

# ANNUAL REPORT

2021



City of Los Angeles  
**Office of the City Clerk**

### 2021 Report



The Office of the City Clerk provides a wide-ranging array of services. A typical day in the Department, for example, might begin with Legislative Staff supporting a Council Meeting in the morning, while the Business Improvement District (BID) team assists BIDs with renewal efforts, and the Election Division conducts multilingual voter outreach at a community event. In the afternoon, one might see the Neighborhood Council (NC) Funding team providing training on funding policies to NC Board Members, and Records Management staff locating historical records for a customer researching the City's history. While the City Clerk has many roles and responsibilities, this snapshot is illustrative of the variety of services we provide, and for which a unifying theme is access to city governance and civic engagement. The City Clerk is proud to serve Angelenos in this capacity; access, transparency and engagement are all key elements of a healthy democracy.

To that end, the City Clerk will continue to expand upon and refine its contactless programs to facilitate broader access and operational resilience and continue to work on goals listed in its Racial Equity Plan. Last year, the Department accomplished several of the milestones in the Plan including coordinating with the College Works Program and Hire LA Youth to onboard six interns. The interns received administrative and clerical training while assisting various divisions. Additionally, City Clerk supervisors expanded professional development opportunities for staff by providing cross training, and exam preparation assistance.

Equitable Services goals were also addressed; the Neighborhood Council Funding program conducted 121 virtual training sessions and offered interpreter services, making it possible for a wide variety of NC Board Members to participate. Lastly, the Elections Outreach team disseminated election information to a broad and diverse audience through its social media platforms and through virtual collaborations with schools and non-profit organizations.

Providing quality and equitable services to the public and the offices and departments we support will continue to be a priority for the Office of the City Clerk. I am proud of staff's accomplishments, as highlighted in this report, and look forward to leading the way in innovation and service inclusivity in the year to come.

This report looks back at our FY 2021 Accomplishments and forward to the goals we plan to achieve in Fiscal Year 2022/23. We call our service delivery framework, TASC, which stands for Transparency, Accountability, Simplicity and Consistency. Every new project is developed with these tenets in mind.

I invite you to follow us on social media (Twitter, Facebook or YouTube @LACityClerk) as we begin a new fiscal year and embark on a new 5-year strategic plan.

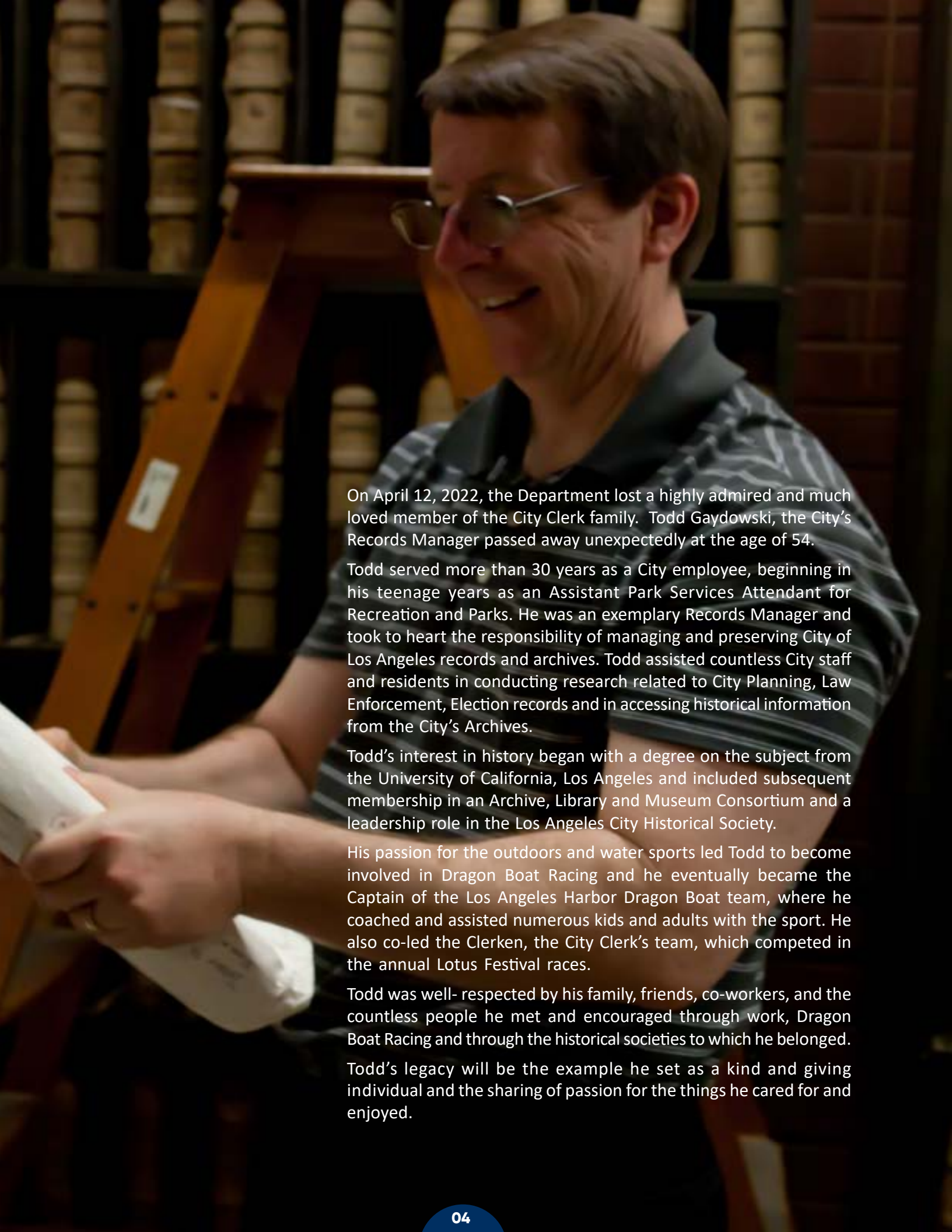
A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Holly L. Wolcott". The signature is fluid and cursive, written in a professional style.

Holly L. Wolcott  
City Clerk

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On April 12, 2022, the Department lost a highly admired and much loved member of the City Clerk family. Todd Gaydowski, the City's Records Manager passed away unexpectedly at the age of 54.

Todd served more than 30 years as a City employee, beginning in his teenage years as an Assistant Park Services Attendant for Recreation and Parks. He was an exemplary Records Manager and took to heart the responsibility of managing and preserving City of Los Angeles records and archives. Todd assisted countless City staff and residents in conducting research related to City Planning, Law Enforcement, Election records and in accessing historical information from the City's Archives.

Todd's interest in history began with a degree on the subject from the University of California, Los Angeles and included subsequent membership in an Archive, Library and Museum Consortium and a leadership role in the Los Angeles City Historical Society.

His passion for the outdoors and water sports led Todd to become involved in Dragon Boat Racing and he eventually became the Captain of the Los Angeles Harbor Dragon Boat team, where he coached and assisted numerous kids and adults with the sport. He also co-led the Clerken, the City Clerk's team, which competed in the annual Lotus Festival races.

Todd was well-respected by his family, friends, co-workers, and the countless people he met and encouraged through work, Dragon Boat Racing and through the historical societies to which he belonged.

Todd's legacy will be the example he set as a kind and giving individual and the sharing of passion for the things he cared for and enjoyed.



When the first government in Los Angeles was established under Spanish control in 1812, the only full time paid City officer was the forerunner to the present day City Clerk. The title of “City Clerk” was first used in the Charter of 1889. Today, The Office of the City Clerk serves as the Clerk of the City Council providing the critical role of maintaining a record of all City Council and Council Committee proceedings. It is the responsibility of the City Clerk to ensure compliance with the Public Records Act, the Political Reform Act and the Brown Act. The Office schedules and prepares Council and Council Committee agendas and processes all files for Council consideration. More than 3,000 Council files are created each year. The City Clerk is also responsible for preserving and protecting the City’s historical archives, attesting City contracts, and processing any claims filed against the City.

Elections is another key function of the City Clerk. It is currently responsible for the administration of up to 99 Neighborhood Council elections, as well as several department and governing board elections throughout the City, including the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD). This Office also provides support to municipal elections by processing candidate filings, distributing City-wide voter information pamphlets and providing education, community outreach, and voter registration services. The Department also receives and processes citizen-sponsored initiatives.

In addition to its regulatory and legislative duties, the Office of the City Clerk oversees the Business Improvement District Program, the Neighborhood Council Funding Program (NC Funding), and their respective trust funds. The BID program allows businesses in a particular area of the City to pay an additional assessment to fund specific projects within its district’s boundaries. The NC Funding Program administers the Neighborhood Council system’s annual budget allocation.

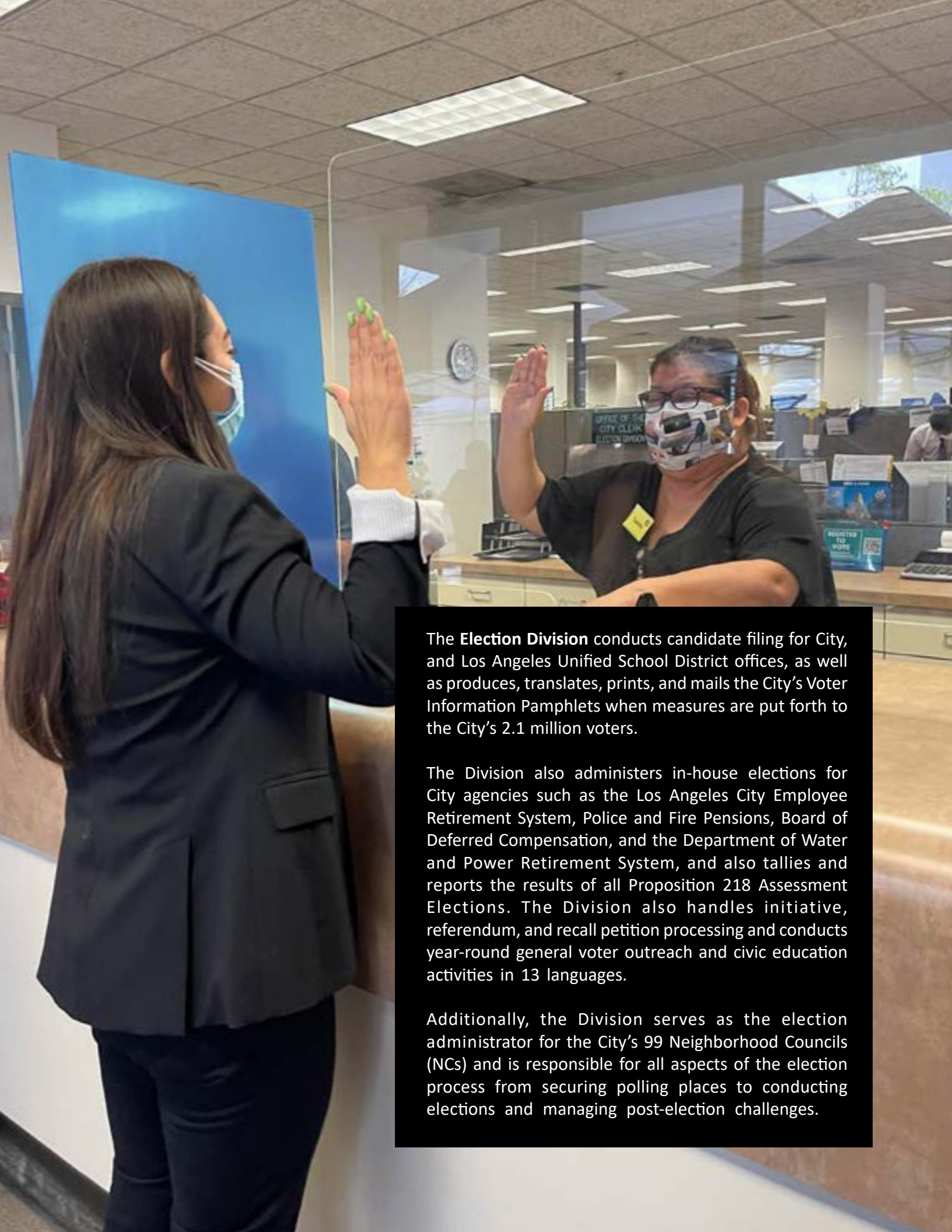
As part of its Charter mandate, the Office of the City Clerk also provides administrative and human resources support to the almost 900 employees that comprise the Offices of the Mayor, the City Council, the Chief Legislative Analyst, the City Clerk, the Office of Public Accountability, the Civil and Human Rights Department, and the Youth Development Department. The Office also provides payroll support to the Departments of Cannabis Regulation and Neighborhood Empowerment.

The 2021/22 adopted operating Budget for the Office of the City Clerk is \$15,818,388 with a position control comprised of 123 full time management, legislative, and administrative employees.



### **A Closer Look at the City Clerk's Six Divisions:**

The Council and Public Services Division (CPS) serves as the official record keeper for all Council actions by providing Council Clerks, Voting Clerks, and Legislative Assistants to support and facilitate the meetings of the Council and its Committees. Each year, CPS posts and publishes more than 1,500 legally required notices and ordinances, and processes over 15,000 documents transmitted for Council consideration, creating in excess of 3,000 Council files. Additionally, CPS processes any claims filed against the City, and “attests” over 2,100 contracts annually. The Division also provides interpretation services for meetings, and responds to requests for records from the public on matters relating to City Council.



The **Election Division** conducts candidate filing for City, and Los Angeles Unified School District offices, as well as produces, translates, prints, and mails the City's Voter Information Pamphlets when measures are put forth to the City's 2.1 million voters.

The Division also administers in-house elections for City agencies such as the Los Angeles City Employee Retirement System, Police and Fire Pensions, Board of Deferred Compensation, and the Department of Water and Power Retirement System, and also tallies and reports the results of all Proposition 218 Assessment Elections. The Division also handles initiative, referendum, and recall petition processing and conducts year-round general voter outreach and civic education activities in 13 languages.

Additionally, the Division serves as the election administrator for the City's 99 Neighborhood Councils (NCs) and is responsible for all aspects of the election process from securing polling places to conducting elections and managing post-election challenges.



**The Business Improvement District (BIDs) Division** administers the BID program. A BID is a geographically defined area within which property and/or business owners agree by election to pay an assessment to fund designated programs and projects within the district's boundaries that provide a special benefit to the defined area. These districts typically fund services which are supplemental to those already provided by the City, including cleaning streets, providing security, making capital improvements, construction of pedestrian and streetscape enhancements, marketing, and increasing economic development and livability.

The Division facilitates the establishment and renewal of BIDs in accordance with State and locally mandated policies and administers the BID Trust Fund which collects \$72 million annually in BID assessments. There are currently 38 property-based BIDs and five merchant-based BIDs established Citywide.





The **Records Management Division** administers the City Clerk's Charter assigned duty as the custodian of City records. The City Archives and Records Center are the two key components of the City Clerk's Records Management Division. The City Records Center, with a capacity of approximately 190,000 standard sized records storage boxes, is responsible for the retention and disposition of the inactive operating records of City Departments, Offices and Bureaus. The Records Management team tracks the location and status of all records and provides reference services for City employees and officials, as well as to the public, within established security guidelines. The Division also manages the offsite storage of inactive departmental records.

The City Archives provides for the permanent retention of the City's historically valuable records. The City Archives identifies, collects, preserves, arranges, and describes records of historical significance originated by City government from as early as 1827.

The **Systems Division** provides strategic and tactical planning, application development, systems integration, automation, and technical support for the Office of the City Clerk. The Division's mission is to utilize technology to modernize systems, automate workflows, and improve efficiency in government services. The Division strives to continue to provide data transparency through mobile and web enabled applications with first-class service to all of the City Clerk's customers.

Finally, the **Administrative Services Division (ASD)** provides a combination of personnel, fiscal and administrative support to the Offices of the Mayor, the City Council, the Chief Legislative Analyst, Public Accountability, the Health Commission; and newly created Departments such as Department of Cannabis Regulation, Civil and Human Right Department and the Youth Development. The Human Resources team also provides payroll support to the Departments of Cannabis Regulation, Neighborhood Empowerment, and the Youth Development Department (YDD.) Additionally, the Fiscal team administers AB1290 funds, General City Purposes (GCP) funds, and Council Special Trust Funds. This Division also houses the fiscal arm of the BID Trust Fund, and the NC Funding program, which administers the NC Trust Fund, a \$3.1M annual appropriation to support the operations of the 99 Citywide NCs.

I am proud of staff's Fiscal Year 2020-21 accomplishments, as highlighted below, and look forward to leading the way in innovation and service inclusivity in the year to come.

### **Election Outreach and Civic Engagement**

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Elections team administered an all Vote-by-Mail Neighborhood Council (NC) Elections for 76 NCs in FY 20-21. The Systems team developed the application and portal for NC stakeholders to register to vote, request the applicable ballots, and allow staff to track ballot issuance and receipt. Further, paper applications were distributed to regional non-profit service providers in an effort to reach unhoused residents. The Elections team further developed procedures for administering the elections, which involved significantly different NC bylaws, different types of board seats and varying voting requirements. Overall, staff certified 1,707 candidates, prepared and mailed out 26,827 ballot packets and received and processed 18,641 ballots.

### **Records Management**

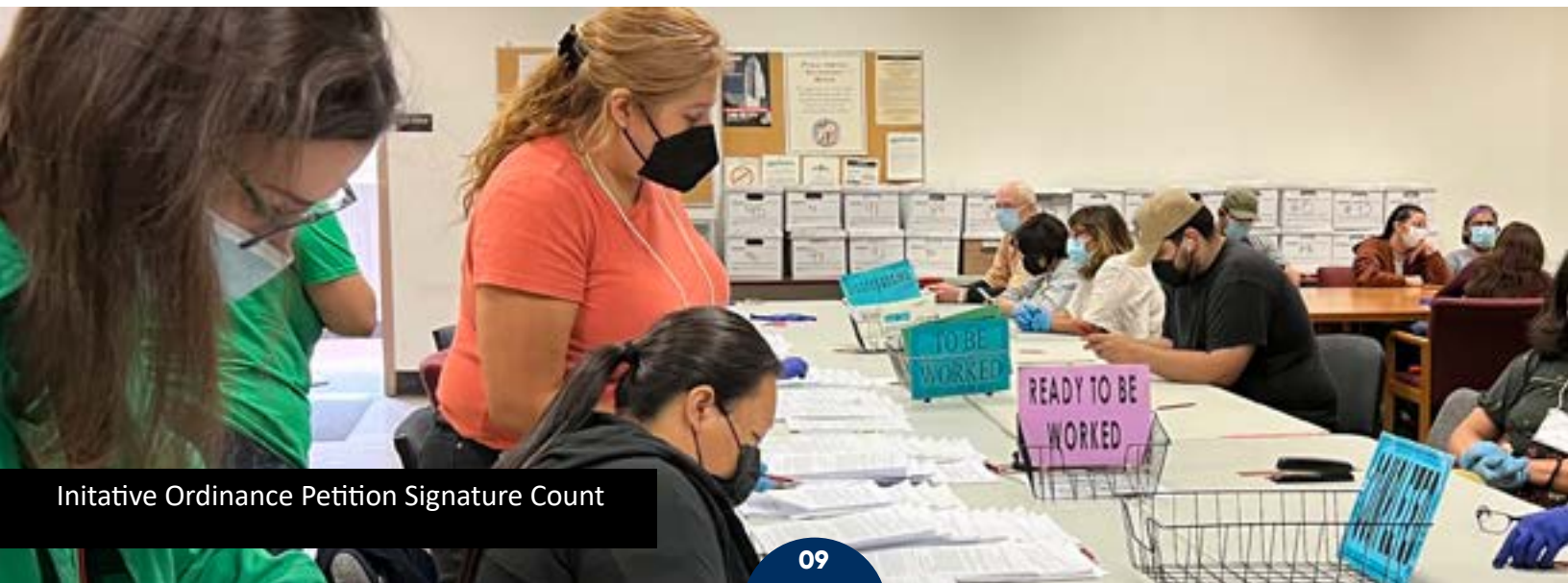
The Record Management Division's long-term goal is to scan all council files back to 1980, the year the Department began indexing to the Council records in the Legislative Management System (LMS). In 2021, staff scanned the 1996 Council files, approximately 80% of which were uploaded for public access. Each fiscal year, the Department is able to scan one year of back files, approximately 3,000 records, with available funding.

### **Automation of Business Improvement District (BID) Processing**

Staff developed and disseminated quarterly newsletters containing information on BID policies and procedures, website features and upcoming events. The section also acquired vendor services to provide technical research assistance and developed an electronic process for the preparation, evaluation, and execution of BID administration contracts.

### **Neighborhood Council (NC) Funding Program**

The team translated the NC Funding guidelines and policies into Chinese, Korean and Spanish and conducted 121 live online training sessions. Additionally, staff processed 2,636 check requests, reviewed 3,539 credit card transactions and 1,099 Monthly Expenditure Reports. NCs collectively contributed \$428,279 toward COVID-19 response efforts.



## **Streamlining of Council and Public Services Processes**

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Council and Public Services staff worked closely with ITA, the City Attorney's Office and the Council President's staff to continue facilitating, supporting, and updating remote Council and Committee Meetings. The feature allowing telephonic public comment on agenda items has been well received and now allows a greater number of people to participate in the City's legislative process. The team also implemented a new meeting calendar for all Council and Committee meeting agendas and a new document submittal and processing system. Staff also initiated protocols to witness and provide oath of office to Council confirmed Commissioners and General Managers via a video conferencing platform, and we established procedures and protocols for City departments to electronically submit City contracts and receive attestation.

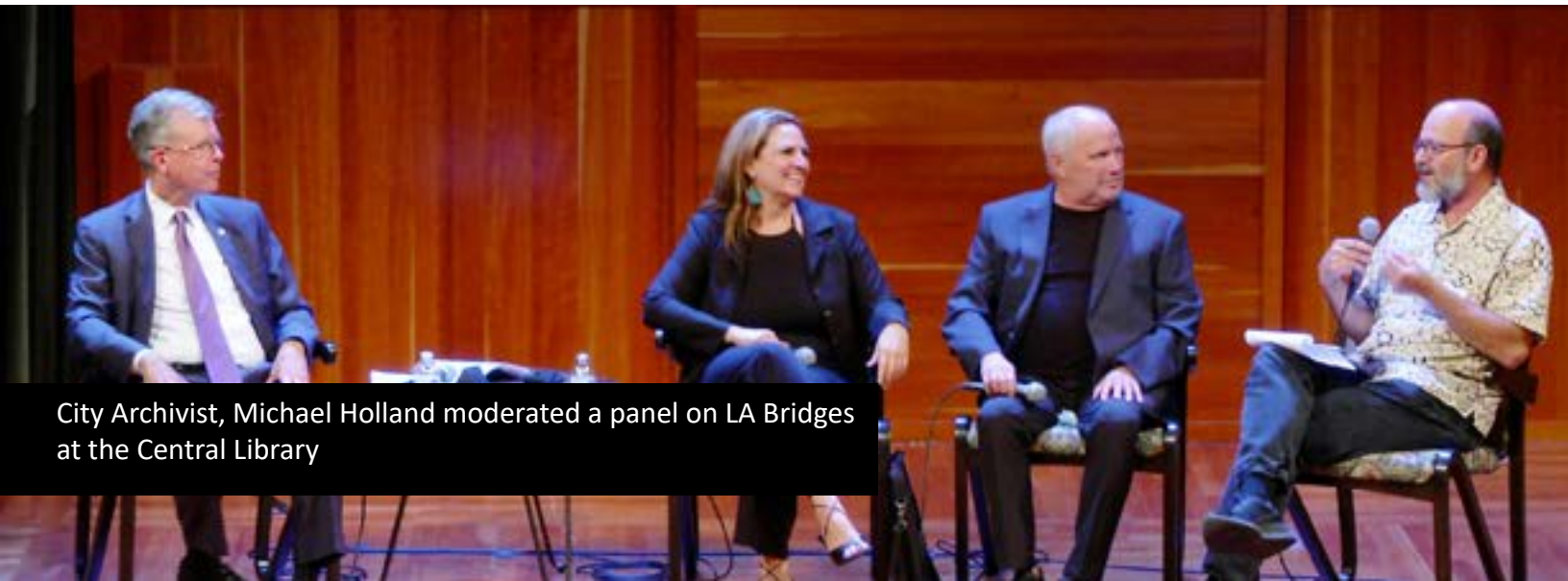
## **Systems**

The Systems team replaced the Granicus Council video/audio infrastructure with YouTube streaming and automated captioning and recently completed Phase I of the General City Purposes (GCP) contract tracking application, which went live on July 1.

Through in-house applications, such as the electronic signature program ClerkSign and the electronic contract attestation system, the team has helped the City Clerk continue to provide high quality services, while decreasing expenditures and reliance on inefficient manual paper-driven processes.

## **Administrative Services**

Staff provided human resources, payroll and accounting assistance to newly established Departments and Commissions such as the Civil and Human Rights and Youth Development Departments and the Redistricting Commissions. City Clerk will continue to provide support as needed. Overall, the Human Resources team processed 828 Form 41s, conducted 182 new hire orientations, 84 exit interviews, coordinated 346 finger print requests, and administered payroll and time keeping processes for approximately 900 staff on a bi-weekly basis. The Accounting and Fiscal staff processed approximately 13,000 accounting documents and 25 GCP contracts.



City Archivist, Michael Holland moderated a panel on LA Bridges at the Central Library

## Fiscal Year 21-22 Goals

The following 2021-22 Fiscal Year Goals are on target for completion:

### Enhance Election Outreach and Civic Empowerment

- Increase awareness and encourage participation in the June 2022 Primary Election
- Conduct outreach at 400 events targeting underprivileged youth, the unhoused, the formerly incarcerated, new Americans, seniors and faith based organizations
- Collaborate with other Departments to promote civic engagement Reach 25,000 Angelenos

### Increase Access to Archival Records

- Scan all of the 1995 Council Files and upload them to the new PrimeGov system

### Improve BID Partnership through Enhanced Services, Communication, and Oversight

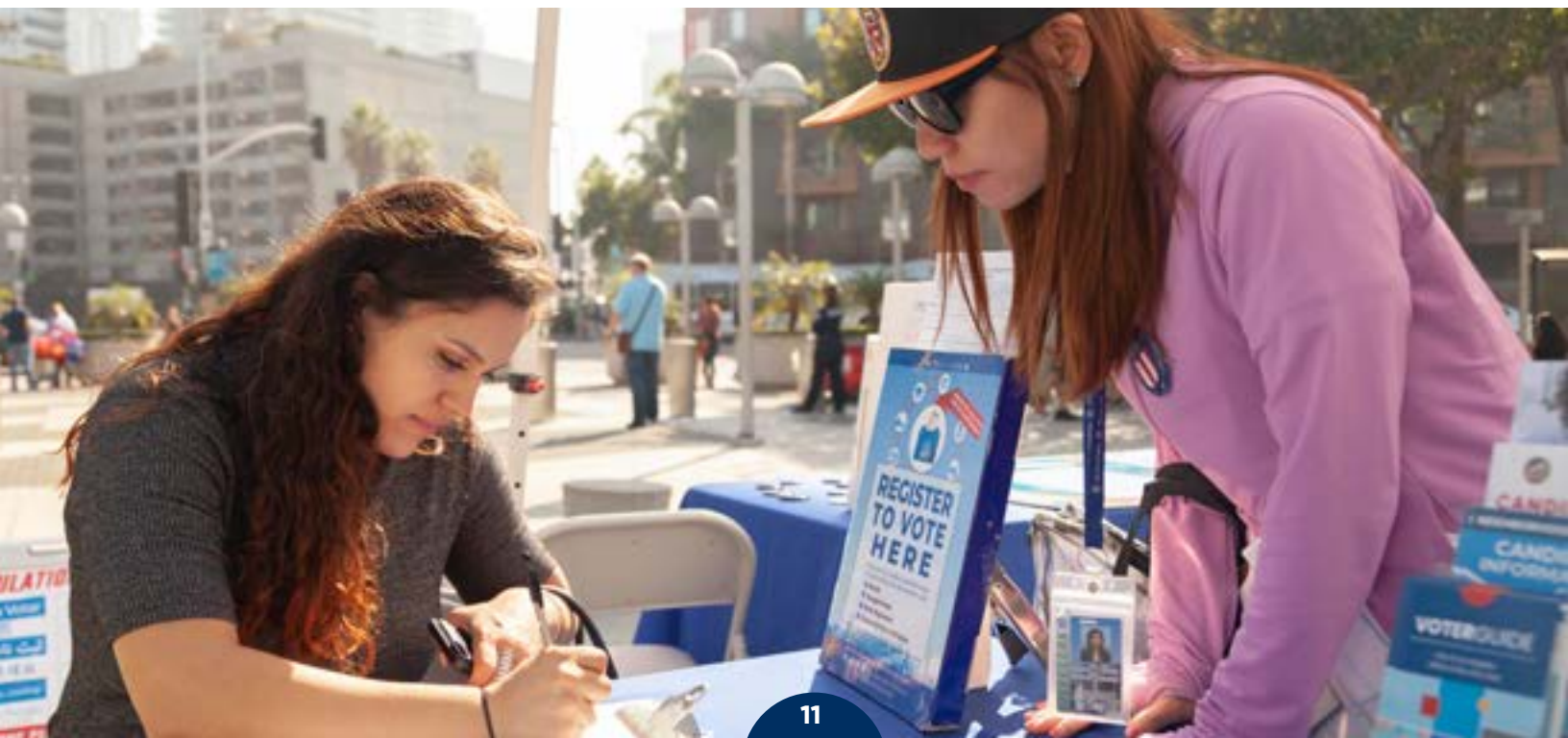
- Modify the BID portal to include notice of compliance deadlines and fund availability
- Work with Systems staff to build improvements based on the experience and feedback gained from ongoing operations
- Develop training and education materials for the BIDs on administration best practices

### Increase NC Funding Training and Communication with Board Members

- Increase NC Funding Training opportunities by 10% for NCs ensuring equity in resources

### Enhance the City Council Meeting Experience

- Review feasibility and implement pilot program for the utilization of a virtual receptionist program for access to Division services.
- Develop a customer training program for all Division staff



## Continue to Digitize Using Technology to Convert Manual Operations to Automated Processes

- Work with the PrimeGov vendor to complete the Council File subscription module in the Legislative Management System (LMS)
- Migrate over 20 applications from on premise servers to Amazon Cloud servers

## Streamline Administrative Services Operations to Provide Quality Services

- Complete GCP contract tracking system implementation and training
- Coordinate with CAO and City Attorney on contracting requirements, draft and execute 75 contracts with Police Reinvestment funds
- Enhance Onboarding process with a virtual component for contactless, secure submission of employment documents and development of a video tutorial.

## Five Year Strategic Plan

The City Clerk’s current 5-Year Strategic Plan ends on June 30, 2022. The Department achieved over 80% of its goals including the implementation of transformational systems such as the Neighborhood Council Funding portal, the in-house-developed electronic signature application, Clerksign, the electronic attestation feature for contract executions, and the conversion of paper council files from 1980-2000 to electronic format, to name a few.

ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES		Year				
Goals	Milestones	1	2	3	4	5
<p>Create a transparent, interactive process to manage and report NC Funding activity for use by staff, NC financial officers, and the public.</p>	<p>Implement first year of new NC Funding Policies and Guidelines</p> <p>Train all NC financial officers</p> <p>Complete first year utilizing online funding portal with 80% expenditure rate</p> <p>Enhance portal to include year of fund tracking</p>	<p>System enhanced to include priority and event process tracking and reporting</p> <p>Conduct process fully automated</p> <p>E-signature process developed and operational</p>	<p>Develop and manage roll over funding and donation receipt processes and integrate with existing online portal</p> <p>Enhance training and create online training videos on NC Funding topics</p>		<p>Expand NC Funding system portal capabilities</p>	
<p>Hiring, onboarding, staff development, retention and sustainability plan (Knowledge transfer, performance appraisal, training, management academy, peer-to-peer mentor groups)</p>	<p>Revamp annual goal process and training</p> <p>Develop management academy program goals and secure contractual services</p> <p>Create new employee orientation video</p>	<p>Enhance online evaluation process to include e-signatures</p> <p>Conduct supervisory receive management academy training</p> <p>Regularly equipment and manager's checklist added to onboarding process</p>	<p>Expand management academy to non-supervisors for staff development</p> <p>Develop on-line video manuals</p>	<p>Complete online onboarding system</p>	<p>Training has been made available to all applicable City Clerk staff</p>	

The Department is currently drafting a new plan, which will encompass Fiscal Years 22-23 through 26-27.

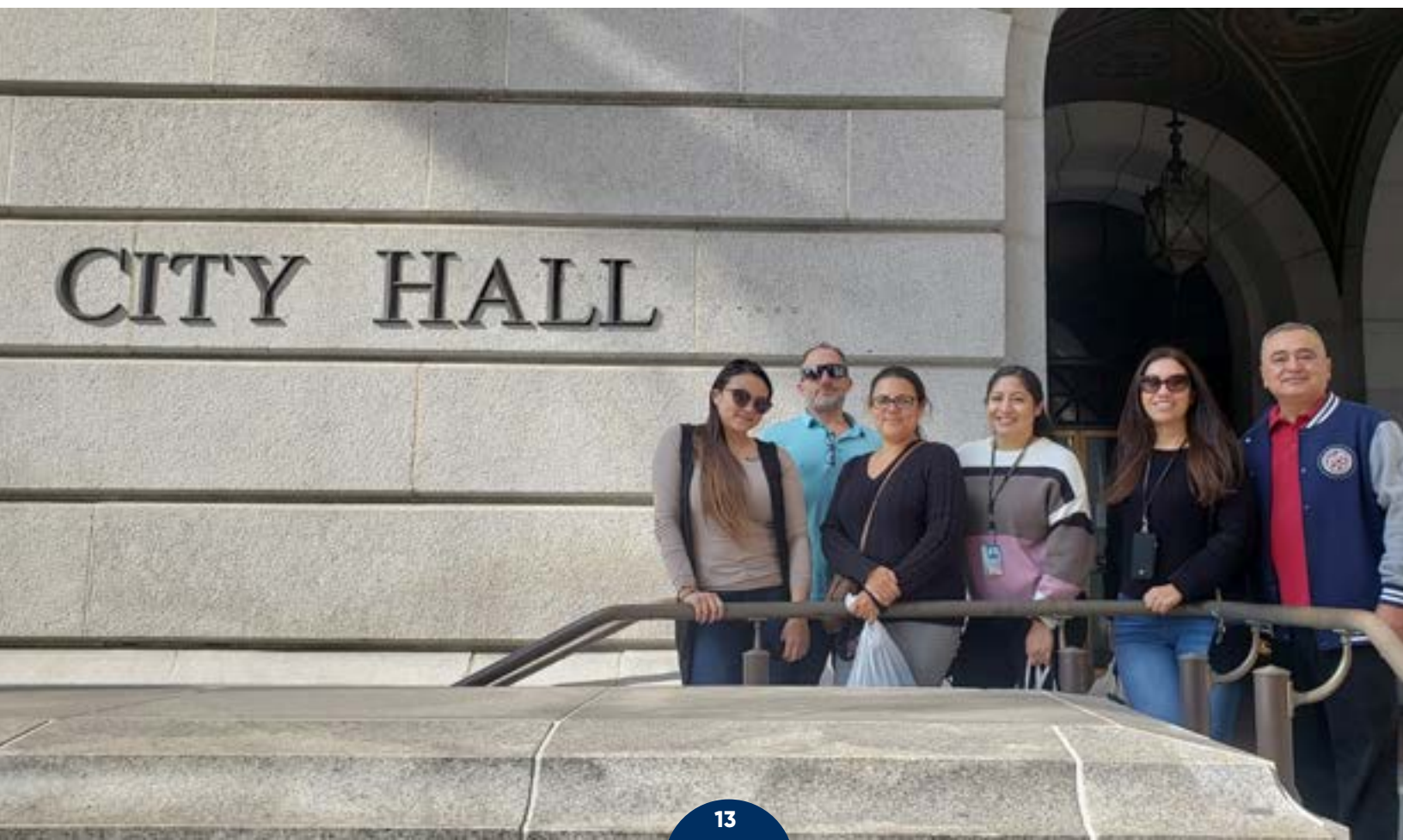


### Racial and Gender Equity Plans

The City Clerk welcomes the opportunity to view its programs and operations through the lens of racial and gender equity. The Department has accomplished several of the milestones in each plan including conducting voter registration outreach to the formerly incarcerated, the unhoused and underserved, as well as developing a video to encourage women to become candidates for Neighborhood Council Board seats.

In Closing...


The COVID-19 pandemic required staff to transition to an unexpected work environment while modifying a number of processes. However, after almost three years of a fluid telecommuting process, the Department is going to move to a more formal stance that includes having staff in the office 2-3 days per week with a goal of providing high quality, uninterrupted service to our clients. We continue to look to contactless services and ready the department for any future events that would require everyone to work remotely. This year was quite a test for that and we passed. Wishing all of our residents and stakeholders a safe, healthy, prosperous fiscal year.





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