

CITY OF LOS ANGELES
INTER-DEPARTMENTAL CORRESPONDENCE

Date: February 1, 2007

To: All General Managers

From: Frank T. Martinez *Frank T. Martinez*
City Clerk

Subject: **ARCHIVING YOUR HISTORICALLY VALUABLE OFFICE FILES**

I want to take the opportunity to remind you of the City Archives and its mission to preserve the historically valuable records of the City. There are two storage facilities maintained by my Records Management Division in its duty as the administrator of the City's records management program: the City Records Center (CRC) for the off site storage of inactive operational records, and the City Archives for the permanent retention of historically valuable records. We need your help to identify the historically valuable records of your department.

The Administrative Code defines historical records as records which, "depict persons or phenomena which are or have been a part of events or conditions which significantly affect or have affected the City, its functional activities, its heritage, growth and/or development."

I am asking you to review your records retention schedules and your office files with a particular emphasis upon historical records. The following steps will help to ensure the identification and preservation of your historical records:

- Initiating the annual transfer to the City Archives of a copy of each of those unique items that document your department activities for the year, such as the annual report, budget summary, and other statistical or narrative summaries of activities that your department produces on an annual basis.
- Identifying specific records series on your records retention schedule that are by their nature historically valuable, and assigning them permanent retention.
- Executive correspondence and office files should be given particular attention.
- Records that reflect new initiatives or projects of historical significance should be singled out and shipped directly to the City Archives rather than the CRC.

Annual Transfers

Archive copies of annual reports, budgets or other publications may be gray mailed to the City Archives, stop 161, to the attention of Todd Gaydowski. Larger shipments or more unique items should be coordinated with Mr. Gaydowski prior to shipment.

Historical Record Series

Record series that are of such unique historical value as to warrant their retention such as commission minutes or board reports should be designated as historical and given permanent retention on your departmental records retention schedule. This will ensure that they will never be purged from the CRC and will be transferred to the City Archives at the appropriate time.

Executive Correspondence and Files

Routine correspondence and subject files as a whole are generally not treated as historically valuable. But correspondence and files from the General Manager's office and possibly from the offices of division or program heads are more likely to reflect the growth and development of the City. As such you should take steps in your office to file separately executive correspondence and files from the more routine administrative files in order to facilitate the orderly transfer of executive files to the City Archives. Your records retention schedules should be updated if necessary to provide a separate record series for executive correspondence and subject files.

Special Records

Routine records that deal with special events or projects and reflect the growth and development of your Department and/or the City can always be singled out for transfer to the City Archives. These special records should be listed on a records transfer list and forwarded to Todd Gaydowski of my Records Management Division.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. It is important that we work together to ensure the preservation of your department's historically valuable records. If you have any questions about your records retention schedules, making changes to your records retention schedules, or transferring records to the City Archives, please contact Todd Gaydowski at (213) 485-8783.