

# COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT CORPORATION OF CITY OF VAN WERT AND VAN WERT COUNTY

## PUBLIC RECORDS POLICY

It is the policy of the COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT CORPORATION OF CITY OF VAN WERT AND VAN WERT COUNTY ("CIC") that openness leads to a better-informed citizenry which leads to better government and better public policy. It is the policy of the CIC to strictly adhere to the state's Public Records Act and the Ohio Revised Code. All exemptions to openness are to be construed in their narrowest sense, and any denial of public records in response to a valid request must be accompanied by an explanation, including legal authority, as outlined in the Ohio Revised Code. If the request is in writing, the explanation must also be in writing.

Van Wert County, in accordance with the Ohio Revised Code, defines records as including the following:

- Any document – paper, electronic (including but not limited to email), or other format – that is created or received by or comes under the jurisdiction of a public office that documents the organization, functions, policies, decisions, procedures, operations, and/or other activities of the CIC.
- All records of the CIC are specifically exempt from disclosure under the Ohio Revised Code.

It is the policy of the CIC that, as required by Ohio Law, records will be organized and maintained so that they are readily available for inspection and copying (see below for the email record policy) pursuant to the record retention schedule adopted by the Board.

Each request for public records should be evaluated for a response using the following guidelines:

- Although no specific language is required to make a request, the requester must at least identify the records requested with sufficient clarity to allow the public office to identify, retrieve and review the records. If it is not clear what records are being sought, the records custodian must contact the requester for clarification, and should assist the requester in revising the request by informing the requester of the manner in which the office keeps its records.
- The requester does not have to put a records request in writing and does not have to provide his/her identity or the intended use of the requested public record. It is the CIC's general policy that this information not be requested.
- Public records are to be available for inspection during regular business hours, with the exception of published holidays. Public records must be made available for inspection promptly. Copies of public records must be made available within a reasonable period of

time. "Prompt" and "reasonable" take into account the volume of records requested, the proximity of the location where the records are stored, and the necessity for any legal review of the records requested.

- Each request should be evaluated for an estimated length of time required to gather the records. Routine requests for records should be satisfied immediately, if feasible to do so. Routine requests include but are not limited to meeting minutes (both in draft and final form), budgets, salary information, forms and applications, personnel rosters, etc. If fewer than 20 pages of copies are requested, or if the records are readily available in an electronic format that can be emailed or downloaded easily, these should be made as quickly as the equipment allows.
  - ✓ If more copies are requested, an appointment should be made with the requester for when the copies or computer files can be picked up.
  - ✓ All requests for public records must either be satisfied or be acknowledged in writing by the office in which the records were requested within a reasonable period of time following the office's receipt of the request. If a request is deemed significantly beyond "routine," such as seeking a voluminous number of copies or requiring extensive research, the acknowledgement must include the following:
    - An estimated number of business days it will take to satisfy the request.
    - An estimated cost if copies are requested.
    - Any items within the request that may be exempt from disclosure.

Any denial of public records requested must include an explanation, including legal authority. If portions of a record are public and portions are exempt, the exempt portions are to be redacted and the rest released. If there are redactions, each redaction must be accompanied by a supporting explanation, including legal authority.

Those seeking public records will be charged only the actual cost of making copies. See below for further clarification:

- The charge for paper copies is 5 cents per page.
- The charge for downloaded computer files to a flash drive is \$3 per drive.
- There is no charge for documents emailed.
- Requesters may ask that documents be mailed to them. They will be charged the actual cost of the postage and mailing supplies.

The CIC shall track public records requests by date of request, person requesting information (if known), records requested, the actual records provided, date of fulfillment of the request, the method records are provided, the cost to fulfill the request, and the person providing the information.

The CIC recognizes the legal and non-legal consequences of failure to properly respond to a public records request. In addition to the distrust in government that failure to comply may cause, CIC's failure to comply with a request may result in a court ordering the CIC to comply with the law and to pay the requester's attorney fees and damages.

## County Community Improvement Corporation Records Retention Schedule

This schedule lists records commonly created by the County Community Improvement Corporation. The retention periods specified herein are either required by statute or have been determined by best practice. Permanent records existing solely in electronic format may become inaccessible through media decay and/or hardware/software obsolescence. Records may not be disposed of until all audits are released and audit discrepancies have been settled. Where a lawsuit or agency proceeding is pending, a legal hold on relevant records is required. Records shall be retained until the legal hold has been removed. ELECTRONIC MAIL (e-mail) is a format on which records are sent, received and/or drafted using electronic mailing systems. E-mail is NOT a record series. Instead, each individual e-mail should be evaluated according to its content and retained in accordance with the record series adopted within this schedule that the content most closely fits.

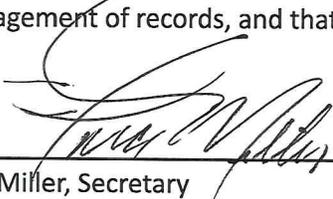
Records Series	Description	Retention
Annual Financial Report	Annual financial report, certified and filed with the auditor of state and published to the CIC or County's website (ORC 1724.05)	5 years, provided audited
Audits	Audits by the auditor of state or independent audits	5 years
Incorporation Records	Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws	Permanent
Minutes	Official Minutes of the Board, to include Resolutions	Permanent
Project Files	Records pertaining to projects undertaken by the CIC, including contracts	8 years after project completion

**COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT CORPORATION OF CITY OF VAN WERT  
AND VAN WERT COUNTY**

**PUBLIC RECORDS POLICY**

***Acknowledgement of Receipt***

The undersigned certifies that she is the properly elected and qualified Secretary of the books, records and seal of the Community Improvement Corporation of the City of Van Wert and the County of Van Wert, that she has received a copy of the Public Records Policy, that she understands said Policy and the attached records retention schedule and will abide thereby in response to public records requests and management of records, and that a copy of said Policy is displayed in the City Building.

  
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Tina Miller, Secretary

Dated: April 19, 2022