

With the dissolution of the Town of Madison in 2022, MPD will take on the responsibility of policing an additional 5,000 residents. While MPD greatly appreciates the addition of eight (8) commissioned positions made last year in the 2022 operating budget to help the department prepare for this attachment, a need for additional civilian support staff positions has been identified in order to ensure equitable services to these new Madison residents. As members from MPD's Record Section have worked with employees of the Town of Madison this year to prepare for the influx of new police records, digital files and evidence, MPD has also seen the volume of public records requests increase and recognized these civilian support needs in MPD's Records Section and Forensics Section. To avoid delays and disruptions to our current service delivery model, MPD is requesting the following:

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- **Increase Capacity for the Public Records Team** - This portion of the request involves the addition of two (2) program assistant positions to the Public Records Team. When fully staffed, the Public Records Team consists of the Police Records Custodian, two Program Assistants, the Records Services Supervisor and six Information Clerks. The primary function of this team is to manage the workflow and complete public records requests that are submitted to the police department, multiple times each day. This team is critical to the department's goal of increased transparency as their work enable residents to read, hear, and view police interactions. Over the last three years MPD has seen the number of public records requests rise, and specifically the number of public records requests that require the review of audio and video files. This type of review is done by the Program Assistants and Records Custodian and is very time intensive. MPD's staff has been made aware of digital records and evidence files coming from the Town of Madison that are currently kept on DVDs or CDs and are in a pile "the size of an igloo" (according to Town staff). All of these files on the thousands of DVDs and CDs coming from the Town will need to be processed when requests are made for release.

Additionally, in 2021, staff from our Public Records Team reviewed well over 27,548 public records requests and with the addition of thousands more records from the Town of Madison (police reports, video and other digital evidence), we anticipate a sizable increase in the number of public records requests the department receives. As of mid-July, the Public Records Team is 10 weeks behind with processing simple requests. This backlog will increase with the addition of records from the Town and it will translate to increased wait times for residents seeking access to police records, an increased number of complaints from requestors and an increased burden to MPD staff who struggle to keep up due to incredible demand from the public. Additional program assistants would increase the capacity, address a process bottleneck and increase the ability of the team to work through the growing backlog, respond more promptly to requests made for Town of Madison records, along with those from the new Independent Monitor (once hired). It would be the Chief's intention to work with the Police Records Custodian to designate a position to support and prioritize records requests from the Independent Monitor once they are in place and operational.

- **Add Forensics Video Lab Technician** - Currently all digital media is processed through the Video Analyst Office which is staffed by only one civilian MPD employee. Adding support to this area has been requested in past MPD budget requests unsuccessfully. As mentioned previously, the amount of digital evidence and digital records has been increasing exponentially (both through MPD's calls for service, squad car video and other video) and has risen to the point where MPD has run out of storage space on its secure server (requested in the 2023 Capital Budget). MPD will be inheriting a significant amount of squad and body worn video from the Town of Madison and many requests that the Public Records Team receives for these records will need to be reviewed now by the one employee staffing the Video Analyst Office. The Town of Madison utilizes a different in-car video system than the MPD and requires the use of DVDs. This system requires multiple process steps to retrieve and access files which translates to more demand on staff time. MPD anticipates not only public records requests for this new Town of Madison video but also discovery requests from the DA's Office. With this in mind, and with the knowledge that MPD staff will only see more digital evidence and digital records in the coming days, MPD is seeking to expand the Video Analyst Office by one position through adding a Police Lab Technician. This position can assist greatly with providing files to the DA's Office and MPD Public Records Team for non-complex requests; preserve, label and document digital video evidence from all city systems; handle evidentiary items as require to fulfill corresponding lab requests; and monitor forensic supplies and equipment.

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