

## CALIFORNIA PUBLIC RECORDS ACT REQUEST

*Government Code §§ 7920.000–7930.215*

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<b>Date:</b>	May 11, 2026
<b>To:</b>	City Clerk, City of Lathrop 390 Towne Centre Drive, Lathrop, CA 95330 cityclerk@ci.lathrop.ca.us
<b>From:</b>	Torie Cortez Publisher & Managing Editor, Dismal Freedom Press Member, Society of Professional Journalists & National Writers Union
<b>Re:</b>	Public Records Request — Bike/Traffic Safety Education, City Council Correspondence, Police Incident Reports, Grant Records, and Related Matters

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### **To the City Clerk of Lathrop:**

Pursuant to the California Public Records Act (Gov. Code §§ 7920.000–7930.215), Dismal Freedom Press hereby requests the opportunity to inspect and/or receive copies of the public records described below. This request is submitted by a working member of the press and by a Lathrop resident directly affected by the subject matters described herein.

The City is required to respond within ten (10) calendar days of receipt of this request. (Gov. Code § 7922.530.) If the City determines that a longer period is needed, please provide written notice stating the reasons for the extension and the date by which a response will be provided. If any records are withheld in whole or in part, please identify the specific statutory exemption claimed for each withheld record or portion thereof.

The requester requests a fee waiver pursuant to Gov. Code § 7922.540 on the grounds that disclosure is in the public interest and will contribute significantly to public understanding of City operations. This request is made by a member of the working press at Dismal Freedom Press, an independent investigative newsroom serving Central Valley communities.

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### **RECORDS REQUESTED**

*The following categories of records are requested in full:*

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**I. CITY COUNCIL CORRESPONDENCE**

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All written communications — emails, letters, memoranda, notes, or other records — between any member of the Lathrop City Council and/or the Office of the Mayor and requester Torie Cortez, from January 1, 2026 to the present, including:

- Requester’s initial written request dated March 23, 2026, addressed to Mayor Paul Akinjo and all Council members, requesting a free Bike and Traffic Safety Education Event at City Hall
- Follow-up correspondence from requester dated March 30, 2026 and April 1, 2026
- All internal routing, forwarding, or communications among Council members, staff, or the Mayor’s office regarding the above correspondence
- All read receipts, delivery confirmations, or automated replies generated in connection with any of the above
- All communications from or to City Clerk Tiffani Christy related to the above, including any out-of-office notifications or coverage arrangements during her absence prior to and following March 30, 2026

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**II. CHIEF SEALY — COMMUNICATIONS & CONTRADICTED PUBLIC STATEMENT**

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On May 11, 2026, at 5:43 p.m. — seventy-seven minutes before the City Council meeting at which this matter was raised — Chief Sealy forwarded requester a program flyer for “Know the Rules, Ride Safe.” Requester had submitted her initial request on March 23, 2026. Chief Sealy did not communicate with requester between April 28 and May 11. No response was provided to requester’s outstanding question about the event location.

At the May 11 meeting, Mayor Akinjo asked Chief Sealy directly, on the public record, whether the “Know the Rules, Ride Safe” program was responsive to requester’s March 23, 2026 request. Chief Sealy stated that it was.

The written record does not support that characterization. Requester’s March 23 request explicitly addressed driver behavior — yield laws at driveways and crosswalks (CVC §§ 21804, 21950), distracted driving, and pedestrian right-of-way — and stated in writing: “This is not simply an event about wearing helmets.” Chief Sealy’s April 2, 2026 response described pre-existing OTS grant programming consisting of bicycle rodeos, helmet safety, and e-bike and e-scooter curriculum. The attachment to that email is titled “25-OTS-E-bike-E-Scooter.” The requester seeks records sufficient to establish when this program was planned, funded, and approved — and whether it predates the March 23 request it was represented as answering on the public record.

Records requested include:

- Chief Sealy’s email to requester dated April 2, 2026, and all attachments, including the OTS e-bike/e-scooter flyer
- All internal communications routing requester’s request to Chief Sealy, including any forwarding from Vice Mayor Torres-O’Callaghan
- Chief Sealy’s email to requester dated April 28, 2026 declining the community partner table, and all related internal discussion or approval records
- The flyer for “Know the Rules, Ride Safe” forwarded to requester on May 11, 2026
- Any response, or documented decision not to respond, to requester’s April 29, 2026 follow-up requesting the event location and basis for the partner table denial

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- All internal communications regarding requester’s media status and/or press access to the “Know the Rules, Ride Safe” event
  - Any pre- or post-meeting communications among City staff or Council members regarding Chief Sealy’s characterization of the “Know the Rules, Ride Safe” program as responsive to requester’s March 23, 2026 request

### **III. INCIDENT REPORTS — CAMRYN CORTEZ**

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All law enforcement records, incident reports, CAD logs, field notes, and internal communications related to the following reported incidents involving a minor child, age 7, a Lathrop-area resident:

- Near-miss vehicle incident near Mossdale Landing Elementary School, reported during the period of March–April 2026
- Crosswalk violation at Autumn Rain Drive and McKee Road, in which a vehicle proceeded around a pedestrian actively crossing in a marked crosswalk; Officer Siler responded and took a statement
- Incident at Golden Spike Trail and Towne Centre Drive
- All traffic unit follow-up actions, referrals, or internal communications related to any of the above incidents
- All written acknowledgments by any City employee of the above incidents, including Chief Sealy’s April 28, 2026 correspondence

### **IV. “KNOW THE RULES, RIDE SAFE” — GRANT & PROGRAM RECORDS**

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All records related to the “Know the Rules, Ride Safe” bicycle safety program, including:

- The complete grant application submitted to the California Office of Traffic Safety (OTS) and/or the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), including the date the application was submitted and the date of award
- The grant award amount and any conditions attached to the award
- The program’s planned scope, target audience, outreach strategy, and budget as described in the grant application
- Any language access or multilingual outreach plan associated with this program
- Any documentation reflecting whether this program was planned, approved, or funded prior to March 23, 2026 — the date of requester’s initial public safety education request to the City
- Any documentation in which City staff or the Police Department characterized this program as a response to community requests received in calendar year 2026

### **V. MAY 11, 2026 CITY COUNCIL MEETING — RECORDING & MINUTES**

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All records related to the Regular City Council Meeting of May 11, 2026, including:

- The full audio and/or video recording of the meeting, including Citizen’s Forum (Agenda Item 3) and the public hearing on Agenda Item 5.5 (Amendment to Chapter 9.28 — Bicycles Used in Violation of the California Vehicle Code)
- Draft and final approved minutes of the meeting
- All staff reports and supporting documents prepared for Agenda Item 5.5
- All written public comments submitted in connection with Item 5.5

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- Any post-meeting communications among Council members or City staff regarding public comments delivered by Torie Cortez at the meeting

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## **VI. COUNCIL CONFERENCE & TRAVEL RECORDS — COUNCILMEMBER DRESSER**

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All records related to City-funded or City-reimbursed conference attendance involving Lathrop City Councilmember Steve Dresser, from January 1, 2024 to the present, including:

- All conference invitations, approval requests, approvals, denials, and related communications involving Councilmember Dresser
- All records related to Councilmember Dresser's objection to, questions about, or vote against Consent Calendar Items 4.9, 4.10, and 4.11 at the May 11, 2026 City Council meeting, specifically: (4.9) Out-of-state travel to the National League of Cities 2026 Summer Board and Leadership Meeting, Louisville, Kentucky; (4.10) Out-of-state travel to the 2026 Women in Municipal Government Conference, Broken Arrow, Oklahoma; and (4.11) Out-of-state travel to the 2026 National Black Caucus of Local Elected Officials Conference, Birmingham, Alabama
- Any pre- or post-meeting communications among Council members or City staff regarding Items 4.9, 4.10, or 4.11, including any communications involving Councilmember Dresser's position on those items
- Any communications in which Councilmember Dresser objected to, voted against, or questioned conference attendance at any other meeting — including any conference focused on minority communities, women, or underrepresented populations
- Any records related to Councilmember Dresser's objections to or questions about any additional professional governance associations or conference bodies discussed at the May 11, 2026 meeting in connection with Consent Calendar Items 4.9, 4.10, or 4.11, including any organization referenced by other Council members or City staff during that discussion
- All records reflecting what professional governance conferences, associations, or training bodies are available to Lathrop City Council members under City policy or state law, including any materials distributed to Council members regarding the National League of Cities, the NLC Women in Municipal Government program, the NLC National Black Caucus of Local Elected Officials, or any comparable organization
- The City's policy governing council member conference attendance, approval process, and reimbursement
- Records reflecting how much time the May 11, 2026 City Council meeting devoted to discussion of Consent Calendar Items 4.9, 4.10, and 4.11, as reflected in the minutes or recording

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## **VII. LANGUAGE ACCESS POLICY**

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All records reflecting the City of Lathrop's language access obligations and practices, including:

- The City's current language access plan, policy, or program, if any
- Any federal or state compliance documentation related to language access obligations under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act
- Records reflecting whether City public safety communications, event notices, or program registrations are provided in Spanish, Punjabi, or other languages spoken by Lathrop-area residents
- Any communications regarding language access for the "Know the Rules, Ride Safe" program or any other City-sponsored public safety program in 2025 or 2026

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**DISMAL FREEDOM PRESS** · INDEPENDENT INVESTIGATIVE NEWSROOM

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**Format & Delivery**

The requester requests records in electronic format (PDF or native file format) where available, transmitted to [newsroom@dismalfreedompress.org](mailto:newsroom@dismalfreedompress.org). For records available only in paper form, the requester requests notification of the estimated duplication cost prior to copying.

Respectfully submitted,

**Torie Cortez**

Member, Society of Professional Journalists & National Writers Union

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