



AGENDA REPORT

City Council

DATE:	March 4, 2025
TO:	Mayor Martinez and Members of the City Council
FROM:	Councilmember Soheila Bana
Subject:	Richmond Municipal Identification (ID) Access and Equity
FINANCIAL IMPACT:	Staff will assess the total cost for the City of Richmond to administer the Municipal ID program at no cost for vulnerable (undocumented, immigrants, unhoused, reentry, etc.) populations.
PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTION:	July 19, 2011
STATEMENT OF THE ISSUE:	Municipal IDs can assist vulnerable (undocumented, immigrants, unhoused, reentry, etc.) populations by providing a form of documentation needed to apply for Medi-Cal, CalFresh, and to obtain a driver's license to improve public safety, increasing civic participation, and to support pathways to engage with local commerce.
RECOMMENDED ACTION:	DIRECT the City Attorney to amend Ordinance No.16-11 N.S. and Richmond Municipal Code 2.64 to allow the City to fund a no-cost Municipal Identification program and DIRECT staff to assess the total cost for the City of Richmond to administer the Municipal Identification program at no cost for vulnerable populations - Councilmember Soheila Bana (510-672-3490).

DISCUSSION:

The Richmond City Council approved [Ordinance No. 16-11 N.S.](#), amending chapter 2.64, Article II, of the Richmond Municipal Code authorizing a Municipal Identification (ID) program to provide for the issuance of Municipal ID cards to residents of the City of Richmond for the purpose of improving public safety, increasing civic participating, and supporting local commerce.

The Richmond Municipal ID Card (ID card) largely serves the City's most vulnerable populations- that includes the undocumented, immigrants, unhoused, reentry, etc. populations ss they face barriers in accessing essential services, including applying for Medi-Cal services and obtaining driver's licenses and other government services. Access to Medi-Cal services plays a critical role in addressing both physical and mental health needs, ensuring that vulnerable residents can obtain necessary medical care, preventive services, and support for chronic conditions or mental health challenges. Without this access, these populations may experience worsening health outcomes, increasing strain on emergency services and other public health resources.

The Richmond Municipal ID Card (ID card) also provides an additional benefit to ID card participants, as it provides a means to partake in local and regional commerce as they may also have the ability to utilize their ID card as a pre-paid debit card.

While Municipal IDs do not replace a California State driver's license, Municipal IDs provide the documentation needed for vulnerable populations to apply for a driver's license. This enhances public safety overall as it aims to reduce unlicensed driving to improve road safety, as it allows drivers to participate in the process

With the potential for stricter federal immigration enforcement policies under the new presidential administration, the Richmond Municipal ID Card (ID card) may provide a layer of support and advocacy in the event of deportation efforts. As participants during the application process do not need to disclose whether they are undocumented to obtain a municipal ID. The ID Cards may help to substantiate their identity to law enforcement personnel while prioritizing citizenship status confidentiality to avoid putting individuals at risk for deportation.

Providing municipal IDs at no cost would help ensure that all Richmond residents can participate fully in community life, access local services, and feel a sense of empowerment and belonging.

DOCUMENTS ATTACHED:

Attachment 1 – [ORDINANCE NO. 16-11 N.S. Amending CHAPTER 2.64, ARTICLE II, Of the Richmond Municipal Code](#)