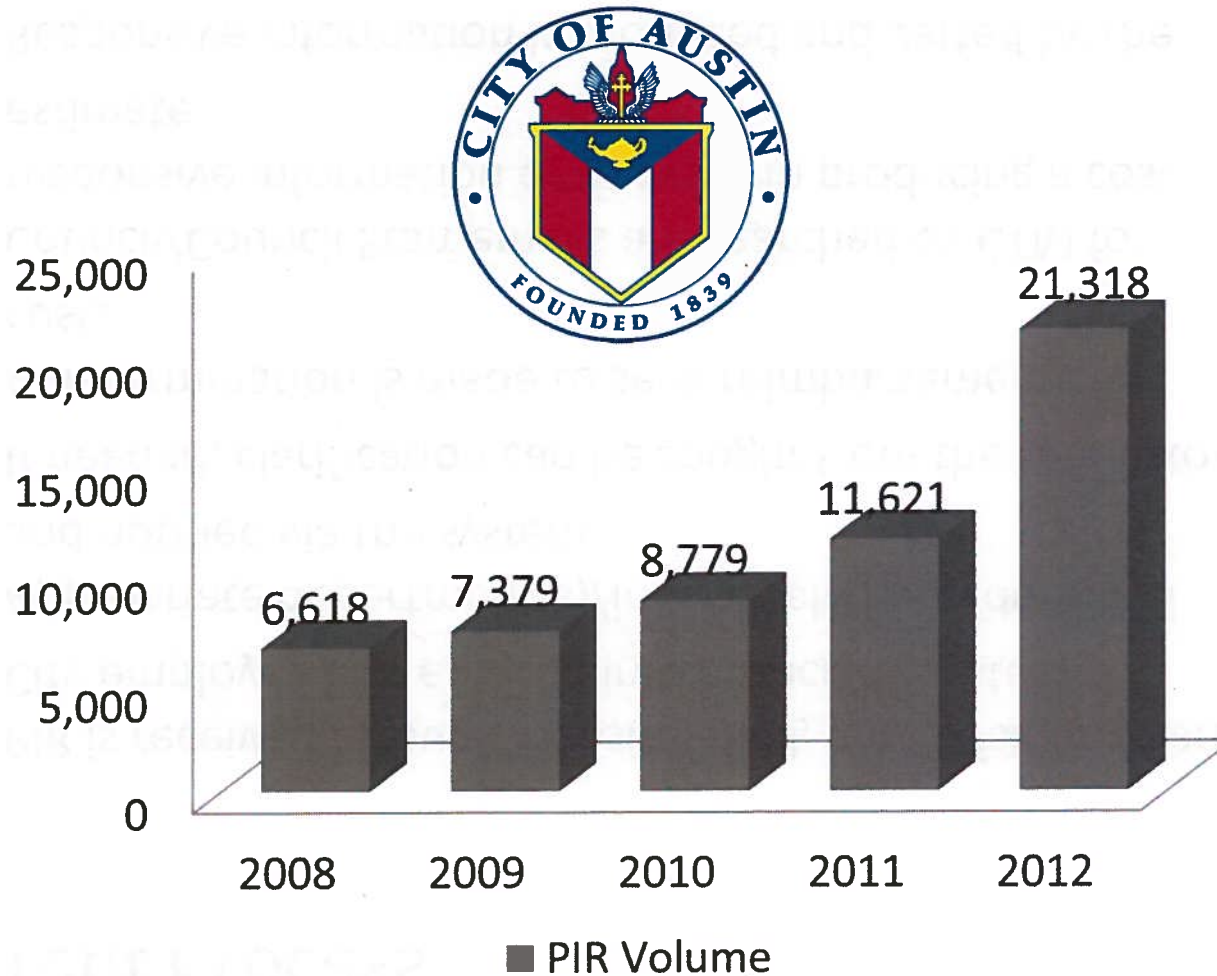


City of Austin Public Information Requests



Current Process

- PIR is received through website, mail, email, fax or by any City employee and entered into a tracking system
- Appropriate department(s)/individual(s) are identified and notified via the system
- If needed, clarification can be sought from the requestor
- A determination is made to seek reimbursements for costs
- Council/Council Staff emails are searched by CTM for responsive information or to assist in producing a cost estimate
- Responsive information is produced and vetted by the PIR SPOC
- Information is released to requestor

Responsive Information

- When a request is made for Council/Council Staff correspondence, CTM assists in searching email files
- A good faith effort is made to determine key words by City staff and can include assistance from the requestor or staff
- Potentially responsive electronic information is placed in an electronic file for review by the PIR single point of contact
- Selected CTM responsive information is combined with any supplementary information gathered by Council PIR SPOCS
- The cumulative, Council responsive information is gathered by the Council PIR SPOC & delivered to CPIO to be released
- In accordance with the records retention schedule, CPIO manages retention of Council's responsive information

Cost Estimates

- A cost estimate providing for allowable charges may be calculated if the request:
 - Requires programming and/or manipulation of data
 - The request is voluminous and/or will take large amounts of personnel time and resources to compile
 - When a determination to pursue recoverable costs through a cost estimate is made, a “sample” of responsive information is conducted
 - CTM runs an email search to produce a sample for selected individuals (Council Members and/or staff) of potentially responsive information
 - The quantity of responsive information is combined with supplementary information to create an estimate
 - If the estimation exceeds \$40, the requestor is given a written, itemized statement before any work is undertaken
 - Once the requestor accepts the charges a complete search is conducted

Response Times

- Per the Texas Public Information Act, the City of Austin promptly produces information in response to a public information request
- If the information is not available at the time of request, the date that the information will be available (within a reasonable time), is conveyed to the requestor in writing
- The law department initiates a request to the Attorney General to withhold information under TPIA
 - In order for the law department to determine whether or not responsive information meets an exception under the TPIA, they ask offices & departments to send them all of the information that may be subject to exception for further review
 - Once Law determines that a document is subject to an exception from disclosure or is confidential by law, a letter requesting to withhold the information is sent to the Attorney General (within 10 days of the request being filed)
 - A copy is sent to the requestor
 - The Attorney General generally responds within 45 days

Horizon improvements

- CTM is launching a new email archiving solution. These benefits will include:
 - The capability to search multiple mailboxes at one time
 - The ability to search all folders at once
- A Public Information Specialist spent several months in 2012 examining best practices among Texas Peer Cities, potential software improvements, developing a recommended Standard Operating Procedure, staffing recommendations and incorporating recommendations by COA PIR SPOCS
 - The PIR process, fundamentally a legal requirement, will be administered by the law department
 - The law department has posted a Public Information Manager position and has begun interviewing candidates
 - Purchasing has conducted an RFP for commercial software to replace the management system created in-house, launched in 2007
 - Responses have been received and evaluated. It is anticipated a Council RCA will be awarded June 20