



# AGENDA REPORT

## Public Works

<b>DATE:</b>	August 19, 2025
<b>TO:</b>	Mayor Martinez and Members of the City Council
<b>FROM:</b>	Daniel Chavarria, PE, Public Works Director Robert Armijo, PE, Deputy Public Works Director / City Engineer Darcie DeLashmutt, Capital Project Manager
<b>Subject:</b>	Contract with Civica Law Group for Legal Services Supporting Public Works Enforcement and Ordinance Development
<b>FINANCIAL IMPACT:</b>	<p>The proposed on-call legal services agreement includes an initial three-year term in an amount not to exceed \$100,000. The agreement also includes two optional one-year extensions, each in an amount not to exceed \$50,000, if exercised, subject to the discretion of the City Manager and the availability of future funding.</p> <p>Of the \$100,000 authorized for the initial term, \$6,025 reflects legal services previously rendered in fiscal year 2023–2024 and fiscal year 2024–2025 in support of the Public Works Department. An After-the-Fact Expense Form was approved internally to facilitate retroactive authorization of those payments.</p> <p>The proposed \$100,000 expenditure for the initial three-year term is included within the approved fiscal year 2025–2026 budget, Public Works Administration (Account String: 15531031-400206).</p>
<b>PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTION:</b>	March 21, 2023 April 1, 2025

<p><b>STATEMENT OF THE ISSUE:</b></p>	<p>The Public Works Department received specialized legal services from Civica Law Group, APC in Fiscal Years 2023–24 and 2024–25 to address time-sensitive enforcement and ordinance-related matters. These services were not covered under an existing Public Works contract.</p> <p>A new on-call professional services agreement is needed to authorize payment for past legal services rendered in support of the Public Works Department and to allow continued access to legal support on an as-needed basis. The agreement includes a base contract amount of \$100,000 over a three-year term, with the option for the City Manager to extend the agreement for up to two additional one-year terms, each in an amount not to exceed \$50,000, subject to future authorization and funding availability.</p>
<p><b>RECOMMENDED ACTION:</b></p>	<p>ADOPT a resolution authorizing the city manager, or their designee, to execute a three-year on-call legal services agreement with Civica Law Group, APC in an amount not to exceed \$100,000 for legal services; The agreement may include two optional one-year extensions, each in an amount not to exceed \$50,000, to be exercised at the discretion of the city manager and subject to future budget approval – Public Works Department (Darcie DeLashmutt 510-672-3944/Robert Armijo 510-620-5477)</p>

## DISCUSSION:

On March 7, 2023, City Council approved a legal services agreement with Civica Law Group, APC, in an amount not to exceed \$485,600.44, through June 30, 2024, to provide legal representation, advice, and assistance to the City of Richmond regarding code enforcement matters and to continue the City's Health and Safety Receivership Program. A new contract agreement was required since the attorneys moved from Silver & Wright, LLP, and formed a new law firm.

On April 1, 2025, City Council approved a second amendment to the Legal Services Agreement with Civica Law Group, APC to increase the contract amount by \$650,000, for a total contract amount not to exceed \$1,135,600.44, for a term through June 30, 2027.

Public Works seeks to expand on prior agreements to establish a new on-call legal services contract with Civica to address department-specific needs. The on-call format is intended to provide timely, as-needed legal support related to operational, regulatory, and enforcement responsibilities.

During Fiscal Year (FY) 2023–24 and continuing into FY 2024–25, Civica began providing legal assistance to Public Works in response to pressing issues involving code enforcement, right-of-way abatement, and interpretation of the City’s sidewalk vending ordinance. These services were necessary to respond to time-sensitive matters, including enforcement actions, legal interpretation of City codes, and internal guidance on administrative procedures. At the time, there was no department-specific agreement in place, and as such, a new contract is now required to both retroactively authorize those services and allow for continued support moving forward.

The services provided to date included legal research, internal consultation, and the drafting of correspondence and administrative guidance—all related to matters within the jurisdiction of the Public Works Department. The legal work supported the City’s efforts to address unpermitted work in the public right-of-way, improve defensibility of code enforcement actions, and ensure consistent application of the Richmond Municipal Code. While much of the legal advice rendered is protected under attorney–client privilege, the general nature of services has been reviewed by City staff and deemed appropriate and necessary.

City staff coordinated with Finance and the City Attorney’s Office and confirmed that the existing contract with Civica does not cover Public Works-specific services. The new on-call contract will establish a defined scope of services tailored to the needs of Public Works and will allow task orders to be issued on an as-needed basis. It also enables the City to authorize payment for past work performed in good faith while maintaining compliance with procurement and contracting requirements.

An After-the-Fact Expense Form was approved internally by City staff to address prior expenses. The proposed resolution authorizes the City Manager, or their designee, to execute the new contract, which includes approved payment of outstanding invoices associated with this legal support.

The proposed contract includes an initial three-year term in an amount not to exceed \$100,000. It also includes the option for the City Manager to extend the agreement for up to two additional one-year terms, each in an amount not to exceed \$50,000, subject to availability of funding and administrative approval. These optional extensions are not

guaranteed and are not included in the base contract, but are available for use in future years needs and budgetary resources align.

City staff recommends that the City Council adopt a resolution authorizing execution of an on-call legal services agreement with Civica Law Group, APC, for legal services in support of the Public Works Department. This action will allow the City to address legal support needs as they arise, ensure continuity of services, and resolve payment for previously rendered support tied to code enforcement and ordinance-related matters.

**DOCUMENTS ATTACHED:**

Attachment 1 – Civica Legal Services Agreement

Attachment 2 - Resolution