**What is the City Archives? Source Sheet No. 2**

The City Archives is part of the Adelaide City Council’s Information Communication and Technology Program. It is responsible for preserving the archives of the Corporation of the City of Adelaide and individuals and organisations closely associated with the Council. Records no longer currently needed by the Corporation Administration are transferred to the City Archives where they are appraised on the basis of their administrative, financial, legal, informational, cultural and historic values. Those records selected as being worthy of permanent preservation are called *archives* (for further information on the definition and use of archives see Source Sheet No.1 *What Are Archives*?).

The City Archives provides a range of services to the Corporation and is open to the public for research. Some of these services may be summarised as follows:

**Records Transfer Services**

It is the Archives’ role to transfer records that the Corporation no longer needs regularly for current administrative activities into archival custody. These are *official records* relating to the Council’s business activities which are no longer required within Council Programs for day-to-day business, but which must be kept under the provisions of the *State Records Act, 1997.* Their removal to archival storage helps free up premium office space. Records are transferred in such a manner as to preserve the original order in which they were created and maintained within the Administration.

**Records Lending Services**

Official records that have been transferred to archival storage may need to be borrowed back by their creators from time to time whenever they are required for ongoing business or administrative purposes. No time limit is set on how long records may be borrowed back, however this process is closely monitored by the Archives to ensure records are returned as soon possible to archival custody in order to minimise the risk their deterioration or loss.

**Records Disposal Services**

The Archives is responsible for overseeing the controlled disposal of the Corporation’s records in accordance with the regulations defined in the **Local Government Disposal Schedule** (known as GDS20) issued under Section 23 of the *State Records Act,1997*. GDS 20 applies to **all** **records created or received** by any local government authority in South Australia, irrespective of format or media and including all paper-based, electronic, graphic, microform (film or fiche) and audiovisual records. In simple terms, it prescribes how long various categories of records have to be retained by allocating to each category a series of records disposal actions. These can range from permanent retention, to temporary retention (5, 7, 10, 25 or more years), through to immediate destruction of records.

**Records Destruction Services**

Those non-current records transferred to the Archives which are not deemed worthy of permanent preservation as archives, are known as *temporary retention status records*, and may be destroyed at the end of an approved period of retention. Some records, generally routine records or ephemeral records that are of only limited or short-term value to the Council and are not considered to contain evidence of its business activities, do not need to be retained under GDS20 and may be destroyed once their active administrative life has ended. Records can only be legally disposed of in accordance with a disposal authority (GDS20) and after approval from State Records Council. Destruction of records is carried out at regular intervals with the help of a confidential destruction contractor.

**Records Processing and Conservation Services**

Once records have been transferred to the City Archives they are arranged and described by Archives staff in accordance with the established archival principles of *provenance* (i.e., the relationship between the records and the context in which they were created and used) and *original order* (i.e., the order in which the records were kept by their creator). Where necessary any materials conservation or repair work is carried out on the records in order to preserve them. To reduce the risk of further deterioration, they are stored in a specially designed repository in which temperature and humidity are constantly controlled.

**Records Access and Reference Services**

The City Archives controls access to the archives of the City of Adelaide in accordance with Council’s Access Policy. It also provides a reference service to staff of the Corporation needing to consult records for administrative purposes, and to members of the public wanting to research them. Records can be made available for research under closely supervised conditions in the Archives Reading Room. In addition to assisting researchers identify relevant records, Archives staff prepare finding aids such as guides, inventories and indexes, which facilitate access to archives, and there is a computer in the Reading Room which researchers can use to search the Archives’ TRIM database records. Research services are limited to enquiries from Council Members and senior Corporation staff, and are not generally provide to the public, however Archives staff are able to assist with identifying external contacts who are able to provide such services.

**Further Information**

**City Archives:** Topham Mall, off Currie and Waymouth Streets, Adelaide 5000

**Counter / telephone enquiries:** 9**.**00 am to 5.00 pm Mondays to Fridays

**Search Room open for public research:**10.00 am to 4.00 pm Tuesdays to Thursdays

**Telephone:** +618 8203 7439

**Email:** cityarchives@cityofadelaide.com.au

**Web:** <https://cityofadelaide.com.au/cityarchives>