

File No.: 2025-946

January 20, 2026

s.22(1)

Dear s.22(1)

Re: Request for Access to Records under the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (the "Act")

I am responding to your request of December 4, 2025 under the ***Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*** for:

Record of staff feedback provided to Councillor Fry on the draft motion "Implementing a reduction in FOI fees". Date Range: October 1, 2025 to October 30, 2025.

All responsive records are attached. Some information in the records has been severed (blacked out) under s.13(1) of the Act. You can read or download this section here: http://www.bclaws.ca/EPLibraries/bclaws_new/document/ID/freeside/96165_00.

Under Part 5 of the Act, you may ask the Information & Privacy Commissioner to review any matter related to the City's response to your FOI request by writing to: Office of the Information & Privacy Commissioner, info@oipc.bc.ca or by phoning 250-387-5629.

If you request a review, please provide the Commissioner's office with: 1) the request number (2025-946); 2) a copy of this letter; 3) a copy of your original request; and 4) detailed reasons why you are seeking the review.

Yours truly,

Kevin Tuerlings, FOI Case Manager, for

[Signed by Kevin Tuerlings]

Siân Madsen, MA, MAS
Acting Director, Access to Information & Privacy

If you have any questions, please email us at foi@vancouver.ca and we will respond to you as soon as possible. You may also contact 3-1-1 (604-873-7000) if you require accommodation or do not have access to email.

Encl. (Response package)

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Implementing a reduction in FOI fees

Submitted by Councillor Fry

STAFF LEAD:	Katrina Leckovic
FEEDBACK SUMMARY TO PROVIDE COUNCILLOR (completed by staff lead or CMO)	<p>s.13(1)</p> <p>In 2024, 756 FOI requests were logged and as of October 15, 2025 we have exceeded that number. The \$30 per hour is to encourage the applicant to narrow their request so that it does not create waste. Reducing or eliminating the fees for the specified bodies will significantly impact staff workload as it is anticipated this will result in an increase in the number of FOIs and the need for additional staff to process such requests.</p> <p>In addition, an increase in requests can impact the number of OIPC complaints that are mediated and may go to Inquiry (a quasi-judicial process that is time intensive).</p> <p>Note: staff will be bringing forward changes to the By-law to implement a \$10 application fee to bring the CoV in alignment with other municipalities and the Provincial government.</p> <p>Note: according to the province in 2021, an average cost of fulfilling an FOI request from start to finish is approximately \$3000. At the CoV, the fees in place are not designed for cost recovery. All fees collected are within legislated allowances under FIPPA.</p> <p>Note: media works with City Communications to obtain city information. If the media requires documents, then an FOI request is required. A public body also cannot charge a fee where an applicant requests their own personal information.</p> <p>Note: the City already refers to a process set out by an OIPC Order to determine if a fee waiver is warranted. The FOI Office assists applicants that receive fees under s.75 of FIPPA an opportunity and guidance on how to reduce or eliminate the fee if a waiver is requested. The FOI Office also assists applicants in clarifying their requests for information under s.10(a).</p> <p>All legislated timelines are upheld by the FOI Office. The FOI Office proactively releases completed FOI requests (that do not contain personal or confidential information), Memos to Mayor</p>

	<p>and Council, In camera decisions and related reports, and Mayor and Councillor calendars and publishes an annual report.</p> <p>The City's Bylaw to provide for the Administration of FIPPA notes: <i>...the FOI office does not provide hard copies of responsive records unless there are exceptional circumstances. All responsive records are provided in electronic formats.</i></p>
Legal/Procedural Issues	
Is there any overlap with current work underway?	
Is there any conflict with prior council direction?	
Financial Implications?	
Impact on Resources/staff?	
Additional Feedback	

1. The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FIPPA) guarantees public access to records held by public bodies, including municipalities, as a cornerstone of transparent governance.
2. FIPPA authorizes local governments to charge fees to access records held by public bodies¹, and in turn fees are set out under By-law No. 11451, A By-law to Provide for the Administration of the Freedom of

¹ https://www.bclaws.gov.bc.ca/civix/document/id/complete/statreg/96165_01

3. The City of Vancouver currently charges fees for FOI requests that exceed three hours of processing time, including a 50% deposit on estimated costs, which may deter public access to information.
4. Many FOI requests are made by journalists, researchers, and community advocates who may not have the financial resources to absorb these costs, especially when seeking information in the public interest. High fees for FOI requests could be considered a barrier to transparency and accountability.
5. Other municipalities have adopted fee waivers or reductions for FOI requests deemed to be in the public interest, promoting civic engagement and oversight;
6. In their 2022 election platform, under Transparency, Accountability, and Good Government Mayor Sim and his caucus promised “An ABC Majority will implement a 50% reduction in FOI fees”

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED

THAT Council direct staff to review the current FOI fee schedule and assess the feasibility of:

- Reducing or eliminating fees for FOI requests made by non-profit organizations, journalists, academic researchers, and members of the public acting in the public interest;
- Increasing the number of free processing hours from 3 to 5 hours before fees are applied;
- Providing full electronic access to records whenever possible to avoid hardcopy preparation fees;

FURTHER THAT Council direct staff to report back within 90 days with considerations for amending the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy By-law No. 11451 and related administrative policies

AND FURTHER THAT Council affirm its commitment to transparency, accountability, and equitable access to information by ensuring FOI fees do not pose a barrier to public participation in civic affairs.

² <https://bylaws.vancouver.ca/consolidated/11451.PDF>