



# AGENDA REPORT

Library and Community Services

<b>DATE:</b>	April 28, 2026
<b>TO:</b>	Mayor Martinez and Members of the City Council
<b>FROM:</b>	LaShonda White, Deputy City Manager of Community Services Kate Eppler, Deputy Director of Community Services-Library Christopher Larsen, Library Services Manager
<b>Subject:</b>	Contract with Unity Courier Services, Inc. for Delivery of Interlibrary Loan Materials
<b>FINANCIAL IMPACT:</b>	The proposed three-year term not-to-exceed cost of \$42,000, comprising \$14,000 per year, is included within the approved fiscal year 2025-2026 Library operating budget and will be budgeted accordingly in subsequent fiscal years (Account String: 01242855-400290).
<b>PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTION:</b>	None.
<b>STATEMENT OF THE ISSUE:</b>	The Richmond Public Library seeks City Council approval to enter into a sole-source contract with Unity Courier Service, Inc. to provide courier services necessary to support the Link+ interlibrary loan system. These services are essential to the continued transport of library materials between participating Link+ libraries and to maintaining uninterrupted access to the program for Richmond residents.
<b>RECOMMENDED ACTION:</b>	APPROVE a sole-source contract with Unity Courier Service, Inc. for Link+ interlibrary courier services, with a term beginning July 1, 2025, and ending June 30, 2028, for a total payment limit of \$42,000 – Community Service-Library (Christopher Larsen/Kate Eppler/LaShonda White 510-620-5524).

## **DISCUSSION:**

The Link+ lending system is an unincorporated, private nonprofit consortium comprised of more than 70 academic and public libraries throughout California and Nevada. Through its participation in Link+, the Richmond Public Library provides its patrons with access to a shared catalog of millions of items beyond the Library's local collection, significantly expanding the range of materials available to residents without requiring additional local acquisitions.

Richmond Public Library cardholders can request items from any participating Link+ library through an online system, either independently or with assistance from library staff. Requested material, including books, audiobooks, and DVDs, are delivered via courier service to a Richmond Public Library location, where they can be borrowed and returned at no cost to the patron. Upon return, materials are transported back to their owning library through the same courier network. This service enhances equitable access to information and resources, particularly for specialized, academic, or less frequently requested materials that may not be held within the Library's local collection.

In Fiscal Year 2024–2025, Richmond Public Library patrons borrowed 4,589 items from Link+ libraries, while Richmond Public Library lent 2,911 items to patrons of other participating libraries. These figures demonstrate both strong local demand for expanded access to materials and Richmond's active role as a contributing member of the regional resource-sharing network.

Participation in Link+ requires member libraries to maintain separate contracts with key service providers that support the system's operations (Attachment 1). These include Innovative Interfaces, Inc., which provides the shared catalog platform, and a courier service responsible for transporting materials between libraries. The Link+ consortium has selected Unity Courier Service, Inc. as its designated courier provider to ensure consistent and coordinated delivery across participating jurisdictions. The courier is selected at the consortium level and must operate within the established Link+ delivery network; therefore, Unity Courier Service, Inc. is the only provider capable of delivering these services for participating libraries, and the contract qualifies as a sole-source procurement (Attachment 2).

The Richmond Public Library's previous agreement with Unity Courier Service expired on June 30, 2025. Due to delays associated with negotiating and finalizing a new agreement, courier services have continued without interruption to avoid disruption to patrons; however, a formal contract has not been in place during this period. The proposed agreement is therefore backdated to July 1, 2025, to authorize payment for services already rendered and to ensure continuity of the Link+ program moving forward.

Continued participation in Link+ is critical to maintaining a high level of library service for Richmond residents, as it allows the Library to leverage regional resources, reduce

duplication of materials, and provide timely access to a significantly broader collection than would otherwise be possible within local budget constraints.

Consequently, City staff recommend that the City Council approve a sole-source contract with Unity Courier Service, Inc. for Link+ interlibrary courier services, with a term beginning July 1, 2025 and ending June 30, 2028, for a total not-to-exceed amount of \$42,000, and authorize payment for services rendered beginning July 1, 2025 to ensure continuity of service (Attachment 3).

**DOCUMENTS ATTACHED:**

- Attachment 1 – Link+ Bylaws
- Attachment 2 – Sole Source Justification
- Attachment 3 – Contract