Municipalities

Functional Analysis
&
Records Disposition Authority

Revision
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Records Commission
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Functional and Organizational Analysis of Municipalities

Sources of Information

- Municipal Government Officials (Gadsden, Grant, Gulf Shores, Huntsville, Madison, Montgomery)
- ADAH Government Records Division, Local Agency History Files
- ADAH Government Records Division, Municipal General Records Schedules, 1998
- ADAH Government Records Division, State Personnel Department RDA (2000)
- Alabama Department of Environmental Management (ADEM)
- *Alabama Government Manual (*1998)
- Alabama League of Municipalities. *Selected Readings for the Municipal Official (*1996)
- Code of Alabama 1975
- Constitution of the State of Alabama 1901
- Martin, David L. *Alabama's State and Local Governments* (1994)
- Owen, Thomas McAdory. *History of Alabama and Dictionary of Alabama Biography* (1921)
- Thomas, James and William Steward. *Alabama Government and Politics* (1988)

Historical Context

"In Alabama, as nearly everywhere else in the United States, cities [have]… come from growth and expansion of villages," or else arisen due to "Proximity to natural resources, particularly mineral wealth or transportation facilities" (Owen, vol. I, p. 264). Birmingham, Decatur, and Mobile all offer good illustrations of the latter point. Municipal governments originated well before statehood: Mobile, for instance, was founded in 1702. Nevertheless, urbanization came slowly to the state. In 1850, only "28 towns in Alabama [had] a population of more than 200". Even by 1900, a mere "17.7% of the… population lived in incorporated towns". Modern Alabama contains about 450 towns and cities, although nearly half boast fewer than 1,000 residents. Under the Code of Alabama 1975 § 11-40-6, all municipalities with over 2,000 inhabitants are cities; those with under 2,000 inhabitants are towns. The Code also establishes eight classes of municipalities (Code of Alabama 1975 § 11-40-12) based on population figures from the 1970 census. However, the classes are misleading, as no Class 1 municipality has existed since Birmingham's official population fell below 300,000 and the overwhelming majority of towns and cities are in classes 6 through 8.

From a political standpoint, "Municipal corporations are bodies politic and corporate, established by law, to share in the civil government of the country, but chiefly to regulate and administer the local or internal affairs of the city, town, or district which is incorporated" (*Dillard v. Web*, 55 Ala. 468 [1876]), quoted under the Code of Alabama 1975 § 11-40-1. As a body politic, a municipality derives its power from the state and acts as an arm of the state legislature, exercising delegated legislative powers for the welfare and protection of all citizens. It cannot, however, "Legislate beyond what the state has either expressly or impliedly *[sic]* authorized" (*City Council v. Foster*, 133 Ala. 587, 32 So. 610 [1902], *op. cit*). As a body of corporate, a municipality exercises ministerial power: it may (for example) acquire property, collect revenue,

regulate commerce, and maintain public order for the benefit of the corporation as a whole. Despite their great diversity in age, size, and organizational complexity, all municipalities serve as agents of the state and country, provide services to citizens, protect the quality of life, safeguard the environment, and establish the direction of their future development and growth.

Agency Organization

Under Title 11, Chapters 43, 43A-D, 44, and 44A-F, the Code of Alabama 1975 permits several possible methods of municipal political organization. (The works by Martin and Thomas & Stewart cited above are the source of all quotations.)

Mayor-Council. This form of municipal government is by far the most widespread. "The mayor is the formal head of the municipal government and the chief executive officer," with "broad powers of supervision over the administration of municipal Programs" and finance, although the council shares appointive powers and retains full responsibility for legislation. The mayor's role varies depending on whether a municipality has more or fewer than 12,000 inhabitants. In the towns and smaller cities "the mayor sits with the council, presides over its meetings, and has a discretionary vote," but lacks the veto power. In larger cities, the council sits alone and the mayor may veto its ordinances, subject to being overridden by a 2/3 vote. A number of mayor-council municipalities employ a city administrator, who performs specified administrative duties on behalf of the mayor and council but has less autonomy than a city manager (see below).

Council-Manager. This form of municipal government is set forth in Title 11, Chapter 43A of the Code of Alabama 1975. A manager is "employed by the council to supervise administration", with the mayor acting only as "ceremonial head of the city" and having no administrative duties other than presiding over council meetings. The council retains full legislative power and the right to establish municipal departments. The manager is entrusted with enforcing laws and ordinances, appointing and supervising most employees (excluding board members and merit system employees) without intervention by the mayor or council, preparing the annual budget, administering finances, and reporting to the council. As under the mayor-council system, the municipality may employ a clerk and a treasurer, or the manager may perform their duties. Although appointed for an indefinite term, the manager may be removed at any time by a 2/3 vote of the council. Currently, only five Alabama cities (Anniston, Auburn, Phoenix City, Talladega, and Tuskegee) use this form of government. Anniston and Phoenix City do so under local legislation.

Mayor-Commission-Manager. Uniquely, the City of Dothan combines all three of the other forms described. Special legislation authorizing this arrangement is found under the Code of Alabama 1975 § 11-44E [1988].

Commission. Under this plan, which formerly was common in large Alabama cities, municipal executive and legislative powers were concentrated in the hands of three commissioners elected by the city as a whole. Each commissioner headed one of three municipal "departments" which aggregated the city's many functions. One commissioner acted ceremonially as mayor. This form of organization is now extinct in Alabama.

Agency Function and Subfunctions

The mandated functions of the Municipalities in Alabama are inherent in their legislative mandate, found under Title 11 of the Code of Alabama 1975. Each municipality is virtually a microcosm of state government, carrying out within its corporate limits all the functions that multiple state agencies perform statewide. As such, it is one of the agencies responsible for performing the Policy and Statue Development, Public Services, Economic and Community Development, Regulation, Law Enforcement/Emergency Powers, and Administrative Support Operation functions of Alabama government as described in the "Functional Analysis of Alabama Government."

In the performance of its mandated function, the Municipalities may engage in the following subfunctions:

- **Making and Implementing Policy.** This sub function relates to drafting, promulgating, and implementing ordinances, resolutions, and other municipal policy statements, as authorized by the Code of Alabama 1975 § 11-45-1. Department heads and attorneys assist the mayor and council in drafting the budget and other legislation. The council promulgates ordinances and resolutions during open meetings, where public debate may influence final action. Unincorporated municipal boards and commissions advise the council on policy development in areas under jurisdiction; separately incorporated boards enjoy considerable autonomy. The municipal clerk records, certifies, and codifies approved council legislation and sends it to the mayor for signature. Ordinances must be published in local newspaper, if available, or posted in three public places. The mayor (or, in a council-manager municipality, the city manager) is responsible for implementing and enforcing legislation, although this activity is normally carried out through the municipal departments.

- **Managing Elections.** In Title 11, Chapter 46, the Code of Alabama 1975 prescribes the duties of the mayor and clerk in providing ballots and supplies for municipal elections; preparing, certifying, and publishing poll lists; canvassing returns; handling absentee ballots; deciding contested elections; and filing a copy of each certificate of election with the county probate judge.

- **Building and Maintaining Streets, Bridges, and Other Municipal Constructions.** Except by special arrangement with the country, a town or city is responsible for streets within its corporate limits. Alabama courts have generally construed the Code of Alabama 1975 § 11-47-90 as imposing a positive duty upon municipalities to maintain streets in safe condition. The street departments of larger towns and cities therefore construct and repair streets and bridges, put up traffic signs and lights, mow grass along public rights-of-way, and otherwise make travel easier for citizens. Heavy work, such as resurfacing, may be performed by private contractors. Some activities related to this and other Public Services subfunctions (inspections, nuisance abatement) will be covered under Regulation. In this edition of the RDA, this subfunction is broadened to include the records of other municipal construction projects

(excluding municipal administrative buildings), such as parks, archives or museums, and parking lots or garages.

- **Providing Public Transportation Systems and Facilities.** This sub function pertains to the operation and maintenance of airports, bus lines, parking garages, and other public transportation services or facilities that a municipality may provide for citizens. The operation of some facilities, such as airports, may be subject to state and federal requirements.

- **Providing Utility and Sanitation Services.** In return for fees, municipalities may provide power, water, sewage, and sanitation services to residents, either directly or by contracting (through an ordinance) with private service vendors. They administer these operations through either a municipal department or an incorporated or unincorporated board. The Alabama Department of Environmental Management (ADEM) regulates municipal water departments, sanitary landfills, and recycling programs, thereby establishing retention requirements for some records these programs create.

- **Providing Social and Recreational Opportunities.** Under Alabama law, towns or cities may establish parks and recreation boards to oversee social and recreational developments. This sub function covers all activities pertaining to operating such facilities as municipal community or recreational centers, parks, zoos, ball fields, and skating rinks. Facilities that safeguard and provide access to historical or cultural collections – such as archives and museums – are treated in separate a RDA, as are local racing commissions. Civic centers, which often provide a location for recreational events, are covered below under Economic and Community Development.

- **Providing Citizen Services.** Municipalities may provide services to their citizens, independently or in cooperation with area councils, school districts, volunteers, vendors, or non-profit agencies. Services for senior may include operating senior centers that provide meals, health and welfare programs, and recreational and social opportunities; providing transportation services; supporting senior citizens discount programs; providing counseling, case work, referrals, and other social services, such as house cleaning and escorted shopping; employing federal funds to provide job or volunteer opportunities; and investigating complaints about residential health care facilities. Services promoting the wellbeing of, and school readiness of children from birth to age five are offered through the Head Start Program administered by the federal Department of Health and Human Services. Funding and oversight of Head Start Programs in Alabama is administered to localities through the Alabama Head Start State Collaboration Office located within the Department of Early Childhood Education.

- **Providing Public Cemeteries.** This subfunction pertains to all activities pertaining to the operation and maintenance of municipal cemeteries, including providing burial plots, interring bodies, and maintaining grave sites and cemetery grounds.

- **Planning and Improving Economic and Community Development.** All municipalities, regardless of size, are authorized to create planning commissions under the Code of Alabama 1975 § 11-52-1, *et. Seq*. This subfunction also entails evaluating the effects of economic growth so that the municipality's physical environment, services and quality of life can keep pace with its development. City planning commissions, and other boards or commissions covered by this subfunction (such as architectural review boards), cooperate with other municipal departments and boards, the mayor, and the city council in their work.

- **Recruiting Business and Industry.** The object of this sub function is to attract new business ventures to the municipality. Towns and cities may cooperate with regional planning commissions and non-government agencies, such as chambers of commerce and tourism councils, in promoting municipal resources to potential businesses and residents. They may operate civic centers and industrial parks as sites to attract business conferences and industrial development.

- **Licensing and Permitting.** Numerous activities require municipal licenses or permits, which serve both to regulate and as a source of revenue. Depending on a town or city's size and structure, business and occupational licenses (authorized by the Code of Alabama 1975 § 11-51-90 through 11-51-91) may be issued either by the clerk's office or by a separate department. A municipal council may, by ordinance, award franchises for certain services, such as taxicab or cable television companies (Section 220 of the Constitution of Alabama of 1901). Subject to state ABC Board regulation, the council also approves liquor licenses and decides the hours in which alcoholic beverages may be sold. It may also rescind the licenses of businesses found to be in violation of municipal codes or ordinances.

- **Inspecting.** As an essential safeguard of the public interest, inspection is a pervasive element of Regulation. Inspections in such areas as public health and housing may be performed by agencies outside the "core" municipality. Municipal building, street, or engineering departments monitor compliance with codes during construction projects and also license contractors, subcontractors, and suppliers. Under the Code of Alabama 1975 § 36-19-4 and 36-19-11, the city fire marshal is responsible for inspections to enforce the fire code.

- **Zoning and Regulating Subdivisions.** In 1923, the legislature gave municipalities the power to zone all territories within their corporate limits (Code of Alabama 1975 § 11-52-70). This power is enacted through a zoning ordinance dividing the municipality into districts, or zones (based on their suitability for certain uses), and regulates the construction, renovation, and use of buildings and land therein accordingly. Municipal planning commissions may hear requests for developing subdivisions and rezoning property. Municipal zoning boards of adjustment interpret zoning ordinances and hear requests for variances. Adverse decisions of the zoning board of adjustment may be appealed to the circuit court.

- **Abating Nuisances.** Alabama law gives municipality's broad authority "to abate all nuisances and to access the cost against the person "responsible for them. Towns and cities may pass ordinances against unvaccinated or loose animals (Code of Alabama 1975 § 11-47-110; see also information under Title 3), weeds growing on neglected or abandoned property (Code of Alabama 1975 § 11-47-140), or junk collections that fall outside the parameters allowed for licensed junkyards (Code of Alabama 1975 § 23-1-240 through 23-1-251). The municipality's power to issue fines and rescind licenses provides leverage in eliminating noisy, offensive, or dangerous activity at "honkytonks" and similar establishments. If a nuisance violation remains uncorrected, the town or city may take action in the courts.

- **Maintaining Public Order.** Under the Code of Alabama 1975, the mayor and council may take reasonable precautions against disruptions of the peace, usually by issuing ordinances, resolutions, or proclamations. Besides recruiting a police force, the mayor and council may establish curfew ordinances (Code of Alabama 1975 § 11-45-1), refuse to license potentially dangerous places of amusement (Code of Alabama 1975 § 11-51-102), require permits for parades and demonstrations, issue proclamations closing places that sell arms if a disturbance threatens (Code of Alabama 1975 § 11-43-83), and ask the governor to call out the National Guard in time of riot (Code of Alabama 1975 § 31-2-111).

- **Managing Emergencies.** The sub function relates to preparing and carrying out emergency responses in time of disaster. The Alabama Emergency Management Act of 1955 (Code of Alabama 1975 § 31-9-2 through 31-9-10) created a state and various local emergency management agencies. In most jurisdictions, cities take part in a country-wide disaster recovery organization. The state and local EMAs, along with the International City/County Management Association (ICMA) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), offer several kinds of emergency management assistance. They make recommendations on disaster planning; administer state and federal matching grants; provide training in risk evaluation and damage assessment and – in case of disaster – distribute relief funds; establish control centers; and coordinate responses at the local, state, and federal levels.

- **Financial Management: Taxing/Collecting and Disbursing Revenue.** As noted, council ordinances provide for the collection of gross receipts, sales, and other taxes to support municipal administration. The Alabama Revenue Department collects and audits sales and use taxes for many cities, remitting them on a bi-monthly schedule. A few cities, such as Selma, collect their own *ad valorem* taxes; elsewhere, the task is performed by county tax collectors. However, towns and cities have a role in selecting members of their county's board of equalization (Code of Alabama 1975 § 40-3-2). Municipal finance divisions enforce the tax code, audit tax returns on taxes collected by the town or city, investigate fraud, and maintain records of taxation and licensing activities. Municipal attorneys handle the litigation of taxation cases, when required. This sub functions also covers disbursing revenue in the form of grants or awards to non-profit agencies within the municipality's corporate limits.

- **Facilitating Government Accountability.** Local governments are beholden to members of the community they serve. It is therefore important that these bodies are both transparent and accountable to the public. Title 36, Chapter 12, Article 3 of the Code of Alabama 1975 grants citizens the rights to inspect public records. Providing access to open records to members of the public is a responsibility of local governments. Local governments must also provide access to deliberative meetings. Title 36, Chapter 25A of the Code of Alabama 1975 requires that all "deliberative process of governmental bodies shall be open to the public" and that the public is given notice of a meeting at least seven days in advance. Additionally, local governments may create boards or task forces to review public complaints and make policy and budgetary recommendations.

- **Administering Internal Operations.** A significant portion of the Municipalities' work includes general administrative, financial, and personnel activities performed to support the programmatic areas of the agency including:

  Managing the Agency: Activities include internal office management activities common to most government agencies, such as corresponding and communicating, scheduling, meeting, documenting policy and procedures, reporting, litigating, legislating (drafting, tracking), publicizing and providing information, managing records, and managing information systems and technology.

  Managing Finances: Activities include budgeting (preparing and reviewing budget package, submitting the budget package to the Department of Finance, documenting amendments and performance of the budget); purchasing (requisitioning and purchasing supplies and equipment, receipting and invoicing for goods, and authorizing payment for products received); accounting for the expenditure, encumbrance, disbursement, and reconciliation of funds within the agency's budget through a uniform system of accounting and reporting; authorizing travel; contracting with companies or individuals; bidding for products and services; and assisting in the audit process.

  Managing Human Resources: Activities include recruiting and hiring eligible individuals to fill positions within the agency; providing compensation to employees; providing benefits to employees such as leave, health insurance, unemployment compensation, worker's compensation, injury compensation, retirement, and death benefits; supervising employees by evaluating performance, granting leave, and monitoring the accumulation of leave; training and providing continuing education for employees; and investigating and disciplining.

  Managing Properties, Facilities, and Resources: Activities include inventorying and accounting for non-consumable property and reporting property information to the appropriate authority; leasing and/or renting offices or facilities; providing security for property managed by the agency; insuring property; and assigning, inspecting, and maintaining agency property.

Records Appraisal of Municipalities

The following is a discussion of the three major categories of records created and/or maintained by Municipalities: Temporary Records, Permanent Records, and Records No Longer Created.

Temporary Records

Temporary records should be held for what is considered their active life and be disposed of once all fiscal, legal, and administrative requirements have been met. Some of the temporary records created by municipalities are discussed below:

- **Municipal Election Records.** These records document municipal elections. Records falling within this series may include, but are not limited to, statements of candidacy, ballots, and poll lists. This series covers records created via absentee and election-day voting.

  The disposition of unused absentee election materials is governed by the Code of Alabama 1975 § 17-11-19. The Code states that upon the conclusion of the election "…the absentee election manager shall return all unused absentee election materials to the sheriff of the respective county along with an itemized, signed statement showing the description and quantity of each item of absentee election material not utilized…" Unused non-absentee ballots may be destroyed after the results of the election have been certified because they contain no voting or record information and cannot be reused.

- **Environmental Control and Monitoring Records – Program Compliance Documentation.** These Environmental Control and Monitoring programs include, but are not limited to, those of municipalities, counties, airports, local sewer and utility districts, and irrigation districts. Common control vectors include Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems, air quality programs, and other programs related to implementation, control, and monitoring of federal, state, and local environmental protection standards and regulations. Such standards and regulation include National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits.

  Records associated with this series include, but are not limited to, materials documenting program planning, calibration, inspection, and compliance, permitting documentation, and associated supporting materials.

  Since certain environmental control and monitoring programs (e.g. Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems) operate under required federal and state-issued permits (including, but not limited to, National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System [NPDES] Permits) this series' retention reflects recordkeeping provisions associated with those federal programs. To comply with federal program requirements outlined in 40 CFR 122.34(a)(1) and 40 CFR 122.34(d)(2), materials within this series should be retained five years after coverage under any associated permit is terminated.

Note: Program Compliance records may also contain annual and periodic reports and documentation of public education and outreach efforts, all of which are stand-alone series within most Local Government Records Commission Records Disposition Authorities. For retentions for these materials, please check to see whether those stand-alone series exist elsewhere in this RDA.

- **Environmental Control and Monitoring Records – Infrastructure Monitoring Files**. These materials may include, but are not limited to, routine infrastructure integrity monitoring records like surveillance video, documentary photographs, work order requests, and work order updates. To comply with federal program requirements outlined in 40 CFR 122.34(a)(1) and 40 CFR 122.34(d)(2)), materials within this series should be retained three years after coverage under any associated permit is terminated.

- **Environmental Control and Monitoring Records – Program working files**. These may include, but are not limited to, working files generated to support a larger report or other intermediate work product or function of the Environmental Control and Monitoring Program.

- **Environmental Control and Monitoring Records – Other Routine Operational Reports (daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly**). These materials may include, but are not limited to, raw data, calibration, and quality control checks, as well as any other reporting instruments that are subsequently included or summarized as part of larger documentary implements (e.g., within an annual report). Since their informational value is ultimately reflected within a more permanent series, these materials need only be retained for the duration of their administrative value.

- **Board Application Records.** These records document applications for membership on boards created by the municipality. Applications and supplementary documentation, which may include cover letters, resumes, transcripts, pre-employment drug testing results, and letters of recommendation, should be retained for three years, consistent with federal requirements established by the Fair Labor Standards Act, Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, and Age Discrimination in Employment Act.

- **Internal Ballots and Related Files.** Municipalities may hold internal elections in which municipal employees elect their coworkers to positions of leadership. These records document the results of said election. Records in this series include, but are not limited to, secret employee ballots, tabulated voting results, and lists of voters.

Permanent Records

The Archives Division has appraised the following records as permanent:

Making and Implementing Policy

- **Municipal Incorporation Records.** Municipalities derive their power to promulgate local legislation from their status as incorporated bodies. Petitions for the incorporation

of a town or city, and its original charter of incorporation, are filed in the country probate office for permanent retention (Code of Alabama 1975 § 11-41-4). In some cases, however, the probate office's copy of the charter has been lost or cannot be located. The historical importance of original articles of municipal incorporation warrants the permanent retention of these records by the municipality itself, either in the clerk's office or in a local library, archives, or historical society under the terms of a local government records depository agreement.

- **Administrative Files that Document Core Agency Functions and Decisions.** These records document the core activities, actions, and positions of the agency by senior-level officials. The scope of this series does not include materials documenting the routine financial, human resources, and facilities management activities which this agency performs. These records may include, but are not limited to, correspondence with public officials and other stakeholders, legal/advisory correspondence, organizational charts, and memoranda. The decision-making process of the agency and its leadership has long-term historical significance and should therefore be preserved.

- **Records of Municipal Councils, Boards, Commissions, and Authorities - Meeting/hearing minutes, agendas, and packets.** The Code of Alabama 1975 § 36-25A-4 stipulates that a municipality must document the proceedings of all meetings held by municipal officials. These records include minutes of the council and all municipal boards, commissions, committees (including council committees), and authorities, as well as those of incorporated boards that service the municipality. Besides minutes, they include one copy of the meeting/hearing agendas and packet materials reviewed by members (copies of budgets, work plans, and other background information) prior to meeting. Minutes of individual boards and authorities are not individually appraised; they are listed (with individual numbers) under the appropriate sub functions along with the program records of these agencies. Normally, approved policy recommendations by municipal boards, commissions, and authorities are codified in council ordinances. Meeting minutes and related records are essential to document the evolution of municipal policy and procedures. Under the provisions of the Code of Alabama 1975 § 36-25A-2, work sessions of municipal councils, boards, commissions, and authorities are defined as open meetings. A note has therefore been added to this schedule stating that minutes and related records of work sessions are included in the disposition.

- **Ordinances.** Council ordinances are a municipality's primary legislative record and provide the basis for budgeting, licensing, code enforcement, nuisance abatement, and similar activities. They are essential for documenting policy development and are appraised as permanent.

- **Codified Ordinance Books.** Periodically, a municipality may codify its ordinances by having them checked for legal compatibility with such sources as the Code of Alabama 1975, the Alabama Administrative Code, and applicable federal rules and regulations. Normally, professional codification companies perform this service for a fee. Once the research is complete, the approved ordinances are published as a book, which the municipality maintains as a permanent record.

- **Administrative Codes and Regulations.** While codes in such areas as housing or sanitation may be based on state and federal requirements, they arise from a municipality's inherent right (see Code of Alabama 1975 § 11-40-1) "to regulate and administer" its own affairs. Departmental codes and regulations originate as council ordinances and are therefore listed under Policy and Statute Development in the RDA, However, they primarily document Regulatory activities of municipal departments. Although permanent records, codes and regulations may be amended or rescinded by passing a new ordinance.

- **Resolutions.** Resolutions document council legislation that generally concerns "one-time" municipal events rather than ongoing policy decisions. (For example, the council's rules of procedure are normally embodied in a resolution.) Like ordinances, resolutions are essential for documenting policy development and are appraised as permanent.

- **Proclamations.** Mayoral proclamations, like council resolutions, generally document policy statements or official pronouncement on "one-time" municipal events. They are also appraised as permanent.

- **Citizen Petitions.** Citizens may petition the council or municipal departments on a variety of public issues, such as annexation of outlying areas, provision of municipal services, property assessment or rezoning, or nuisance abatement through licenses revocation. These records document the impact of citizen opinion on policy development and therefore have important evidentiary value. They do not pertain to matters specifically regulated by the Code of Alabama 1975, such as municipal incorporation, consolidation, or dissolution, or to matters that require the holding of a special municipal election.

Managing Elections

- **Maps of Municipal Council Districts.** These maps document the boundaries of each municipal council member's electoral district. Although used primarily for municipal elections, collectively they help to document the city or town's changing geography, demography, and voting patterns over time. Therefore, their historical value warrants permanent retention.

Building and Maintaining Streets, Bridges, and Other Municipal Constructions

- **Right-of-Way Deeds, Maps, and Drawings.** As they document the municipality's ownership of right-of-way over lands on which roads and bridges are constructed, these records have permanent legal and historical value. They contain a legal description and diagram of the right-of-way and the land's location. A copy of the deed is kept on file at the county probate office.

- **Aerial Photographs.** These records provide a photographic record of the municipality's surface characteristics. Aerial views of streets, bridges, bodies of water, and other

structures and topography are recorded in photographs that are used in planning, economic development, regulation, and other core functions of municipal government.

- **Street Project Plans, Specification, Maps, Plats, and Photographs.** These records provide comprehensive documentation of the construction and improvement of municipal streets. Information available includes overall project and specifications, photographs, and maps or drawings. Because they have historical interest and provide primary documentation of an important municipal subfunction, overall project plans, specifications, maps, and plats are appraised as permanent.

- **Bridge Project Plans, Specifications, Maps, Plats, and Photographs.** These records provide comprehensive documentation of the construction and improvement of municipal bridges. The plans or drawings document the bridge's location and structural details, materials used in construction, and flood levels. Information available in them includes overall project plans and specification, photographs, and maps or drawings. Although these records have no administrative utility beyond the life of the bridge, they may have permanent value in documenting bridges of significant historical interest.

- **Other Municipal Construction Project Plans, Specifications, Maps, Plats, and photographs.** These records provide core documentation of the construction and improvement of various municipal constructions that are not streets, bridges, or municipal administrative buildings (parks, cemeteries, parking lots or garages, archives or museums, etc.). Plans or drawings documents the facility's location and structural details, as well as materials used in construction. Information in these records may include overall project plans and specifications, photographs, and maps or drawings. Permanent retention is again assigned to constructions of significant historical interest.

Providing Public Transportation Systems and Facilities

- **Airport Maps, Plans, and Blueprints.** Like maps, plans, and blueprints for other municipal buildings and facilities, these records are appraised as permanent for their evidentiary and historical value. Master vs. "as-built" plans show any differences between projected and completed airport construction or improvement that might affect the safety and efficiency of airport operations. Layouts are continually updated to reflect changes that may influence the airport's technical performance.

Providing Utility and Sanitation Services

- **Utility System Maps, Plans, Profiles, and Photographs.** These records include maps, profiles, plans, and photographs of sewer systems, water reservoirs, and other utility constructions operated by the county or its service vendors. Under Title 11, Chapter 50 of the Code of Alabama 1975, such records shall be available for inspection by the affected property owners. However, the proposed disposition allows the eventual destruction of records for systems or reservoirs not actually leased or purchased by the county, once the potential for litigation has expired.

- **Annual Water Quality Reports.** These are "reports pertaining to the quality of water or operation of [a municipality's] water supply system." They are required under the federal Safe Drinking Water Act of 1974, as amended in 1986 and 1996, and now codified under Title 42 USC. Under the Alabama Administrative Code, Chapter 335-7-10.05(h), copies of the report "shall be furnished to [ADEM] upon request and must be available for review by the public." The Montgomery Water Works and Sanitary Sewer Board's reports (which are published and appear on the board's website) contain "information about the source of [Montgomery's] water and the process used to purify it," as well as tables of annual laboratory test results, public health information, and tips on maintaining home sewer systems. The records provide excellent summary documentation of municipal water works' services to citizens and compliance with state and federal regulations. They are therefore appraised as permanent.

- **Environmental Control and Monitoring Records – Program Plans, Specifications, Maps, and Plats**. This permanent subseries includes planning files regarding the long-term projected designs, plans, development, and influence of the Environmental Monitoring and Control Program. These materials are considered permanent because of their environmental and historical value.

Providing Social and Recreational Opportunities

Permanent records documenting the sub function include council ordinances authorizing municipal community or recreational centers, parks, zoos, ball fields, skating rinks, or other recreational facilities; minutes of boards or authorities established to oversee their operation; and general ledgers or audit reports that record financial transactions.

Providing Citizen Services

- **Senior Citizen Program Records.** Municipalities may operate senior centers or provide other services to senior citizens, either in cooperation with area councils on aging or independently. Retention periods for records in this section comply with minimum requirements for area councils on aging in the Alabama Administrative Code, Chapter 70-X-12-.02. Based on federal requirements, they may differ in some instances from retention periods for similar records elsewhere in the RDA. Only Area Plans are appraised as permanent. The retention period for Medicaid Waiver Case Management Client files is based on a directive from the National Senior Citizens Education and Research Center, the federal agency that oversees the Senior AIDES program.

Providing Public Cemeteries

- **Sexton's (Cemetery) Records.** The sexton is the cemetery's manager, issues permits and/or orders for internment for all burials within the city limits, maintains information on all bodies buried on municipal cemetery grounds, and maintains cemetery property. Permanent records include: cemetery maps (showing each burial site by lot, square, and section, as well as cemetery plates and photographs); records of internment, providing personal information on the occupants of burial sites; affidavits of ownership,

documenting the purchase and ownership of individual cemetery plots (deeds to plots may be, but are not always, filed in the county probate office); and logs of cemetery visitors. Because of their historical and genealogical importance, these records are appraised as permanent.

Planning and Improving Economic and Community Development

- **Comprehensive Plans**. Municipal governments create comprehensive plans to guide future development within the county. Comprehensive plans typically address twenty years of strategic planning for municipal activity. These records include information such as anticipated changes to zoning, land use, infrastructure, or municipal boundaries, among other topics. It may also address future economic and/or community development. Comprehensive plans should be retained permanently to document a municipality's plans for development and allow researchers to track how those goals are achieved.

- **Flood Insurance Rate Maps.** These maps (FIRMs) are provided to municipalities by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). They show insurance rates, based on the likelihood of flooding, for each piece of property located within municipal boundaries. The Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs (ADECA) acts as a liaison between localities and FEMA in incorporating flood prevention into civic planning. Each municipality must develop a flood prevention into civic planning. Each Municipality must develop a flood prevention ordinance, based on the latest FEMA map, and keep the FIRM "on file and accessible [to] the public in perpetuity or until a new map is issued." ADECA urges that outdated flood maps also be retained permanently. Besides demonstrating compliance with ADECA and FEMA regulations, they document a town or city's cognizance of changing public safety issues in the process of municipal development. Because the maps are vital to all planning activities, they are placed here rather than under the subfunctions governing zoning or construction projects.

Recruiting Business and Industry

Besides the records mentioned above, minutes and administrative correspondence of industrial development boards provide permanent documentation of this subfunction. They are appraised under Making and Implementing Policy. Permanent documentation of civic center operations is found in council minutes, administrative files that document core agency functions and decisions, and financial management records listed under Administrative Support Operations.

Licensing and Permitting

- **Annual List of Businesses Licensed to Operate in the Municipality.** These records provide summary documentation of business activity in the municipality. Information available includes business names, owners' names, and street addresses. Although the creation of these records is not mandated by the Code, and not all municipalities create them, annual business listings have permanent historical and genealogical value where they do exist, as they provide a "snapshot" of business life in the community.

Inspecting

Permanent documentation of this subfunction will be found in statistics included with agencies' annual reports and appropriation requests included with annual budget packages. In cases where repeated failure of inspections leads to license revocation, it will also be reflected in council minutes.

Zoning and Regulating Subdivisions

- **Subdivision Files – final plans, maps, and photographs; statements dedicating streets to the municipality; council resolutions.** Subdivision Files, final plans, plats, maps, and photographs of subdivisions are appraised as permanent records, like most other plats, maps, and photographs. Statements dedicating streets to the municipality, and council resolutions assuming maintenance responsibility, are normally included with the council minutes.

Abating Nuisances

Permanent documentation of this subfunction will be found in council minutes and ordinances, as well as municipal audit reports, listed under the Administering Internal Operations subfunction.

Maintaining Public Order/Managing Emergencies

Permanent documentation of this subfunction would be found in mayoral proclamations or council ordinances that established curfews, declared martial law, or took other emergency management measures. These records are listed under Making and Implementing Policy.

Financial Management: Taxing/Collecting and Disbursing Revenue

- **Records Documenting Municipal Funding of Non-Profit Agencies.** Municipalities may award funds annually or periodically to non-profit agencies within their corporate limits. Along with permanent, policy-related records establishing the program – ordinances, resolutions or other directives and guidelines and application forms for each funding cycle – other records involved in this process may include: contracts with funded agencies, non-profit agencies' verification of insurance coverage, agencies' funding implementation reports, related financial records, and final narrative reports from funded agencies. Disposition requirements for these records are based on, but not identical to, similar records elsewhere in the RDA (grant files, contracts, etc.).

Administering Internal Operations: Managing the Agency

- **Municipal Geographic Information System (GIS) Data – Annual Snapshots.** These records consist of geospatial data that describe and contextualize features within a municipality, such as property boundaries, political boundaries, address data, and road

center line data. Alabama municipal governments may utilize GIS data to inform a variety of government functions including, but not limited to, managing elections; building and maintaining streets, bridges, and other municipal constructions; providing utility and sanitation services; providing public cemeteries; planning and improving economic and community development; zoning and regulating subdivisions; and taxing, collecting, and disbursing revenue. Municipalities take a “snapshot” of their GIS at the end of each year. The snapshot is stored in a static layer of the GIS. As the archived, static layers have long-term administrative and historical value, the annual snapshots should be permanently retained.

Permanent Records List
Municipalities

Making and Implementing Policy

1. Municipal Incorporation Records
2. Administrative Files that Document Core Agency Functions and Decisions
3. Records of Municipal Councils, Boards, Commissions, and Authorities – Meeting/ hearing minutes, agendas, and packets (includes records of boards, commissions, and authorities listed under individual subfunctions)
4. Ordinances, Codes, and Regulations – Ordinances
5. Ordinances, Codes, and Regulations – Codified Ordinances Books
6. Ordinances, Codes, and Regulations – Administrative Codes and Regulations
7. Resolutions
8. Proclamations
9. Citizen Petitions
10. Applications for Annexation Opt-Out – Approved Applications

Managing Elections

1. Maps of Municipal Council Districts

Building and Maintaining Streets, Bridges, and Other Municipal Constructions

1. Right-of-Way Deeds, Maps, and Drawings
2. Aerial Photographs
3. Street Project Plans, Specifications, Maps, Plats, and Photographs
4. Bridge Project Plans, Specifications, Maps, Plats, and Photographs – Records of significant historical interest
5. Other Municipal Construction Project Plans, Specifications, Maps, Plats, and Photographs – Records of constructions or facilities of significant historical interest.

Providing Public Transportation Facilities and Services

1. Transportation Authority Records – Meeting/hearing minutes, agendas, and packets
2. Airport Maps, Plans, and Blueprints

Providing Utility and Sanitation Services

1. Utility Board/Commission Records – Meeting/hearing minutes, agendas, and packets
2. Utility System Maps, Plans, Profiles, and Photographs – Maps, plans, profiles, and photographs of systems or reservoirs leased, purchased, or operated by the municipality.
3. Water Treatment Surveys and Reports – Annual Water Quality Reports
4. Solid Waste Management Landfill Records – Engineering drawings; final closure/post-closure plans; explosive gas/groundwater monitoring/corrections plans for closed landfills.

5. Environmental Control and Monitoring Program Records – Program Plans, Specifications, Maps, and Plats

Providing Social and Recreational Opportunities

1. Parks and Recreation Board Records – Meeting/hearing minutes, agendas, and packets.

Providing Citizen Services

1. Area Plans

Providing Public Cemeteries

1. Cemetery Board or Authority Records - Meeting/hearing minutes, agendas, and packets
2. Sexton's (Cemetery) Records – Cemetery maps, plats, and photographs
3. Sexton's (Cemetery) Records – Records of interment
4. Sexton's (Cemetery) Records – Affidavits of ownership
5. Sexton's (Cemetery) Records – Visitor's logs

Planning and Improving Economic and Community Development

1. Planning Commission Records - Meeting/hearing minutes, agendas, and packets
2. Architectural Review Board Records – Meeting/hearing minutes, agendas, and packets
3. Comprehensive Plans
4. Flood Maps

Recruiting Business and Industry

1. Industrial Development Board Records – Minutes, meeting agendas, and packets

Licensing and Permitting

1. Annual Lists of Businesses Licensed to Operate in the Municipality

Zoning and Regulating Subdivisions

1. Zoning Board/Board of Adjustment Meeting/Hearing Minutes, Agendas, and Packets.
2. Subdivision Files – Final plans, plats, maps, and photographs
3. Subdivision Files – Statements dedicating streets to the municipality; council resolutions

Financial Management: Taxing/Collecting and Disbursing Revenue

1. Records Documenting Municipal Funding of Non-Profit Agencies – Ordinances, resolutions, or other directives establishing program requirements, policies, and guidelines

2. Records Documenting Municipal Funding of Non-Profit Agencies – Guidelines and application forms for each funding cycle
3. Records Documenting Municipal Funding of Non-Profit Agencies – Final narrative reports by funded agencies

Facilitating Government Accountability

1. Civilian Review Records – Final Reports and Recommendations
2. Civilian Review Records – Meeting/Hearing Minutes, Agendas, and Packets

Administering Internal Operations – Managing the Agency

1. Administrative Policies and Procedures
2. Annual Reports
3. Representative Final Versions of Informational and Promotional Materials
4. Websites and Social Media Sites – Annual snapshots
5. Municipal Geographic Information System (GIS) Data – Annual Snapshots
6. Educational Program Records – Representative Final Versions of Educational Program Records.

Administering Internal Operations – Managing Finances

1. Budgeting Records - Approved Annual Budgets
2. Budgeting Records - Annual Financial Reports
3. Audit Reports
4. Accounting Records - General Ledgers and detailed year-end trial balances – Records created prior to 1975
5. Grant Project Files – Final narrative reports

Administering Internal Operations – Managing Human Resources

1. Personnel Board Meeting/Hearing Minutes, Agendas, and Packets.
2. Employee Handbooks
3. Employee Newsletters
4. Job Classification and Pay Plans – Master copies of job classifications and pay plans
5. Annual Reports of Promotions and New Hires
6. Training Records – Training standards, policies, procedures, and publications

Administering Internal Operations – Managing Properties, Facilities, and Resources

1. Municipal Building Construction and Renovation Files – plans, specifications, and blueprints of city halls and other municipal buildings of significant historical interest

Municipalities Records Disposition Authority

This Records Disposition Authority (RDA) is issued by the Local Government Records Commission under the authority granted by the Code of Alabama 1975 § 41-13-5 and 41-13-22 through 24. It was compiled by the Archives Division, Alabama Department of Archives and History (ADAH), which serves as the Commission's staff, in cooperation with representatives of the Municipalities. The RDA lists records created and maintained by the Agency in carrying out their mandated functions and activities. It establishes minimum retention periods and disposition instructions for those records and provides the legal authority for the Agency to implement records destruction.

Alabama law requires public officials to create and maintain records that document the business of their offices. These records must be protected from "mutilation, loss, or destruction," so that they may be transferred to an official's successor in office and may be made available to members of the public. Records also must be kept in accordance with auditing standards approved by the Examiners of Public Accounts (Code of Alabama 1975 § 36-12-2, 36-12-4, and 41-5-23). For assistance in implementing this RDA, or for advice on records disposition or other records management concerns, contact the agency records manager or ADAH Archives Division at (334) 242-4452.

Explanation of Records Requirements

The RDA shall govern the disposition of all records, regardless of format, created by the agency from creation to dissolution. Please contact the staff of the Department of Archives and History before destroying any records created prior to 1940.

This RDA supersedes any previous records disposition schedules or RDAs governing the retention of the records created by the Agency. Copies of superseded schedules are no longer valid and may not be used for records disposition.

The RDA establishes retention and disposition instructions for records listed below, regardless of the medium on which those records may be kept. Electronic mail, for example, is a communications tool that may record permanent or temporary information. As for records in any other format, the retention periods for e-mail records are governed by the requirements of the subfunctions to which the records belong.

Certain other record-like materials are not actually regarded as official records and may be disposed of under this RDA. Such materials include (1) duplicate record copies that do not require official action, so long as the creating office maintains the original record for the period required; (2) catalogs, trade journals, and other publications received that require no action and do not document agency activities; (3) stocks of blank stationery, blank forms, or other surplus materials that are not subject to audit and have become obsolete; (4) transitory records, which are temporary records created for short-term, internal purposes, may include, but are not limited to, telephone call-back messages, drafts of ordinary documents not needed for their evidential value, copies of material sent for information purposes but not needed by the receiving office for future business, and internal communications about social activities; (5) honorary materials, plaques,

awards, presentations, certificates, and gifts received or maintained by the agency staff. They may be disposed of without documentation of destruction.

Records Disposition Requirements

This section of the RDA is arranged by subfunctions of the Agency and lists the groups of records created and/or maintained as a result of activities and transactions performed in carrying out these subfunctions. The Agency may submit requests to revise specific records disposition requirements to the State Records Commission for consideration at its regular biannual meetings.

Making and Implementing Policy

1.01 Municipal Incorporation Records. These records include petitions for the incorporation of a town or city and its original charter of incorporation. Municipal incorporation records are filed in the county probate office for permanent retention, but the legal and historical importance of these records warrants the retention of any copies by the municipality itself.
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD. Retain in office or offer for transfer to a local archives, library, or historical society under the terms of local government records deposit agreement.

1.02 Administrative Files that Document Core Agency Functions and Decisions. Records within this series document high-level decision-making processes and organizational changes and may include, but are not limited to, correspondence with public officials and other stakeholders, legal/advisory correspondence, organizational charts, and memoranda.
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

1.03 Records of Municipal Councils, Boards, Commissions and Authorities.

a. **Meeting/hearing minutes, agendas, and packets.** These records document meetings of the council and all other boards, commissions, authorities, etc. involved with the municipal activities. They include one copy of agendas and packet materials (copies of budgets, work plans, reports, and other project files or background information) reviewed by members prior to meetings.
   Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

   Note: Under the provisions of the Code of Alabama 1975 § 36-25A-2, work sessions of municipal councils, boards, commissions, and authorities are defined as open meetings. Minutes and related records of work sessions are therefore included in this disposition.

b. **Project file materials not included in meeting packets.** These records consist of reports, forms, work plans, research data, correspondence, or financial records documenting projects, studies, surveys, or other information-gathering activities authorized by municipal councils, boards, commissions, and authorities that do not become part of a meeting packet.

i. Financial records (bids, accounting records, etc.).
Disposition: See "Administering Internal Operations: Managing Finances" section of the RDA. Retain for useful life. Review for historical significance before disposal.

ii. All other records.
Disposition: Temporary record. Retain for useful life. Review for historical significance before disposal.

Note: Records of individual boards, commissions, and authorities, with separate numbers, are listed under the subfunctions that they oversee.

1.04 Recordings of Meetings. Audio or video recordings provide a verbatim account of debate and public input at meetings of the municipal council and municipal boards, commissions, or similar bodies. They are normally used only as an aid to preparation of the minutes.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until minutes are approved.

1.05 Ordinances, Codes, and Regulations.

a. **Ordinances.** Council ordinances are a municipality's primary legislative records and provide the basis for budgeting, licensing, code enforcement, nuisance abatement, and similar activities.
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

b. **Codified ordinance book.** This book provides a printed compilation of municipal ordinances after codification service has checked them for legal compatibility with such sources as the Code of Alabama 1975, the Alabama Administrative Code, and applicable federal rules and regulations.
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

c. **Administrative codes and regulations.** Municipal codes and regulations originate as council ordinances and are administered by municipal departments. They are designed to regulate such activities as housing, zoning, and public health within the corporate limits.
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

1.06 Resolutions. Resolutions document council legislation that generally concerns "one-time" municipal events rather than ongoing policy decisions. The council's rules of procedure are normally embodied in a resolution.
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

1.07 Proclamations. Mayoral proclamations, like council resolutions, generally document policy statements or official pronouncements on "one-time" municipal events.
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

1.08 Citizen Petitions. Citizen may petition the council or municipal departments on a variety of public issues, such as annexation of outlying areas, provision of municipal services, property assessment or rezoning, or nuisance abatement through license revocation. These records document the impact of citizen opinion on policy development and therefore have important evidentiary value. They do not pertain to matters specially regulated by the Code of Alabama 1975, such as municipal incorporation, consolidation, or dissolution; or matters that require the holding of a special municipal election.
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD. If petition is filed with council minutes or departmental administrative correspondence, duplicates may be destroyed.

1.09 Applications for Annexation Opt-Out. These records document the process that determines whether a property may be exempted from annexation.

a. **Approved Applications.**
   Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD. If applications are filed with the council minutes, duplicates may be destroyed.

b. **Unapproved Applications.**
   Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after the annexed area officially becomes part of the municipality, or until all required new boundary notifications to state and federal agencies have been made, whichever is longer.

1.10 Legislative Tracking Files. These records are created to track draft legislation in the Alabama state legislature. Proposed legislation may affect one or several counties. The files may include copies of draft legislation, statistics, and names of legislative sponsors, roll call votes, position papers, and correspondence.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for useful life.

Managing Elections

2.01 Municipal Election Records.

Note: These records exclude official results of the election, which are filed as permanent records with the county probate judge.

a. **Statements of candidacy, absentee voting applications and other used materials relating to the absentee voting process, ballots, poll lists, and election materials used in the conduct of municipal elections.**

   i. Records for elections with no federal office on the ballot.
      Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 months after the election.

   ii. Records for elections with a federal office on the ballot.
      Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 22 months after the election.

Note: If the election is contested or results in litigation, retain all materials until the contest is resolved, litigation has terminated, and all appeals have been exhausted.

b. **Petitions for election to determine classification of municipality as "wet" or "dry."**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 22 months.

c. **Unused absentee ballots and related election materials.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Upon the conclusion of the election, return all unused absentee election materials to the sheriff of the respective county along with an itemized, signed statement showing the description and quantity of each item of absentee election material not utilized by the county or municipality in the election just concluded (pursuant to the Code of Alabama 1975 § 17-11-19)

d. **Unused non-absentee ballots and related election materials.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until the results of the election have been certified.

2.02 Maps of Municipal Council Districts. These maps document the boundaries of each municipal council member's electoral district.
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

Note: Municipalities that now maintain these records within a geographic information system (GIS) should reference the "Municipal Geographic Information System (GIS) Data" record series within the "Administering Internal Operations: Managing the Agency" section of the RDA for system-specific retention guidelines. Historic permanent records created prior to the implementation of GIS should be maintained in their original paper format.

Building and Maintaining Streets, Bridges, and Other Municipal Constructions

3.01 Right-of-Way Deeds, Maps, and Drawings. These records document the municipality's ownership of right-of-way over lands on which streets, bridges, parks, or other public facilities are constructed. They contain a legal description and diagram of the right-of-way, and the land's location.
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

3.02 Aerial Photographs. These records provide a photographic record of the municipality's surface characteristics. Aerial views of roads, bridges, bodies of water, and other county structures and topography are recorded in photographs that are used in panning, economic development, regulation, and other core functions of municipal government.
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

Note: Municipalities that now maintain these records within a geographic information system (GIS) should reference the "Municipal Geographic Information System (GIS) Data" record series within the "Administering Internal Operations: Managing the Agency" section of the RDA

for system-specific retention guidelines. Historic permanent records created prior to the implementation of GIS should be maintained in their original paper format.

3.03 Street, Bridge, or Other Municipal Construction and Maintenance Project Files. These records document day-to-day activities on a street, bridge, or other municipal construction project site. The files note such information as the name(s) of the contractor(s), project personnel, project name and number, weather condition, tests and test results, results of soil and structural component tests, progress reports, and cost estimates. They may also contain permit information, vendor applications, reports, and correspondence.

a. **Results of soil and structural component tests.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for life of street or bridge.

b. **All other records.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 10 years.

3.04 Street Project Plans, Specifications, Maps, Plats, and Photographs. These records provide core documentation of the construction and improvement of municipal streets. Information in them includes overall project plans and specifications, photographs, and maps or drawings.
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

3.05 Bridge Project Plans, Specifications, Maps, Plats, and Photographs. These records provide core documentation of the construction and improvement of municipal bridges. The plans or drawings document the bridge's location and structural details, materials used in construction, and flood levels. Information in them includes overall project plans and specifications, photographs, and maps or drawings.

a. **Records of bridges of significant historical interest.** Agency staff may wish to consult the state Department of Transportation, the Alabama Historical Commission, or the county historical society in evaluating the historical significance of local bridges.
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD. Retain for life of bridge; then offer to a local library, archives, or historical society under the terms of a local government records deposit agreement.

b. **Records of other bridges.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for life of bridge.

Note: For routine street and bridge operations records (accounting and purchasing records; grants, bids, and contracts; personnel and training records; work orders, operations logs, and telephone/radio logs), follow the disposition statements for such records in the "Administering Internal Operations" subfunctions.

3.06 Other Municipal Construction Project Plans, Specifications, Maps, Plats, and Photographs. These records provide core documentation of the construction and improvement of other municipal constructions intended for public use that are not streets, bridges, or municipal administrative buildings (parks, cemeteries, parking lots or garages, archives or museums, etc.). Plans or drawings document the facility's location and structural details, as well as materials used in construction. Information in these records may include overall project plans and specifications, photographs, and maps or drawings.

a. **Records of constructions or facilities of significant historical interest.** Agency staff may wish to consult the Alabama Historical Commission or the county historical society in evaluating the historical significance of local constructions or facilities.
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD. Retain for life of facility; then offer to a local library, archives, or historical society under the terms of a local government records deposit agreement.

b. **Records of other constructions or facilities.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for life of construction or facility.

Note: For routine construction project operations records (accounting and purchasing records; grants, bids, and contracts; personnel and training records; work orders, operations logs, and telephone/radio logs), follow the disposition statements for such records in the "Administering Internal Operations" subfunctions.

3.07 Citizen Clean-up Program Records. This documentation includes, but is not limited to, records associated with adopt-a-mile and adopt-a-beach programs.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for length of sponsorship period.

Providing Public Transportation Systems and Facilities

Note: Alabama Act 2022-345, codified as the Code of Alabama 1975 § 11-43-85, allows municipalities with annual expenditures of less than $100,000 to submit an annual report to the Examiners of Public Accounts in lieu of a biennial audit. This report "shall constitute the annual audit report," so qualifying municipalities may use this report in lieu of an audit report when determining whether temporary records with audit-dependent retentions are eligible for destruction.

4.01 Transportation Authority Records.

a. **Meeting/hearing minutes, agendas, and packets.** These records document meetings of the transportation authority. They include agendas and packet materials (copies of budgets, work plans, reports, and other background information) reviewed by members prior to meetings.
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

b. **Hearing files.** These files document citizen appeals to the transportation authority, as well as hearings and the authority's decisions. Records may include correspondence with citizens, hearing notices, reports, and other material maintained in case files.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after authority's decision and settlement of all appeals.

Note: Correspondence between citizens and the transportation authority that does not result in a formal hearing may be disposed of as Routine Correspondence.

4.02 Federal, State, and County Aviation Regulations. These records include Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) regulations, advisory circulars, and security and operations manuals; the *Alabama Department of Aeronautics Manual*; county emergency management agencies' emergency operations manuals; and other materials used by municipal airport authorities in establishing and updating policies and procedures.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until superseded.

4.03 Airport Certification and Procedures Manuals. These records include certification requirements, policies and procedures, and related information compiled by the airport in compliance with FAA and other federal or state regulations. They govern airport compliance with FAA and other federal or state regulations. They govern airport operations in such areas as security, maintenance, concessions, contract formulation, and personnel. Individual manual pages or regulations may be superseded and discarded as requirements are updated by the FAA or other oversight authorities.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until superseded.

4.04 Airport Maps, Plans, and Blueprints. These records consist of at least one copy of all versions of maps, plans, and blueprints for municipal airports and related facilities, including any variations between master and "as-built" plans.
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

4.05 Approach Slope Conditions Reports. These records document approach slope conditions at municipal airports.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until superseded.

4.06 Airport Evacuation Agreements. These records document agreements made in plans for evacuating municipal airports.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until superseded.

Note: For routine airport operations records (accounting and purchasing records; grants, bids and contracts; personnel and training records; work orders, operations logs, and telephone/radio logs; maintenance data on equipment and facilities), follow the disposition statements for such records in the "Administering Internal Operations" subfunctions.

4.07 Public Transit Program Administrative Files. These records document the municipality's operation of public transit systems within its boundaries, as well as special transportation systems for the elderly or handicapped. Records within this series may include, but are not limited to, annual and quarterly reports submitted to the state Department of Transportation, patron sign-in sheets, vehicle inspections, and accident reports.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years after audit.

Note: Other routine administrative records for these services (such as financial records, personnel records, vehicle maintenance files, and correspondence) are covered in the RDA's "Administering Internal Operations" subfunctions.

Providing Utility and Sanitation Services

Note: Alabama Act 2022-345, codified as the Code of Alabama 1975 § 11-43-85, allows municipalities with annual expenditures of less than $100,000 to submit an annual report to the Examiners of Public Accounts in lieu of a biennial audit. This report "shall constitute the annual audit report," so qualifying municipalities may use this report in lieu of an audit report when determining whether temporary records with audit-dependent retentions are eligible for destruction.

5.01 Utility Board/Commission Records.

a. **Meeting/hearing minutes, agendas, and packets.** These records document meetings of the utility board or commission. They include agendas and packet materials (copies of budgets, work, plans, reports, and other background information) reviewed by members prior to meetings.
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

b. **Hearing Files.** These files document citizen appeals to the utility board or commission, as well as hearings and the board's decisions. Records may include correspondence with citizens, hearing notices, reports, and other material maintained in case files.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after board's decision and settlement of all appeals.

Note: Correspondence between citizens and the utility board/commission that does not result in a formal hearing may be disposed of as Routine Correspondence.

5.02 Utility System Maps, Plans, Profiles, and Photographs. These records include maps, profiles, plans, and photographs of sewer systems, water reservoirs, and other utility constructions operated by the municipality or its service vendors. Disposition requirements are as follows:

a. **Maps, plans, profiles, and photographs of systems or reservoirs leased, purchased, or operated by the municipality.**
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

b. **Maps, plans, profiles, and photographs of external systems or reservoirs not leased or purchased by the municipality and operated by a service vendor.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until system or reservoir is no longer in use.

Note: Municipalities that now maintain these records within a geographic information system (GIS) should reference the "Municipal Geographic Information System (GIS) Data" record series within the "Administering Internal Operations: Managing the Agency" section of the RDA for system-specific retention guidelines. Historic permanent records created prior to the implementation of GIS should be maintained in their original paper format.

5.03 Utility and Sanitation User Agreements. These records document agreements between the municipality and users of its utility and sanitation services. Information in these records includes the names and addresses of customers, amount of deposits paid, and term of the agreement.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years after the audit period in which the agreement was terminated.

5.04 Applications and Exemptions for Utility Fee Exemption. These records document the process that determines whether persons may be exempted from solid waste collection or other utility charges.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

5.05 Utility Meter Reading, Billing, and Collection Records. These records are created to record monthly meter readings by utility staff and to document billing and collection activities on utility and sanitation customer accounts. Information available includes customers' names and addresses, account numbers, meter location numbers, monthly meter readings, amounts due, and amounts/dates paid. This series includes customers' remittance copies of utility bills and Daily Cash Receipt Reports.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

5.06 Utility and Sanitation Customer Complaint Logs. These records document complaints by utility and sanitation customers and the agency's actions in regard to them. They may include such information as the customer's name and address; date, time, and nature of the complaint; names of the utility personnel assigned to respond; and any actions taken.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years.

5.07 Utility Department Operational Records. These records document routine utility department operations that do not relate to billing and collection. Items include work orders, operations/dispatch logs, operational reports, and records documenting variations in amounts of power or water provided over time. Disposition of the records is as follows:

a. **Work orders.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year.

b. **Operations/dispatch logs.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years.

c. **Operational reports (daily, monthly, quarterly or annual reports of utility or sanitation operations).**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 5 years.

i. Annual or quarterly reports (if no annual report produced).
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 5 years.

ii. Daily, monthly or quarterly reports (if annual report produced).
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for useful life.

d. **Records documenting power fluctuations, or similar variations in service, to individual business or residential customers**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 10 years.

e. **Utility Infrastructure Monitoring.** May include such things as surveillance video to monitor the integrity of sewers.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 months after date of recording.

Note: Municipalities that now maintain these records within a geographic information system (GIS) should reference the "Municipal Geographic Information System (GIS) Data" record series within the "Administering Internal Operations: Managing the Agency" section of the RDA for system-specific retention guidelines. Historic permanent records created prior to the implementation of GIS should be maintained in their original paper format.

5.08 Water Treatment Surveys and Reports. Local water treatment systems are subject to regulation by the Alabama Department of Environmental Management (ADEM). (See chapter 335-7-10.05 of the Alabama Administrative Code.) These records include the following:

a. **Water quality control tests and monthly reports to ADEM.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years or until next sanitary survey, whichever is longer.

b. **Water reservoir level and temperature readings.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for useful life.

c. **Water temperature operational reports (daily reports).**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 5 years.

d. **Bacteriological monitoring reports.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 5 years.

e. **Water system sanitary surveys and reports.** These records include sanitary surveys and reports, summaries, and correspondence related to surveys or system inspections conducted by system staff or by local, state, or federal authorities.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 10 years.

f. **Complaint files.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after complaint is resolved.

g. **Water system regulation violation correction reports.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after correction of violation.

h. **Water system regulation exemption records.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after exemption or variance.

i. **Chemical Analysis reports.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 10 years.

j. **Disinfection monitoring plans.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until replacement plan has been approved by ADEM.

k. **Annual water quality reports.** These reports are required annually under the federal Safe Drinking Water Act and the Alabama Administrative Code. They may contain summary documentation of water sources and purification processes, annual laboratory test results, public health information, and advice to citizens on maintaining their home sewer systems.
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

Note: Municipalities that now maintain these records within a geographic information system (GIS) should reference the "Municipal Geographic Information System (GIS) Data" record series within the "Administering Internal Operations: Managing the Agency" section of the RDA for system-specific retention guidelines. Historic permanent records created prior to the implementation of GIS should be maintained in their original paper format.

5.09 Solid Waste Management Landfill Records. These records include, but are not limited to, those required by the Alabama Department of Environmental Management (ADEM) for the management of sanitary landfill (See Chapters 335-13-4-.20(3)(a) and 335-13-4-.29 of the Alabama Administrative Code).

a. **Permits.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 5 years.

b. **Engineering drawings; current closure/post-closure care plans; explosive gas/groundwater/environmental monitoring; compliance inspections; correction plans.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 30 years after closure of landfill, or until released by ADEM.

c. **Engineering drawings; final closure/post-closure care plans; explosive gas/groundwater monitoring/corrections plans for closed landfills.**
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

d. **Superseded closure/post-closure care plans; explosive gas/groundwater monitoring/corrections plans.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years.

e. **Operational reports.** These include periodic reports detailing tonnage or volume intake and reports and studies covering routine information not covered by any other item in this series.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 10 years.

5.10 Solid Waste Management Recycling Records. The Alabama Department of Environmental Management (ADEM) requires that Materials Recovery Facilities, Recoverable Materials Processing Facilities, and other facilities that receive, store, process, and sale recovered materials that are not used in any on-site, end-use manufacturing process follow certain operating standards (see Alabama Administrative Code Chapter 335-13-3). The records in this series include documentation required by ADEM and include copies of original registration application and the registration certificate; copies of all applicable zoning permits; records of vector control actions; owner/operator inspection logs; records of all materials (to include composition, weight, volumes, and totals) received by and shipped from the facility; documentation that any charred metal wire originated from a facility properly operating in accordance with applicable air pollution requirements; and documentation regarding variances or exemptions approved by ADEM.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

5.11 Solid Waste Service Collection Records. These records document billing and collection activities related to landfill and recycling customer accounts. Information available may include customers' names and addresses, account numbers, amount due, and amounts/dates paid.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

Note: For other routine records of utility and sanitation departments (grants, bids, and service contracts; personnel and training records; maintenance data on equipment and facilities), follow the disposition statements for such records in the "Administering Internal Operations" subfunctions.

5.12 Utility Equipment Rebates. These records document rebates which public utility companies may issue to encourage the installation, purchase, and/or use of certain utility equipment, including, but not limited to, water heaters and environmentally friendly appliances. Records produced may include, but are not limited to, application forms, receipts, equipment installation records, and check copies.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

5.13 Environmental Control and Monitoring Program Records.

a. **Program Plans, Specifications, Maps, and Plats.**
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

b. **Program Compliance Documentation.** Information included in this series may include but is not limited to documentation of program compliance with local, state, and federal environmental programs and permit requirements.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for 5 years after coverage under permit is terminated.

c. **Infrastructure Monitoring Files.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years.

d. **Program Working Files.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for 1 year.

e. **Other Routine Operational Reports (daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly).**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for duration of administrative value.

Providing Social and Recreational Opportunities

6.01 Parks and Recreation Board Records.

a. **Meeting/hearing minutes, agendas, and packets.**
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

b. **Hearing files.** These files document citizen appeals to the parks and recreation board, as well as hearings and the board's decisions. Records may include correspondence with citizens, hearing notices, reports, and other material maintained in case files.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after board's decision and settlement of all appeals.

Note: For routine parks and recreation department records (correspondence that does not result in a formal hearing; accounting records; bids, grants, and service contracts; personnel and training records; work orders and operations/radio logs; maintenance data on equipment and facilities), follow the disposition statements for such records in the "Administering Internal Operations" subfunctions.

6.02 Municipal Recreational Program Administrative Records. These records document public recreational programs (such as summer camps, team sports leagues, and other recreational activities) either administered by the municipality or taking place at municipal parks, swimming pools, or other facilities. Records may include registration forms, membership lists, attendance logs and passes, team rosters, waivers and release forms, short-term rental or lease agreements for city facilities, and related financial records.

a. **Financial records.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. See "Administering Internal Operations – Managing Finances" subfunction of the RDA.

b. **All other records.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years.

Providing Citizen Services

Note: Alabama Act 2022-345, codified as the Code of Alabama 1975 § 11-43-85, allows municipalities with annual expenditures of less than $100,000 to submit an annual report to the Examiners of Public Accounts in lieu of a biennial audit. This report "shall constitute the annual audit report," so qualifying municipalities may use this report in lieu of an audit report when determining whether temporary records with audit-dependent retentions are eligible for destruction.

(Note: Individual municipalities may not necessarily create all of the records listed below.)

7.01 Area Plans. Area councils on aging are responsible for developing uniform area plans. During the years it covers, an area plan provides a blueprint for all aspects of the council on aging's operations.
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

7.02 Annual Operating Plans. These records offer a more detailed account of the senior services program and its financial planning on an annual basis.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain through completion of multi-year area plan.

7.03 Program Performance Reports (Including Quarterly Financial Reports). These reports provide statistical information for programs administered under Title III of the Older Americans Act of 1965.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the records were created.

7.04 Senior Center Administrative Reports and Forms. These records document routine operations at senior or community centers within the local area. They may include such items as senior activity schedules, senior center booking information, reports on weekly activities and meals, daily attendance records, meal vouchers and certifications, service logs, home-delivered meal ratings, meal change requests, and client registration forms.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the records were created.

7.05 Service Analysis Reports. These are monthly reports that service providers under contract to the senior program submit to document operations at senior centers.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the records were created.

7.06 Senior Center and Contractor Evaluations. These records document inspections and evaluations of senior centers and other service providers by council on aging, country, or municipal personnel.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 10 years.

7.07 Legal Assistance Reports, Forms, and Case Files. These records document legal assistance to elderly individuals under the Older Americans Act. They may include participant registration forms, service logs, information on community legal education sessions, and statistics. Disposition is as follows:

a. **Case Files.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after verification of client's death or departure from the jurisdiction.

b. **All other records.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the records were created.

7.08 Medicaid Waiver Case Management Client Files. These files document counseling and other assistance by senior service providers to elderly individuals under the federal Medicaid Wavier Program.

a. **Case files, correspondence, memoranda.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 5 years after client's death or departure from the jurisdiction.

b. **Other records (time sheets, statements of expenditure, etc.).**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the records were created.

7.09 Senior AIDES (Alert, Industrious, Dedicated, Energetic Service) Program Files. These records document the locality's participation in a federally-funded program for assisting qualified senior citizens to find employment. In 2004, the U.S. Department of Labor, Senior Service America authorized in the destruction of Senior AIDES records created prior to July 1, 1999. This disposition of Senior AIDES records is therefore as follows:

a. **Records created prior to July 1, 1999.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Destroy.

b. **Records created after July 1, 1999.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the records were created.

7.10 Senior Program Complaint Files. These files document complaints about long-term health care facilities and efforts by community ombudsmen to resolve such complaints.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 12 years after final disposition of the case.

7.11 Ombudsmen Quarterly Reports. These are cumulative statistical reports submitted by community ombudsmen to the state ombudsman. They contain such information as number of complaints in specific categories, agent who investigated each complaint, and number of complaints resolved or active.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after the end of the fiscal year which the records were created.

7.12 Aging Grantee Community Profiles. These are status reports on the community submitted to senior program staff and used in the process of grant application.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year.

7.13 Aging Information Management System (AIMS) Service Logs. These records document the entry of information into the statewide network for area councils on aging maintained by the Alabama Department of Senior Services.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until entered into AIMS and verified.

7.14 Head Start Center/Service Provider Collaboration Agreements. These records are service contracts or agreements between the municipality and local Head Start centers or vendors providing services to children in the municipality.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 10 years after expiration of the agreement.

7.15 Head Start Center Administrative Files. These records document routine operations at Head Start centers in a municipality. They may include registration and attendance records, meal vouchers, service logs, and reports on meals and activities.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

7.16 Head Start Center/Service Provider Evaluations. These records document inspections and evaluations of Head Start centers or service providers by municipality staff.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 10 years.

7.17 Head Start Program Complaint Files. These files document complaints about Head Start centers or service providers and efforts to resolve such complaints.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 12 years after final disposition of the case.

Providing Public Cemeteries

Note: Alabama Act 2022-345, codified as the Code of Alabama 1975 § 11-43-85, allows municipalities with annual expenditures of less than $100,000 to submit an annual report to the Examiners of Public Accounts in lieu of a biennial audit. This report "shall constitute the annual audit report," so qualifying municipalities may use this report in lieu of an audit report when determining whether temporary records with audit-dependent retentions are eligible for destruction.

8.01 Cemetery Board or Authority Records.

a. **Meeting/hearing minutes, agendas, and packets.**
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

b. **Hearing files.** These files document citizen appeals to the cemetery board, as well as hearings and the board's decisions. Records may include correspondence with citizens, hearing notices, reports, and other material maintained in case files.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after board's decision and settlement of all appeals.

Note: Correspondence between citizens and the cemetery board or authority that does not result in a formal hearing may be disposed of as Routine Correspondence.

8.02 Sexton's (Cemetery) Records. These records document all burials within the city limits, as well as identifying information on all bodies on municipal cemetery grounds. Sexton's/cemetery records may include:

a. **Cemetery maps, plats, and photographs.** As well as boundaries, cemetery maps may show burial sites by lot, square and section. Also included here are aerial or other photographs and plats of cemetery property.
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

Note: Municipalities that now maintain these records within a geographic information system (GIS) should reference the "Municipal Geographic Information System (GIS) Data" record series within the "Administering Internal Operations: Managing the Agency" section of the RDA for system-specific retention guidelines. Historic permanent records created prior to the implementation of GIS should be maintained in their original paper format.

b. **Records of interment.** Internment records document individual burial sites by plot, square and section. Other information may include decedent's age, sex, race, and citizenship; date (and sometimes cause) of death; burial date; kind of grave or vault; names of undertaker and county health officer; and name of person ordering interment/removal.
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

c. **Affidavits of ownership.** These records document the purchase and ownership of individual cemetery plots. Information may include owner's name and location of plot. (Deeds to cemetery plots may also be filed in the county probate office.)
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

d. **Burial permits.** These permits allow bodies to be buried in municipally-owned cemeteries, or other cemeteries within the corporate limits, upon payment of a fee. Information in these records may be used to compile records of internment.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit. Before disposal, verify that information is documented in records of internment.

e. **Orders for interment.** These records are work orders for the interment of bodies in municipally-owned cemeteries. Information may include decedent's name, address, place of birth, and place of death; location of grave site; time and location of funeral; name of undertaker; descendant or agent ordering interment; and types of services requested.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year. Before disposal, verify that information is documented in records of internment.

f. **Visitor's logs.** These logs contain the names of cemetery visitors. Information may include name of visitor, home address, and date of visit.
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

Note: For routine cemetery operations records (correspondence; accounting records; bids, grants, and service contracts; personnel training records; operation logs; and maintenance data on equipment and facilities), follow the disposition statements for such records in the "Administering Internal Operations" subfunctions.

Planning and Improving Economic and Community Development

9.01 Planning Commission Records.

a. **Meeting/hearing minutes, agendas, and packets.**
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

b. **Hearing files.** These files document citizen appeals to the planning commission, as well as hearings and the commission's decisions. Records may include correspondence with citizens, hearing notices, reports, and other material maintained in case files.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after board's decision and settlement of all appeals.

Note: Correspondence between citizens and the planning commission that does not result in formal hearings may be disposed of as Routine Correspondence.

9.02 Architectural Review Board Records.

a. **Meeting/hearing minutes, agendas, and packets.**
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

b. **Hearing files.** These files document appeals to the architectural review board by residents of historic districts, as well as hearings and the board's decisions. Records may include correspondence with citizens, hearing notices, reports, residents' applications for board approval of changes to their homes or property, "certificates of appropriateness" documenting such approval, and other material maintained in case files.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after board's decision and settlement of all appeals.

Note: Correspondence between residents and the architectural review board that does not result in a formal hearing may be disposed of as Routine Correspondence.

9.03 Comprehensive Plans. These records document strategic planning for future development within the municipality and may include information such as anticipated changes to zoning, land use, infrastructure, community resources, economic activity, or municipal boundaries.
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

9.04 Flood Insurance Rate Maps. These maps are provided to municipalities by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). They show insurance rates, based on the likelihood of flooding, for each piece of property located within municipal boundaries.
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

Note: Municipalities that now maintain these records within a geographic information system (GIS) should reference the "Municipal Geographic Information System (GIS) Data" record series within the "Administering Internal Operations: Managing the Agency" section of the RDA for system-specific retention guidelines. Historic permanent records created prior to the implementation of GIS should be maintained in their original paper format.

9.05 Fire District Maps. These maps document the boundaries of fire districts within a county and may be used for zoning or other planning purposes.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for the duration of administrative value.

Note: Municipalities that now maintain these records within a geographic information system (GIS) should reference the "Municipal Geographic Information System (GIS) Data" record series within the "Administering Internal Operations: Managing the Agency" section of the RDA for system-specific retention guidelines. Historic permanent records created prior to the implementation of GIS should be maintained in their original paper format.

Recruiting Business and Industry

10.01 Industrial Development Board Records.

a. **Minutes, meeting agendas, and packets.**
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

b. **Hearing files.** These files document citizen appeals to the industrial development board, as well as hearings and the board's decisions. Records may include correspondence with citizens, hearing notices, reports, and other material maintained in case files.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after board's decision and settlement of all appeals.

Note: Correspondence between citizens and the industrial development board that does not result in a formal hearing may be disposed of as Routine Correspondence.

Licensing and Permitting

Note: Alabama Act 2022-345, codified as the Code of Alabama 1975 § 11-43-85, allows municipalities with annual expenditures of less than $100,000 to submit an annual report to the Examiners of Public Accounts in lieu of a biennial audit. This report "shall constitute the annual audit report," so qualifying municipalities may use this report in lieu of an audit report when determining whether temporary records with audit-dependent retentions are eligible for destruction.

11.01 Annual Lists of Businesses Licensed to Operate in the Municipality. The records provide summary documentation of business activity in the municipality and have historical value over time. Information available includes business names, owners' names, and street addresses. *(Note: Not all municipalities create this record.)*
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

11.02 Records Documenting Business and Occupational (Privilege) Licensing. These records document the issuing of business and privilege licenses and permits as a means of regulating such activities within its boundaries and collecting revenue. The Code of Alabama 1975 § 6-2-35 sets a five-year statute of limitations on the collection of such fees.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

11.03 Alabama Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC) Board Liquor Licenses. These records document the municipality's submission to the ABC Board of a vendor's letter requesting approval of a liquor license. A copy of the application for the license is attached. License applications are approved by the council and documented in its minutes prior to sending them to the ABC Board.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

11.04 Bartenders'/Managers' Licenses Applications and Licenses. These records document applications by individuals for licensure as bartenders and bar managers; also the issuing of such licenses in compliance with municipal regulations. Normally, approved applications serve as the license's record. Information includes personal data on the applicant, references, and data of license approval or rejection.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until the license is renewed. Retain expired licenses and unsuccessful applications for 3 years.

11.05 Licensee Inspection and Investigation Records. Municipal staff may conduct inspections to ensure that license- or permit-holders are in compliance with state, county, or municipal regulations. Inspections may be routine or may be initiated in response to a complaint. Records within this series may include inspection reports, violation case files, complaints, and supporting materials for findings.

a. **Records of significant findings.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 7 years.

b. **Records of inspections or investigations without significant findings.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year.

11.06 Utility Permits/Street Cut Permits. These records document the proper placement of utility poles, sewer lines, and ditches on municipal rights-of-way. They also include permits issued when streets must be cut for such purposes. Information available in the records includes plans and diagrams of pole, line, or ditch locations; names of utility contractors; correspondence; maps or drawings; and permits.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 7 years.

11.07 Commercial and Residential Building Plans, Permits, and Permit Logs. These records document the municipality's assessment of commercial and residential building plans and drawings and the issuance of associated permits. Records within this series may include materials documenting the building's location, owner's name, contractor's name, permit numbers, and other supporting documentation. Disposition is as follows:

a. **Original commercial building plans.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 7 years. Offer to a local public library, archives, or other historical repository prior to destruction.

b. **All other records.** These records include but are not limited to land use certificates, site plan approval materials, residential plans, associated permits and permit logs, and contractors' certificates of insurance.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 7 years (Code of Alabama 1975 § 6-5-221 through 6-5-227).

c. **Abandoned projects.** These records include documents, plans, and drawings that are submitted for permitting but apply to abandoned projects. They may include permitting information and notes recorded by the municipality's plan review staff.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after last action or contact with vendor.

Note: For records documenting construction, improvement, or renovation of municipal buildings, follow the disposition statements for such records in the "Administering Internal Operations: Managing Properties, Facilities, and Resources" subfunction.

11.08 Door-to-Door Solicitation Permits and Application Materials. These records document the application for, and issuance or denial of, permits to individuals, groups, or organizations who peddle, solicit, or canvass door-to-door within a municipality's limits.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

11.09 Yard Sale Permits. These records document legal authorization from the municipality for citizens to conduct yard sales within the corporate limits. Information available may include the applicant's name and address, the date of issuance, the date of the yard sale, and a copy of municipal rules governing such sales.

a. **Permits for which a fee is collected (auditable records).**
   Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

b. **Permits for which no fee is collected (not auditable records).**
   Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year.

11.10 Environmental Control Permitting Records. A municipality may issue permits regulating environmental impact within its boundaries. Permit types may include, but are not limited to, permits regulating controlled/open burns, mine blasting, and air pollutant outputs.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years, or 2 years following audit, whichever is longer.

11.11 Permitting and Licensing Records, Other. Local governments regulate a wide range of activities through permits and licenses. While many types are explicitly addressed within this RDA, local governments may also issue permits or licenses that are not specifically described. This record series provides retention guidance for all such permitting or licensing records not otherwise covered in this RDA.

a. **Permits with fees.**
   Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for 2 years after audit.

b. **Permits without fees.**
   Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year or for the validity of the permit, whichever is longer.

11.12 Citizenship/Legal Immigration Status Verification Records. These records document enforcement of Section 30 of Alabama Act 2011-535, commonly known as the Immigration Act. They consist of copies of specified types of identifying documents (e.g., valid driver's licenses, birth certificates, naturalization documents) that verify the U.S. citizenship, or legal immigration status, of persons applying for or renewing business licenses. Disposition also covers any forms created by an agency to facilitate enforcement of the act.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

Note: Return original verification documents to the license applicant.

Inspecting

12.01 Building Inspection Files. These records document the inspection of commercial and residential buildings for compliance with code regulations. Information available includes the inspector's name, date of inspection, and a list of any violations found. The records may also include certificates of occupancy issued by inspectors once problems are corrected.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 7 years (Code of Alabama 1975 § 6-5-221 through 6-5-227 [revised 2011]).

12.02 Street and Subdivision Inspection Files. These records document the inspection of municipal streets and subdivisions during and after construction for compliance with building and zoning ordinances. Information includes street or subdivision's location, inspection date, inspector's name, and results of the inspection.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 7 years (Code of Alabama 1975 § 6-5-221 through 6-5-227 [revised 2011]).

12.03 Bridge Inspection Reports. These records document the periodic inspection of public bridges by inspectors to comply with state and federal requirements. An inventory of bridge structures and inspection data is maintained at the state level (CAR 650.211). The reports include forms and other information on the bridge's age and location structural details and grade of the structure. Photographs and drawings may also be included.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for life of bridge.

Zoning and Regulating Subdivisions

13.01 Zoning Board/Board of Adjustment Meeting/Hearing Minutes, Agendas, and Packets.
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

13.02 Board of Adjustment Hearing Files. These records document citizens' requests for variances to the zoning board of adjustments, hearings on requests, and the board's decisions. They may include applicants for variances, protest letters, hearing notices, correspondence and reports, and other material maintained in case files (see the Code of Alabama 1975 § 11-52-81).
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after board's decision and settlement of all appeals.

Note: Correspondence between citizens and the zoning board of adjustment that does not result in a formal hearing may be disposed of as Routine Correspondence.

13.03 Tree Plans of Subdivisions and Commercial Lots. Plans for tree plantings submitted by developers of commercial lots and subdivisions. They are reviewed by municipal horticultural departments for compliance with tree ordinances.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 7 years (Code of Alabama 1975 § 6-5-221 through 6-5-227 [revised 2011]).

13.04 Subdivision Files. These files document the municipality's approval of contractors' plans and specifications prior to assuming responsibility for subdivision street maintenance. The records include plans, plats, maps, and specifications showing roads, rights-of-way, drainage ditches, and other surface improvements. They also include statements dedicating streets to a municipality, copies of council resolutions assuming responsibility for street maintenance, soil testing reports, performance bonds for contractors, inspection reports, permits, correspondence, and photographs.

a. **Final plans, plats, maps, and photographs.**
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

Note: Municipalities that now maintain these records within a geographic information system (GIS) should reference the "Municipal Geographic Information System (GIS) Data" record series within the "Administering Internal Operations: Managing the Agency" section of the RDA for system-specific retention guidelines. Historic permanent records created prior to the implementation of GIS should be maintained in their original paper format.

b. **Statements dedicating streets to the municipality; council resolutions.**
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD. If copies are included with council minutes, duplicates may be destroyed.

c. **Other material in files (inspection reports, permits, performance bonds, correspondence).**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 7 years (Code of Alabama 1975 § 6-5-221 through 6-5-227 [revised 2011]).

13.05 Zoning Violation Correction Files. These files document the county's efforts to identify and correct violations of its zoning ordinances, as well as ordinances regulating weeds, littering, and other public nuisances. Case files or similar records may include notices of violations, complaints from citizens, and other correspondence; photographs of property; and records of court proceedings.

a. **Records of violations that result in litigation.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after litigation is concluded.

b. **Records of violations that do not result in litigation.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after violation is corrected.

Abating Nuisances

Note: Alabama Act 2022-345, codified as the Code of Alabama 1975 § 11-43-85, allows municipalities with annual expenditures of less than $100,000 to submit an annual report to the Examiners of Public Accounts in lieu of a biennial audit. This report "shall constitute the annual audit report," so qualifying municipalities may use this report in lieu of an audit report when determining whether temporary records with audit-dependent retentions are eligible for

destruction.

14.01 Animal Control Operations Files (Rabies Immunization Certificates; Reports of Operations; Lists of Animals Impounded, Claimed, Adopted, or Executed). These records document general operations of the municipal animal control department, including licensing and vaccinating pet animals and retrieving housing and executing strays.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years (Code of Alabama 1975 § 3-7A-2).

Note: For routine animal control operations records (accounting and purchasing records; service contracts; personnel and training records; work orders, operations logs, and telephone/radio logs; maintenance data on equipment and facilities; and correspondence with pet owners or complaining citizens), follow the disposition statements for such records in the "Administering Internal Operations" subfunctions.

14.02 Nuisance Complaint Files. These records document the process by which a complaint is lodged and investigated. They may concern matters including, but not limited to, noise complaints, animal control violations, and environmental permit violations. Records contained within this series include the complaint lodged, materials generated in investigating the complaint, and any related documentation.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after the complaint is filed.

14.03 Nuisance Abatement Notifications and Orders. These records document municipal orders to citizens to eliminate public nuisances (e.g., uncontrolled or dangerous animals, weeds, junk, and noise).
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 5 years after nuisance is eliminated, fine is collected, or litigation is concluded.

14.04 Nuisance Abatement Collection Records. These records document the municipality's collection of fees and fines as part of regulating public nuisances, such as uncontrolled or dangerous animals, weeds, junk, and noise (see Nuisance Abatement Notifications and Orders).
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

14.05 Structural Condemnation Files. These records document the government's determination that buildings within their respective jurisdictions are not structurally sound. Records produced may include, but are not limited to, citizen complaints, inspection forms and notes, and documentation of building destruction.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 5 years after destruction of the building.

Maintaining Public Order/Managing Emergencies

Note: Alabama Act 2022-345, codified as the Code of Alabama 1975 § 11-43-85, allows municipalities with annual expenditures of less than $100,000 to submit an annual report to the Examiners of Public Accounts in lieu of a biennial audit. This report "shall constitute the annual audit report," so qualifying municipalities may use this report in lieu of an audit report when determining whether temporary records with audit-dependent retentions are eligible for destruction.

15.01 Parade or Public Meeting Applications and Permits. These records document the application for and issuance or denial of permits to organizations wishing to conduct parades, marches, assemblies, or other public meetings within the corporate limits. Information in them may include the application date, date of the meeting, name of the sponsoring organization, purpose of the meeting, expected number of participants, and related correspondence.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit. If a parade or meeting results in litigation, retain records until final disposition of the case.

15.02 Municipal Disaster Plans. These records document emergency procedures for restoring municipal government operations and protecting vital records in case of natural disasters or other emergencies. Information in the plan may include: lists of vital records and equipment, locations of the back-up record copies and emergency supplies, contact numbers for emergency assistance agencies, names and telephone numbers of disaster recovery team members, and disaster response and recovery procedures.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until superseded. Duplicate the current plan and disperse off-site copies among disaster recovery team members.

Financial Management: Taxing/Collecting and Disbursing Revenue

Note: Alabama Act 2022-345, codified as the Code of Alabama 1975 § 11-43-85, allows municipalities with annual expenditures of less than $100,000 to submit an annual report to the Examiners of Public Accounts in lieu of a biennial audit. This report "shall constitute the annual audit report," so qualifying municipalities may use this report in lieu of an audit report when determining whether temporary records with audit-dependent retentions are eligible for destruction.

16.01 Assessments for Public Improvements. Municipal councils may, after passing ordinances or resolutions and holding public hearings, have property owners assessed when public improvements to streets, sewers or other types of property occur (Code of Alabama 1975 § 11-48-5 through 11-48-9). The assessment is a one-time charge to property owners. Information in these records include: the type of assessment, the names and addresses of property owners, descriptions of property, and the assessed value of improvements.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 20 years after last effort to collect assessment or property owner's last acknowledgment of debt.

16.02 Police Jurisdiction Maps. These files illustrate the police jurisdictions both within a municipality and outside of the boundaries of municipal incorporation. Within these jurisdictions, municipalities are authorized to enforce codes and collect sales and use taxes.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until superseded and all required reports to Alabama Department of Revenue and/or Department of Examiners of Public Accounts have been submitted.

Note: Municipalities that now maintain these records within a geographic information system (GIS) should reference the "Municipal Geographic Information System (GIS) Data" record series within the "Administering Internal Operations: Managing the Agency" section of the RDA

for system-specific retention guidelines. Historic permanent records created prior to the implementation of GIS should be maintained in their original paper format.

16.03 Records Documenting the Collection of Municipal Taxes. These records document the collection of sales, use, lodging, liquor, gasoline, tobacco, and *ad valorem* taxes by the municipality. They also include reports of such taxes collected for the municipality by the county tax collector or the state Department of Revenue.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

Records Management Recommendation: It is recommended that returned checks, or other records documenting the municipality's efforts to collect unpaid fees or service charges, be retained for 5 years or until settlement of all claims due. The Code of Alabama 1975 § 6-2-35, sets 5 years as the statute of limitations for collecting "amounts claimed for licenses, franchise taxes, or other taxes."

16.04 Records Documenting Auditing of Businesses and Enforcement of the Municipal Tax Code. These records document enforcement of the municipal tax code, including audits of businesses within the corporate limits. They do not include tax cases that proceed to litigation (See record series Legal Case Files).
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years after the audit period in which the audit was closed and all claims were settled.

16.05 Records Documenting the Issuance and Redemption of Municipal Bonds. These records document the redemption of municipal bonds. They may include obligation warrants, copies of authorizing ordinances, preliminary and final financial statements, certificates, and interest coupons. Information may include descriptions/amounts of bonds and/or interest, and the names and addresses of persons presenting the demand of payment.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following the audit period in which bonds are redeemed.

16.06 Records Documenting Municipal Funding of Non-Profit Agencies. These records document funds awarded by municipalities to non-profit agencies within their corporate limits. The records may include:

a. **Ordinances, resolutions, or other directives establishing program requirements, policies, and guidelines.**
   Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

b. **Guidelines and application forms for each funding cycle.**
   Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

   Note: Disposition applies to one file copy.

c. **Applications for funding.**

i. Unsuccessful applications.
Temporary Record. Retain 3 years.

ii. Successful applications.
Temporary Record. Retain in agency's project file.

d. **Contracts with funded agencies.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 10 years.

e. **Project files of funded agencies.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

Note: For non-profit agencies that receive ongoing funding, municipalities may wish to retain project files from earlier funding cycles.

f. **Interim implementation reports to funded agencies, final financial reports and documentation, and correspondence (includes correspondence with unsuccessful applicants).**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

g. **Final narrative reports by funded agencies.**
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

16.07 Property Assessment Requests. These records document requests by attorneys and/or property owners for information on whether any property fees are owed to the municipality. Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years.

Facilitating Government Accountability

Note: Alabama Act 2022-345, codified as the Code of Alabama 1975 § 11-43-85, allows municipalities with annual expenditures of less than $100,000 to submit an annual report to the Examiners of Public Accounts in lieu of a biennial audit. This report "shall constitute the annual audit report," so qualifying municipalities may use this report in lieu of an audit report when determining whether temporary records with audit-dependent retentions are eligible for destruction.

17.01 Civilian Review Records. These records are gathered or created by a group tasked with providing oversight and accountability of public offices – often law enforcement agencies. These boards may investigate public complaints, personnel issues, governmental misconduct, and other topics. Boards may produce reports or provide recommendations on policy and procedures, personnel issues, proposed budgets, and other topics.

a. **Public Complaints.** Citizens may submit complaints relating to specific incidents or broader concerns for the board to evaluate. These records include the complaints, forms, and/or associated documents.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after the complaint was reviewed by the board.

b. **Investigation Files for Personnel Complaints Not Resulting in Disciplinary Recommendations or Additional Proceedings.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after the board's decision and settlement of all appeals.

c. **Investigation Files for Personnel Complaints Resulting in Disciplinary Recommendations or Additional Proceedings.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after separation of the employee.

d. **Research Files.** These records are compiled in the process of investigating specific topics or incidents not pertaining to specific employees. This information may or may not be gathered with the use of subpoenas. Records in this series may include, but are not limited to, interviews, listening sessions, public records, governmental briefings, and other gathered evidence.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after investigation, recommendation, or report is complete, or 3 years after the matter is dismissed.

e. **Final Reports and Recommendations.** The board may provide guidance to government officials. Records in this series may include, but are not limited to, quarterly and final reports, budget proposals, and policy and procedure recommendations.
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

f. **Meeting/Hearing Minutes, Agendas, and Packets.** These records document meetings of the board. They include one copy of agendas, minutes, and packet materials reviewed by members prior to meetings.
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

17.02 Public Notices. These records are official notifications of the time and place of regular and special meetings of the municipal council or other municipal commissions, boards, authorities. They also include notices of public hearings on issues affecting the municipality and copies of newspaper announcements of municipal ordinances, decisions, or activities (proofs of publications).
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

17.03 Complaint Files/Unlitigated Claims for Damages. These records document damage claims against the municipality that are resolved without litigation.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years after settlement or denial of complaint or claim (Code of Alabama 11-47-23).

17.04 Internal Audits. Internal audits include, but are not limited, to process, compliance, and information system audits.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 7 years after completion of audit.

Note: For audits documenting financial conditions, see the Administering Internal Operations: Managing Finances section of the RDA.

17.05 Records Management Documentation.

a. **Local Government Records Destruction Notices and Letters of Eligibility.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 10 years.

b. **Agency copies of the approved RDA.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until superseded.

c. **File listings, records management plans, and other records documenting implementation of the locality's approved RDA.** This documentation primarily serves an internal purpose and should be transferred to the records custodian's successor.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for duration of administrative value.

17.06 Open Records Requests and Related Documentation. This series encompasses requests to view records in accordance with Open Records laws and any related correspondence or other documentation related to the fulfillment or denial of the request(s).
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit. If litigation is initiated during this period, retain until litigation is concluded.

17.07 Local Government Records Deposit Agreements.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 10 years after termination of the agreement.

Note: Deposit agreements must be approved by the Local Government Records Commission. For information, contact the ADAH.

Administering Internal Operations: Managing the Agency

Note: Alabama Act 2022-345, codified as the Code of Alabama 1975 § 11-43-85, allows municipalities with annual expenditures of less than $100,000 to submit an annual report to the Examiners of Public Accounts in lieu of a biennial audit. This report "shall constitute the annual audit report," so qualifying municipalities may use this report in lieu of an audit report when determining whether temporary records with audit-dependent retentions are eligible for destruction.

18.01 Administrative Policies and Procedures. These records document policies and procedures established by the municipality on a variety of issues regarding its relations with the public, other governmental or private entities, and municipal employees. Such policies may be available to citizens in printed form.
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

18.02 Administrative Reference Files. These records include materials not created by the municipality; they are collected and used only as reference sources of information.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for useful life.

18.03 Annual Reports. Municipal agencies may create annual narrative reports describing their activities during the calendar or fiscal year. Such reports provide summary documentation of functions, projects, and activities, as well as ongoing history of the town or city and its government.
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

18.04 Representative Final Versions of Informational and Promotional Materials. These records are created to build public awareness about a variety of issues and government related activities. Examples of these records include, but are not limited to, press releases, brochures, guides, magazines, news articles, advertisements, and posters. The publications document the activities of the local government agency and how it views these activities.
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

18.05 Informational and Promotional Working Files.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for useful life.

18.06 Photographs. This series includes photographs taken for agencies by staff, volunteers, or contractors and the supporting documentation for those photographs. Photographs taken are often voluminous and repetitive and may be for informational or promotional use or may serve internal, external, or reference purposes.

a. **Selection of Representative Photographs (Including High-Quality and Published Photographs).** Selections of agencies' representative photographs annually provides visual documentation of agencies' activities, operations, programs, and functions. The scope of this series includes, but is not limited to, high-quality photographs that may be published in informational or promotional materials.
   Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

   Records Management Recommendation: The Alabama Department of Archives and History recommends that agencies identify and separate representative selections of their photographs on an annual basis.

b. **Photographs Outside of a Representative Selection (Including Duplicative and Poor Photographs).**
   Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for useful life.

c. **Copyright and Reproduction Records for Photographs.** This series includes, but is not limited to, use agreements, release forms, service request forms, and requests for permission to reproduce or publish photographs. These records are to be retained for the life of the photograph and may be permanent if related to photographs with a permanent retention.
   Disposition: Retain for the life of the photograph.

18.07 Board Application Records. These records include applications and supplementary documentation, such as cover letters, resumes, transcripts, pre-employment drug testing results, and letters of recommendation.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years.

18.08 Internal Ballots and Related Files. Records within this series document the results of internal elections.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years.

18.09 Official Bonds and Oaths. These records comprise copies of official bonds and oaths required of municipal officials and other personnel under Title 11 of the Code of Alabama 1975. They include oaths of office, power of attorney statements, insurance policies, and other surety bonds. Original bonds and oaths are filed at the county probate office.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

18.10 Routine Correspondence. This type of correspondence documents the daily conduct of the municipality's affairs in its relations with local citizens and businesses, other governmental agencies, and the general public. It relates to everyday matters (such as answering inquiries, providing information, or performing mandated services) rather than to policy development or issues of long-term administrative impact.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years.

18.11 Legal Case Files. These records document legal proceedings where the municipal government is a party. These include, but are not limited to, litigation, arbitration, mediation, facilitation, and other legal remedies not otherwise addressed in this RDA.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after the case is closed.

18.12 Agency Contracts and Related Records. Local governments may enter into contracts or other binding agreements for the purposes of securing goods, services, and property. Related records, such as disclosure statements provided pursuant to Alabama Act 2025-35, codified in the Code of Alabama 1975 § 41-16-80, et seq., also fall within the scope of this series.

a. **Contracts Under Seal and Related Files.** Contracts under seal are formal agreements that do not require the element of consideration (the exchange of items of value between the parties) to be considered enforceable. This relatively uncommon type of contract is valid due to its format, not due to its inclusion of the three elements generally required to make a contract valid: an offer, acceptance, and consideration.
   Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 10 years from the beginning of the contract, 6 years after expiration or termination of the contract, or 2 years after audit, whichever is longest.

b. **Contracts Not Under Seal and Related Files.** These contracts must possess three key elements to be considered valid: an offer, acceptance, and consideration (the exchange of items of value between the parties).
   Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after expiration or termination of the contract, or 2 years after audit, whichever is longer.

18.13 State Board of Adjustment Files. These materials relate to involvement in Board of Adjustment proceedings, and include, but are not limited to, claims, supporting documentation, evidentiary materials, findings, decisions, consents, settlements, and other dispositions by the Board.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after final disposition of claim.

18.14 Mailing Lists. These records include various standard lists of names and addresses use by municipal personnel.
Disposition: Temporary List. Retain for useful life.

18.15 Mail, Telephone, and Fax Machine Logs. These records are lists of mail, telephone, and fax machine contacts and related data.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for useful life.

18.16 Returned/Undeliverable Correspondence. This series includes correspondence or communications which (1) are returned to the sender for any reason, including insufficient postage, incorrect address, forwarding order expired, etc., or abandoned at a mail/document pickup station by a defunct addressee and (2) do not require follow-up or retention for other documentary purposes.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for duration of administrative value.

Note: This series does not include responses solicited and received. Additionally, returned correspondence requiring follow-up or which is specifically elucidated in other series may have differing or longer retentions. The scope of this series does not include items such as returned certified mail; returned letters related to employee certification files; remittance copies received with payments; returned voter file maintenance postcards; select notary correspondence; or returned mailings containing legal instruments.

18.17 Calendars. These records include desk calendars and other scheduling devices for municipal personnel.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for useful life.

18.18 Computer Systems Documentation. These records document the addition, modification, and removal of software and/or hardware from an agency's computer systems. Documentation in this series may include, but is not limited to, the following record types: current source code, dataset inventories and layouts, hardware/software specifications and changes (including operating system details, server names, IP addresses, and software lists), hardware/software warranties, input/output specifications, instruction manuals (including user guides and vendor-supplied documents), licensing information, local and/or wide area network schematics, operational logs (including audit logs, dataset logs, job logs, programming logs, system development logs, and update logs), performance reports, system backup reports, and system overviews.

a. **Core computer systems documentation.** This series includes documentation that enables the continued use of data and records contained within computer hardware and software systems.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for the life of the system.

Note: Agencies should ensure that they maintain documentation that allows them to migrate their data.

b. **Routine computer systems documentation.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for the duration of administrative value.

c. **Warranties and Licenses.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until expiration.

18.19 Websites and Social Media Sites. Municipalities develop web and social media sites for responding to public inquiries and providing information on municipal affairs. Material on the site may include information on the municipal affairs. Material on the site may include: information on the municipality's location, population, and demography; organization and officials; economic, cultural, and educational resources; and other information describing the town or city's "way of life".
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD. Preserve a complete copy of the web or social media site annually, or as often as significant changes are made.

18.20 Municipal Geographic Information System (GIS) Data. These records consist of geospatial data that describe and contextualize features within a municipality, such as property boundaries, political boundaries, address data, and road center line data. Alabama municipal governments may utilize GIS data to inform a variety of government functions including, but not limited to, managing elections; building and maintaining streets, bridges, and other municipal constructions; providing utility and sanitation services; providing public cemeteries; planning and improving economic and community development; zoning and regulating subdivisions; and taxing, collecting, and disbursing revenue.

a. **Annual Snapshots.**
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD. Preserve a snapshot (complete copy) of the database contents annually.

b. **Base datasets and maps.** The scope of this subseries includes base datasets, such as ground and water features used to compile other layers of primary focus; datasets of buildings, structures, and businesses; census datasets; communication or emergency dispatch datasets; engineering, environmental, storm water, and flooding datasets; and datasets for output documents such as maps and aerial photographs.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain data entry fields until superseded.

18.21 Master Address Files and Address Change Information. These records include geographic information – primarily street and road names and locations – on all residential and business addresses covered by the municipal GIS system. They also include additions or corrections of names, street addresses, telephone numbers, or other information on residences and businesses.

a. **Master address files.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after information has been superseded.

b. **Address change information.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after master file has been updated and verified.

18.22 Sign-In Logs.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year.

18.23 Educational Program Records. These records document the process of conducting public educational outreach or training. These records do not document the municipality's provision of in-service training and professional development for its employees.

a. **Representative Final Versions of Educational Program Records.** Examples of these records include, but are not limited to, planning documentation (policies, procedures, standards); audiovisual presentations or materials; and program appraisals.
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

b. **Educational Program Working Files.** Examples of these materials include, but are not limited to, final versions of educational program records not chosen for permanent retention, draft versions of audiovisual presentations, course announcements, lists of attendees at workshops or training sessions, sign-in sheets, rosters, and other routine operational records.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for 2 years after date of program.

18.24 Employee and Dependent Patient Medical Records. This series documents records generated in the municipality's role as a medical provider to its employees and their dependents, such as through municipal employee health centers or city-operated flu clinics.

a. **Medical records of adults.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 7 years after last patient interaction.

b. **Medical records of minors.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until patient reaches age 21 or for 7 years after last patient interaction, whichever is later.

Administering Internal Operations: Managing Finances

Note: Alabama Act 2022-345, codified as the Code of Alabama 1975 § 11-43-85, allows municipalities with annual expenditures of less than $100,000 to submit an annual report to the Examiners of Public Accounts in lieu of a biennial audit. This report "shall constitute the annual audit report," so qualifying municipalities may use this report in lieu of an audit report when determining whether temporary records with audit-dependent retentions are eligible for destruction.

19.01 Budgeting Records. These records document preparing a budget request package and reporting the status of funds, requesting amendments of allotments, and reporting program performance.

a. **Budget estimates and requests.** These records contain information submitted by municipal departments, nonprofit organizations, and/or other entities during budget preparation.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

b. **Approved annual budgets.** These records are the final municipal budgets approved by the council. Usually, they take the form of ordinances.
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD. If a copy of the budget is included with the council minutes, retain additional copies for useful life.

c. **Records documenting budget performance during the budget cycle** (budgeted and actual revenue reports, investment reports, expenditure reports, encumbrance reports, etc.)
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

d. **Annual Financial reports.** At the end of the fiscal year, a summary statement of municipal finances may be included in council minutes and published in the local newspaper.
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD. If a copy of the report is included with the minutes, retain additional copies for useful life.

19.02 Audit Reports. These records document the municipality's overall financial condition and the findings of its independent auditor during each audit period.
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

19.03 Accounting Records.

a. **Routine accounting records.** These are records of original entry or other routine accounting transactions, including journals, registers, ledgers, receipts, invoices for services, bank statements, deposit slips, canceled checks, and other supporting documentation.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

Records Management Recommendation: It is recommended that returned checks, or other records documenting the municipality's efforts to collect unpaid fees or service charges, be retained for 5 years or until the settlement of all claims due. The Code of Alabama 1975 § 6-2-35 sets 5 years as the statute of limitations for collecting "amounts claimed for licenses, franchise taxes, or other taxes."

Note: Disposition for grant-related accounting records is provided under Grant Project Files.

b. **General Ledgers and detailed year-end trial balances.** These records of final entry for all financial transactions: collecting revenue (taxing and licensing), purchasing, investing, administering state and federal funds, and general accounting.

i. Records created prior to 1975.
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

ii. Records created in or after 1975
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 10 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the record was created.

19.04 Purchasing Records. These records document the requisitioning and purchasing of supplies and equipment, receipting and invoicing for goods and services, and authorizing payment for products. Records in this series may include, but are not limited to, purchase orders, quotes, invoices, purchasing card receipts, and receiving reports.
Disposition: Retain 2 years following audit.

Note: Disposition for grant-related purchasing records is provided under Grant Project Files.

19.05 Records of Formal Bids. These records document the municipal bid process, which is subject to the requirements of Title 41, Section 16 of the Code of Alabama 1975.

a. **Records documenting bids on products or services obtained by the municipality.** These records include municipal requests for bid proposals, successful and unsuccessful bids by product or service vendors, and related correspondence.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 7 years after the date bids were opened (Code of Alabama 1975 § 41-16-54e).

b. **Lists of eligible bidders.** Municipalities may compile lists of persons or businesses who have filed requests to be notified of bids on projects, products, or services required by the municipality.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after last contact with listed vendors.

Note: Requests from bidders to be included on the lists may be treated as Routine Correspondence.

c. **Correspondence with vendors slated for removal from the lists of eligible bidders.** Under the Code of Alabama 1975 § 41-16-54a, any listed bidder who fails to respond after receiving three solicitations for bids may be stricken from the eligible list. This correspondence documents the municipality's efforts to warn unresponsive vendors that they will be dropped from the lists unless they ask to remain eligible. It includes forms or letters sent out by the municipality and any responses, forms, or letters sent out by the municipality and any responses from the vendors.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years after the audit period in which the bidder is removed from the list.

19.06 Vendor Verifications of Employee's Legal Immigration Status. These records document enforcement of Section 9 of Alabama Act 2011-535, commonly known as the Immigration Act. They consist of affidavits and/or E-Verify Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) stipulating that active or prospective vendors do not knowingly employ illegal immigrants.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after last contact with vendor.

19.07 Grant Project Files. These records document the municipality's application for and conduct of grant projects funded by local, state, federal, or private sources.

a. **Financial reports, interim narrative reports, and correspondence.** These records include financial reports, interim narrative reports, background materials, and other non-financial supporting documentation for grants awarded. Also included are records relating to unsuccessful grant applications.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after submission of final financial report or denial of application.

b. **Subsidiary financial records.** These records include accounting or purchasing records and any other subsidiary financial documentation of federal grants, excluding financial reports. (See Federal Rule 1354.)
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after submission of final financial report.

c. **Final narrative reports.** Final narrative reports are submitted according to the requirements of the funding agency. They summarize the goals of the grant, how the money was used, and what was accomplished.
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

d. **Revenue sharing files.** These records were formerly created to document financial activities related to the defunct federal revenue sharing program.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Destroy.

e. **Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) Files.** These records were formerly created to document administration of a federal program to provide job training and employment opportunities.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Destroy.

19.08 Investment Reports. These records provide summary documentation of the municipality's financial investments.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

19.09 Travel Records. These records document requests by municipal personnel for authorization to travel on official business, and related materials such as travel reimbursement, forms and itineraries.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

19.10 Employer Tax Returns and Related Files. These records include, but are not limited to, employer state tax returns, federal tax returns, local tax returns, monthly and quarterly tax reporting forms such as federal Form 941, unemployment quarterly reports, and Federal Forms 1099. These records do not pertain to individual employees but instead describe the local government agency as a whole.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

19.11 Sales Tax Exemption Documentation. Government agencies are legally exempted from paying sales tax per the Code of Alabama 1975 § 40-23-49. Since agencies must occasionally demonstrate their tax-exempt status when dealing with vendors or other contacts, the Alabama Department of Revenue provides proof of sales-tax-exempt status on request.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the record was created.

Administering Internal Operations: Managing Human Resources

Note: Alabama Act 2022-345, codified as the Code of Alabama 1975 § 11-43-85, allows municipalities with annual expenditures of less than $100,000 to submit an annual report to the Examiners of Public Accounts in lieu of a biennial audit. This report "shall constitute the annual audit report," so qualifying municipalities may use this report in lieu of an audit report when determining whether temporary records with audit-dependent retentions are eligible for destruction.

20.01 Personnel Board Meeting/Hearing Minutes, Agendas, and Packets.
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

20.02 Personnel Hearing Files. These records document various types of hearings held by the municipal personnel board, such as demotion hearings, hardship rules hearings, grievance hearings, dismissal appeals, discrimination appeals, layoffs appeals, and citizen complaints.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after board's decision and settlement of all appeals.

20.03 Employee Handbooks. These records provide guidance to new employees about personnel rules and other policies and procedures.
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

20.04 Employee Newsletters. These records are internal newsletters created for municipal government employees to communicate personnel policies, news of important events, and information on individual employees.
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

20.05 Job Classification and Pay Plans. These records document various job classifications used by the municipality. They include the qualifications, duties, and pay range for each municipal position. The required retention depends on whether the municipality has a separate personnel department.

a. **Master copies of job classifications and pay plans.** These copies are usually maintained by the mayor's office or the municipal personnel department.
   Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

b. **Copies held by other municipal departments.**
   Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 4 years after position is reclassified.

c. **Job reclassification surveys, correspondence, and related materials.**
   Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 4 years after position is reclassified.

20.06 Examination Records. These records document the development of administration examinations for employment in municipal positions.

a. **Examination history files.** These files document the development of employment examinations. They include questionnaires, comparison studies, final copies of examinations, and job announcements.
   Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after examination is no longer in use.

b. **Examination administrative files.** These records document the administration of examinations to applicants for municipal positions. They include rating forms, answer sheets, and lists of applicants.
   Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years.

c. **Typing tests.** These records document typing tests given to potential job applicants before accepting their applications for employment. They may include printouts showing the test taken, with errors; summaries of results; demonstration forms used by the staff; and sign-in sheets.
   Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year.

20.07 Certification Records. These records document the process of employee certification. They pertain to individuals deemed qualified for municipal positions after submitting an application and taking an employment examination.

a. **Employment registers.** These records are lists of individuals declared qualified for certain municipal positions. They include the job classification, names of eligible applicants, and their ranking on the lists.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after superseded**.**

b. **Employee certification files.** These records document the certification process with individual job applicants. They include questionnaires, training and experience records, grades, notifications, and returned postcards and letters.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years.

20.08 Job Recruitment Materials. These records document efforts by the municipality to advertise positions and attract qualified personnel.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years after the position is filled.

20.09 Employment Applications. These records document applications for employment that are maintained for consideration when vacancies arise. They may also include rejected applications, applications for transfer, and applications for promotion.

a. **Successful applications.**
Disposition: Move the information to the employee personnel file.

b. **Unsuccessful applications.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years.

c. **Supplemental data forms of successful applicants.** Information on these forms may include, but is not limited to, the job applicant's name, Social Security Number, date of birth, race, sex, and recruitment source. The form may be filed separately from other information on the employment application.
Disposition: Move the information to the employee personnel file.

d. **Supplemental data forms of unsuccessful applicants.** Information on these forms may include, but is not limited to, the job applicant's name, Social Security Number, date of birth, race, sex, and recruitment source. The form may be filed separately from other information on the employment application.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years.

e. **I-9 forms.** These federal forms are used to verify that persons seeking employment are eligible to work in the United States. Employers must keep a completed I-9 form on file for all employees. The forms must be kept for as long as the employee works for the agency, and for a certain amount of time after separation. The minimum required retention of the employing agency's copy is provided by 8 CFR § 274a.2 (Migrant and Seasonal Agricultural Worker Protection Act).

i. If the employee worked for less than two years.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain their form for three years after the date you entered in the First Day of Employment field.

ii. If the employee worked for more than two years.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain their form for one year after the date they stop working for you.

f. **E-Verify case verification numbers.** Guidelines from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security Citizenship and Immigration Services state that employers must record or print and file the E-Verify case verification number for each corresponding I-9 form.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for 3 years after the date of hire, or 1 year after the date employment ends, whichever is later.

20.10 Equal Employment Opportunity Commission Files. These records document the municipality's compliance with hiring regulations established by the federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years.

Note: "Whenever a charge of discrimination has been filed, or an action brought by the Attorney General – [retain] until final disposition of the charge or action" (29 CFR 1602.31,1602.20).

20.11 Employee Personnel Files. These records document each municipal employee's work history; they are generally maintained as case files. A file may include information on an employee's training, performance evaluations, disciplinary actions, promotions and demotions, awards, leave, and salary.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after separation of employee.

20.12 Employee Work Schedules. These records document the daily and weekly work schedules of all municipal employees.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

20.13 Annual Reports of Promotions and New Hires. These records summarize overall municipal personnel activity and turnover during the year. They may also include reports of employee retirements, resignations, and terminations.
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

20.14 Leave and Attendance Records. These records document the attendance and leave status of agency personnel, both generally and for individual employees.

a. **Individual employee leave and attendance records (including time sheets).** These are records documenting hours worked, leave earned, and leave taken by individual employees.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

b. **Employee cumulative leave/attendance records.** These records document the final leave status (cumulative leave) of individual employees.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after the separation of the employee.

c. **Employee leave donation records.** These records document the donation of leave to their colleagues by employees.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

20.15 Payroll Records. These records document payrolls, as well as pay status and payroll deductions for individual employees.

a. **Employer annual payroll earnings reports.** These are summaries of employees' earnings during a fiscal year, including all deductions and wage and tax statements.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 50 years after the end of the tax year in which the records were created.

b. **Records documenting employee payrolls.** These records include pre-payroll reports, payroll check registers, payroll action forms, payroll/overtime certification reports, etc.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 4 years, or 1 year after audit, whichever is longer.

c. **Records documenting employee payroll deduction authorizations.** These records document payroll deduction authorizations for taxes (including W-4 forms), retirement contributions, and similar deductions withheld from the pay of individual employees.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after separation of employee.

d. **Records documenting employee payroll deductions.** These records document taxes (including W-2 forms), retirement contributions, and all other deductions withheld from the pay of individual employees.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 4 years, or 1 year after audit, whichever is longer.

20.16 Employee Flexible Benefits Plan Files (applications, correspondence, enrollment cards, and related files). These records document participation in "cafeteria plans" as provided by the Internal Revenue Code § 125.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after termination of participation in program.

20.17 Employee Insurance Program Enrollment and Claims Files. These files document the municipality's efforts to assist employees and their dependents to enroll in health/life insurance programs, in accordance with stablished guidelines.

a. **General information on the program.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until superseded.

b. **Employee applications, correspondence, and enrollment cards and files.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 4 years after program termination or employee separation.

c. **Employee claims files.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years after the audit period in which the claim was filed.

20.18 "Drug-Free Workplace" Records. These records document municipal substance abuse policies and programs, as well as drug and alcohol testing of municipal employees. Under the federal Americans with Disabilities Act, such medical-related records may not be included in Employee Personnel Files.

a. **Drug/alcohol abuse policy and procedures documentation.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 4 years after policy is superseded.

b. **Positive employee drug or alcohol test results, documentation of employee refusals to take tests, documentation of employee referrals and treatment in substance abuse programs, copies of municipality's annual MIS reports submitted to FTA.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 5 years.

c. **Records related to the collection process and employee training.**
Disposition. Temporary Record. Retain 2 years.

d. **Negative employee drug or alcohol test results.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year.

20.19 Workers' Compensation Records.

a. **Workers' Compensation Insurance Claim Files.** These files document all claims made by municipal employees that pertain to work-related injuries or diseases.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 12 years after the end of the fiscal year in which a report of injuries is filed (Code of Alabama 1975 § 25-5-4).

b. **Proof of Workers' Compensation Insurance.** These records document that the agency possesses workers' compensation coverage. This may be through coverage possessed directly by the state or locality, or through coverage possessed and administered by a contracted vendor on behalf of the locality.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

20.20 Unemployment Compensation Files. These files provide documentation related to employee claims for unemployment compensation.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

20.21 Employee Assistance Program Files. These are administrative records documenting the referral of employees to various assistance programs and subsequent provided.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

20.22 Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) Records. These records document administration of the federal Family Medical Leave program, including leave taken, premium payments, employer notices, and correspondence.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

20.23 Affordable Care Act Compliance Files. These records encompass the documentation submitted to the federal government to demonstrate compliance with the Affordable Care Act.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after submission.

20.24 Training Records. These records document the municipality's provision of in-service training and professional development for its employees. They do not include materials obtained from outside sources.

a. **Training standards, policies, procedures, and publications.** These records document the municipality's overall standards, policies, and procedures in providing specialized training to its employees. They may include general policy statements or guidelines, training manuals, or related publications.
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

Note: Permanent retention applies to the file copy. Duplicates may be destroyed when no longer needed.

b. **Training administrative files.** These records document the process of conducting training for employees. They may include individual lesson plans, audiovisual presentations or materials, lists of attendees at workshops or training sessions, sign-in sheets, unpublished handouts, and appraisals of training completed by participants.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for useful life.

20.25 Reports of Municipal Employees Required to File Statements of Economic Interest. These records include reports to the Alabama Ethics Commission, and related transmittal letters, copies of statements, and correspondence, pertaining to the filing of Statements of Economic Interest by municipal employees. The reports contain the names of municipal employees who are required to file Statements of Economic Interest.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 4 years.

Administering Internal Operations: Managing Properties, Facilities, and Resources

Note: Alabama Act 2022-345, codified as the Code of Alabama 1975 § 11-43-85, allows municipalities with annual expenditures of less than $100,000 to submit an annual report to the Examiners of Public Accounts in lieu of a biennial audit. This report "shall constitute the annual audit report," so qualifying municipalities may use this report in lieu of an audit report when determining whether temporary records with audit-dependent retentions are eligible for destruction.

21.01 Municipal Building Construction and Renovation Files. These files document the design, construction, repair, and renovation of city halls and other municipal buildings. Included may be building specifications and floor plans, plans proposed work, lists of materials, correspondence, memoranda, reports, blueprints, site plans, elevation details, and financial records.

a. **Plans, specifications, and blueprints of city halls and other municipal buildings of significant historical interest (e.g., municipal archives).**
Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD. Retain in office for life of building: agency may then offer for transfer to a local library, archives, or historical society under the terms of a local government records deposit agreement.

b. **All other records (financial records; plans, specifications, and blueprints for buildings lacking significant historical interest).**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for life of building.

c. **Record of rented buildings or facilities.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain during use of building or facility and transfer to new occupant.

Note: Fixed Assets Records. Records below document the municipality's ownership of assets (such as land, buildings, and equipment) that are purchased for long-term use and are not likely to be quickly converted into cash. They may include:

21.02 Annual Inventory Records. These records document all personal property, equipment, or capital outlay by the municipality on an annual basis.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

21.03 Appraisals of Real Property Acquired for Municipal Use. These records document appraisals of private or real property that are performed prior to the municipality acquiring the land for public use (for example, constructing streets, bridges, public parks, and parking lots or garages).
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 10 years.

21.04 Deeds to Municipal Real Property. These are copies of records that document the municipality's ownership of real property. Deeds are held permanently by the county probate office.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until property is sold. Verify that the country probate office holds the original deed prior to destruction.

21.05 Rental Agreements and Related Records. These records document the rental and use of real estate and/or facilities owned by a municipal government or public corporation, board, or commission to other entities including, but not limited to, nonprofit organizations and businesses. Records in this series may include rental agreements governing the usage of public facilities, annual insurance verifications submitted to local governments, and other related files.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years after the agreement expires.

21.06 Vehicle and Equipment Ownership Files. These records document the ownership and maintenance of all vehicles and other equipment owned or maintained by the municipality. They may include titles, bills of sale, and related correspondence.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following the audit period in which equipment or vehicle is removed from inventory.

21.07 Vehicle and Equipment Maintenance Files (work orders, repair records, and related financial records)**.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

21.08 Facilities/Buildings Inspection Records. These records document the routine safety and maintenance inspection of municipal buildings, facilities, and such potentially dangerous items as furnaces, elevators, electronic doors, etc.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 5 years.

21.09 Facilities/Buildings Maintenance Work Orders. These records document routine maintenance activities in municipal buildings or other facilities.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year.

21.10 Infrastructure Maintenance Records. Records document the general maintenance and upkeep of city infrastructure, including streets, parks and recreation, building and grounds, public works, and other facilities. Records may include, but are not limited to, progress reports, daily work assignments, and reports summarizing the activities of maintenance crews.
Disposition: Temporary Records. Retain 3 years.

21.11 Insurance Policies and Claims.

a. **Insurance policies.** These policies document all insurance policies carried by the agency.
   Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 10 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the policy was terminated.

b. **Insurance claims.** These records document insurance claims filed by the local government agency.
   Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years after the audit period in which the claim was settled.

c. **Certificates of liability.** These records provide proof of insurance. Certificates are typically valid for a period of one year or less.
   Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until superseded.

d. **Certificates of insurance for vendors.** These certificates are provided by vendors that are providing goods and/or services to a local government agency. The records list the local government as being additionally insured.
   Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years.

21.12 Depreciation Schedules. These records document the expected depreciation, and consequent decline in value, of municipal fixed assets over time.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years after the audit period in which fixed asset is removed from inventory.

21.13 Receipts of Responsibility for Property. These records document the temporary use or possession of municipal property by employees.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until return of item to property manager.

21.14 Security Audiovisual Recordings. This record series consists of security recordings created to monitor activities and document incidents. They may include, but are not limited to, video recordings, audio recordings, and images from security or surveillance cameras. Security setups vary, and recordings may be continuous, stop-frame, or random use. Recordings or images may capture date and time indexing information, which should be retained contextually with recordings.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 30 days.

Note: Security audiovisual recordings associated with incidents should be maintained until the incident is resolved.

21.15 Facility Access Control Authorization Records for Individuals. These records include, but are not limited to, documentation surrounding the issuance and accountability of identification badges, access badges and tokens, physical keys, and related assigned-access credentials for buildings and other facilities. Biometric facility access control records also fall within the scope of this series.

a. **Access Control Authorization Records Subject to Federal Tax Information (FTI) Security Guidelines.**
   Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after credentials are updated, superseded, or terminated, but in no instance fewer than 5 years (IRS Publication 1075).

b. **All Other Access Control Authorization Records.**
   Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after credentials are updated, superseded, or terminated.

21.16 Facility Access Control Master Lists. This series consists of centralized lists that define who has access to specific areas or resources within facilities and their designated levels of access.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until updated, superseded, or terminated.

21.17 Facility Access Registers and Logs. These materials include logs, registers, and reports documenting access to buildings and other facilities. Such records include, but are not limited to, gate logs, guard logs, access registers, and similar routine admission registers or security logs.

a. **Facility Access Registers and Logs Subject to Federal Tax Information (FTI) Security Guidelines.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 5 years (IRS Publication 1075).

b. **All Other Facility Access Registers and Logs.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year.

Note: Facility access registers and logs associated with incidents should be maintained until the incident is resolved.

21.18 Visitor Sign-in Records.

a. **Visitor Sign-in Records Subject to Federal Tax Information (FTI) Security Guidelines.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 5 years (IRS Publication 1075).

b. **All Other Visitor Sign-in Records.**
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year.

Note: Sign-in records associated with incidents should be maintained until the incident is resolved.

21.19 Facilities/Buildings Safety Plans and Training Files.

a. **Safety plans.** These records document the manner in which agency staff are directed to respond in emergencies. Examples of safety plans include, but are not limited to, fire evacuation protocols, severe weather plans, and active shooter protocols.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until superseded.

b. **Training files.** These records document the training and practice undertaken by staff to implement safety plans. Examples of training and practice include, but are not limited to, fire drills, tornado drills, and bomb threat drills.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years.

21.20 Motor Pool Use Records. These records document the use of vehicles in the municipal motor pool by employees.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

21.21 Parking Records. These records document the use of municipal parking facilities by employees or visitors. They may include parking permits, cards, and applications for these items.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

21.22 Long-Distance Telephone Logs. These records document use of the municipality's long-distance telephone systems by employees during business hours.
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 2 years following audit.

Requirement and Recommendations for Implementing the Records Disposition Authority (RDA)

Requirement

Under the Code of Alabama 1975 § 41-13-23, "no county, municipal, or other local government official, shall cause any. . . record to be destroyed or otherwise disposed of without first obtaining the approval of the local government records commission." This RDA constitutes authorization by the Local Government Records Commission to dispose of records as stipulated, with the condition that the responsible official must submit a Local Government Records Destruction Notice to the ADAH Government Records Division to document the destruction. The ADAH, which serves as the commission's staff, retains local records destruction documentation as a permanent record.

Recommendations

In addition, the Agency should make every effort to establish and maintain a quality record-keeping program by conducting the following activities:

The Agency should designate a staff member in a managerial position as its records liaison/records manager, who is responsible for: ensuring the development of quality record keeping systems that meet the business and legal needs of the agency, coordinating the transfer and destruction of records, ensuring that permanent records held on alternative storage media (such as microforms and digital imaging systems) are maintained in compliance with national and state standards, and ensuring the regular implementation of the agency's approved RDA.

Permanent records in the Agency's custody should be maintained under proper intellectual control and in an environment that will ensure their physical order and preservation.

Destruction of temporary records, as authorized in this RDA, should occur agency-wide on a regular basis – for example, after the successful completion of an audit, at the end of an administration, or at the end of a fiscal year. Despite the RDA's provisions, no record should be destroyed that is necessary to comply with requirements of the Open Meetings Act, audit requirements, or any legal notice or subpoena.

The agency should maintain full documentation of any computerized record-keeping system it employs. It should develop procedures for: (1) backing up all permanent records held in electronic format; (2) storing a back-up copy off-site; and (3) migrating all permanent records when the system is upgraded or replaced. If the agency chooses to maintain permanent records solely in electronic format, it is committed to funding any system upgrades and migration strategies necessary to ensure the records' permanent preservation and accessibility.

Electronic mail contains permanent, temporary, or transitory record information. Although e-mail records can be printed out, filed, and retained according to the RDA's requirements, the office should preferably employ an electronic records management system capable of sorting e-

mail into folders and archiving messages having long-term value.

The staff of the Local Government Records Commission or the Examiners of Public Accounts may examine the condition of the permanent records maintained in the custody of the Agency and inspect records destruction documentation. Agency records managers and/or the ADAH archivists are available to instruct the staff in RDA implementation and otherwise assist the Agency in implementing its records management program.

The Local Government Records Commission adopted this revised Records Disposition Authority on October 28, 2026.

_____ _____

Steve Murray, Chair Date
State Records Commission

By signing below, the agency acknowledges receipt of the retention periods and requirements established by the records disposition authority.

_____ _____

Mayor Date
City/Town of _____

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