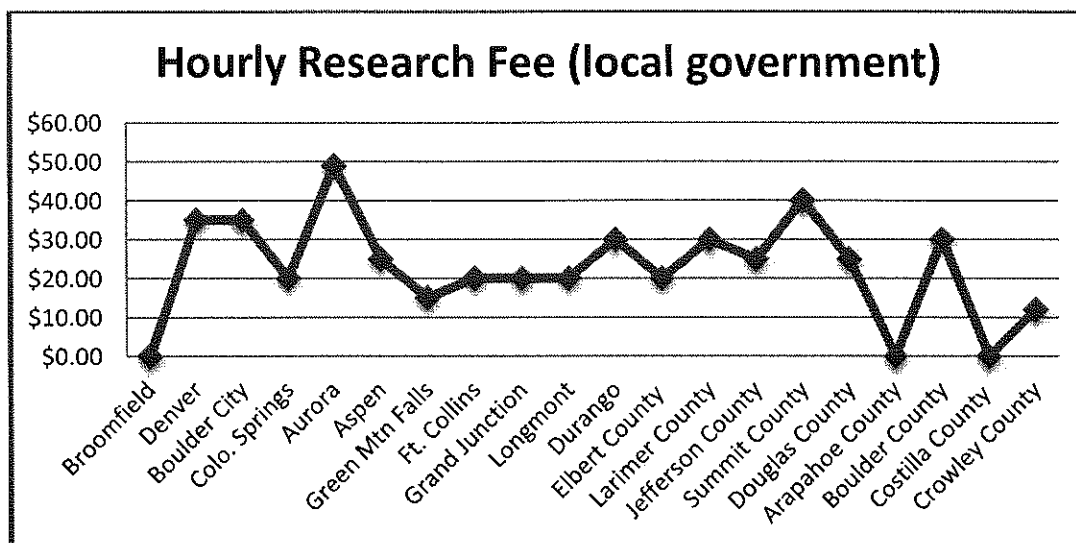


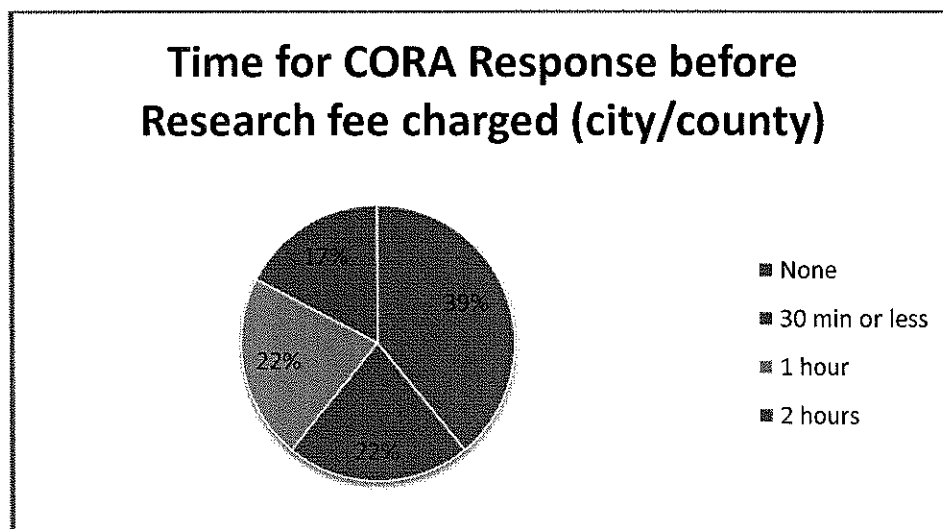


**Highlights of “Runaway Fees Charged under CORA”**

[www.coloradoforethics.org/co-pages/21st-century-sunshine](http://www.coloradoforethics.org/co-pages/21st-century-sunshine)



Lakewood, Salida, Pueblo, El Paso County, Weld County, Mesa County, Adams County, Rio Blanco County and Crowley County each state that fees for responding to CORAs are based on the “actual cost” of the employee fulfilling the CORA request.



## Recent media coverage of growing CORA fees:

- Colorado Springs city government responded to a CORA request for emails among city councilmembers for a 2 week period with a \$370 estimated charge.<sup>i</sup> The *Colorado Springs Independent* was “unwilling to pay” the charge and withdrew its request, rather than continuing to investigate whether councilmembers were improperly conducting public business through private emails.
- Durango City Council adopted a new \$30 per hour research fee and a ban on requestors using smartphones to photocopy records because the city argued they were “burned” by people who used their own equipment to photograph records instead of paying 25 cents per page for paper copies.<sup>ii</sup>
- Elbert County started charging \$20 per hour research fees because “the cost of providing information was just too high in tough economic times.”<sup>iii</sup>
- Salida City Council responded to a citizen CORA requesting electronic messages sent between councilmembers during council meetings. The citizen was told a \$1,900 deposit was required before research could begin.<sup>iv</sup>
- The same CORA request to different school districts received estimates of costs to respond ranging from \$5,000 (Adams County School District 50) to \$76,000 (Lewis-Palmer District 38).<sup>v</sup>
- Jefferson County officials referred to CORA requests as “fishing expeditions” that are costly and time consuming when considering increased CORA research fees.<sup>vi</sup>

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<sup>i</sup> Pam Zubeck, *A Case in Point*, COLORADO SPRINGS INDEPENDENT (September 4, 2013).

<sup>ii</sup> Jim Haug, *Photographing of City Records May be banned*, DURANGO HERALD, June 11, 2013.

<sup>iii</sup> Carlos Illescas, *Elbert County to charge for research behind open records requests*, DENVER POST, May 18, 2012.

<sup>iv</sup> Marilyn Marks, *Respond to Steve Tafoya’s Request*, THE MOUNTAIN MAIL, February 12, 2013.

<sup>v</sup> Editorial Board, *Government Shouldn’t Inflate Cost of Records*, FORT COLLINS COLORADOAN, June 8, 2010.

<sup>vi</sup> Electra Draper, *Jefferson County in Colorado weighs charging up to \$50 an hour for public record searches*, DENVER POST, Sept. 23, 2011.