, motions, proclamations, or other directives passed by any city board, commission, advisory committee, task force, or similar body which meets on a regular or ad hoc basis.

Scrapbooks

Clipping scrapbooks, clipping files, or similar records that document news coverage of city departments and programs.

Sound or video recordings

Sound and/or video recordings (tapes, cd's/dvd's) of meetings of any city board, commission, advisory committee, task force, or similar body which meets on a regular or ad hoc basis; or speeches, press conferences, or other public appearances by municipal officials.

Miscellaneous

Press releases
Public opinion polls
Speeches
Newsletters, brochures, handbooks, pamphlets published by a department or office