

Agenda Report

August 2, 2021

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council

FROM: Department of Libraries and Information Services

SUBJECT: AUTHORIZATION TO ENTER INTO A PURCHASE ORDER CONTRACT WITH OVERDRIVE, INC. IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$750,000 TO PROVIDE EBOOKS AND EAUDIOBOOKS FOR THE LIBRARIES AND INFORMATION SERVICES DEPARTMENT

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the City Council:

1. Find that the proposed actions are exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA") in accordance with Section 15061(b)(3), the common sense exemption (formerly the General Rule) that CEQA only applies to projects that may have an effect on the environment; and
2. Authorize the City Manager, or his designee, to enter into a purchase order ("PO") contract without competitive bidding pursuant to City Charter Section 1002(C), contracts for labor, materials, supplies or services available from only one vendor, and pursuant to Pasadena Municipal Code Section 4.08.049(B) contracts for which the City's best interests are served, with OverDrive, Inc ("OverDrive") for an amount not to exceed \$450,000 for three years or until the not-to-exceed amount has been expended, whichever occurs first, with an option for two additional one-year terms of \$150,000 each at the approval of the City Manager, for a maximum contract amount not to exceed \$750,000.

BACKGROUND:

The Pasadena Public Library's eBook collections, which include both eBooks and eAudiobooks, are among the highest circulating collections in the system, and the popularity of these collections is on the rise. Through the first half of Fiscal Year 2021, circulation of the Library's eBook collections was up by 10.65% over the same 6-month period in FY 2020. The strong circulation of eBooks compares favorably with the Library's print collections, which have seen a dramatic decrease in circulation since the Stay-at-Home order went into effect in California in March 2020.

The eBook collections continue to meet the needs of an increasing number of Library patrons who, due to modern lifestyles and preferences, prefer to read books on a tablet or listen to eAudiobooks on their phone. Additionally, eBook collections allow for increased access to in-demand titles while occupying no additional shelf space, and all circulation transactions take place in the eBook app or website.

The Library currently offers access to eBooks and eAudiobooks on the proprietary platform OverDrive. OverDrive's digital media service enables patrons to download eBooks and eAudiobooks via the Library's online catalog, the OverDrive website, or through its app. This resource is available to patrons 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Most notably, OverDrive is the only platform that allows patrons to download content onto all Amazon Kindle reading devices, which accounts for nearly 40% of all eBook checkouts among Library patrons. For many patrons, their Kindle device is their only way to borrow eBooks and eAudiobooks. Since the beginning of FY 2019, Library patrons have checked out 63,667 eBooks to their Kindle devices on the OverDrive platform, accounting for nearly 42% of all eBook checkouts. Although the Library offers access to eBooks and eAudiobooks through other platforms, OverDrive is the only platform that allows patrons to download content to all Amazon Kindle reading devices. Without access to OverDrive, our Library patrons will no longer be able to check out eBooks or eAudiobooks to all of their Amazon Kindle devices or have access to more than 17,000 available titles.

After the onset of the pandemic, Library staff worked with Pasadena Unified School District to offer all students access to the Library OverDrive catalog using their school ID number. This arrangement, exclusive to the OverDrive platform, provides vital access to reading materials for families and increases the demand for OverDrive titles.

The Pasadena Public Library has purchased and provided Library patrons with access to over 17,000 titles in OverDrive's proprietary platform. As a result, the Library's robust collection of best sellers and classic titles in electronic format, for readers of all ages, is exclusively available to Pasadena Public Library patrons through the OverDrive platform.

The 5-year trend of annual unique Pasadena Public Library users and circulation activity in the OverDrive platform clearly indicates a consistently growing demand for the service. The number of annual users has increased from 5,039 in 2015 users to 9,396 in 2020, an increase of 86.5%. Annual circulation has risen even more dramatically, from 57,426 total checkouts in 2015 to 108,089 in 2020 (88.2% increase).

In FY 2021, the Library spent \$101,605.05 on OverDrive platform fees and content, while total circulation for the collection during the same period was 93,530. This works out to an approximate rate of \$1.09 per checkout, which is identical to the rate for the OverDrive collection in FY20. Staff anticipates that a similar rate in FY22 with a budget of \$150,000 would result in 137,614 checkouts for Pasadena Public Library patrons.

COUNCIL POLICY CONSIDERATION:

The proposed contract furthers the City Council's strategic planning goals to maintain fiscal responsibility and stability, and to support and promote quality of life for all patrons.

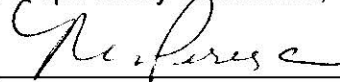
ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:

The contract has been determined to be exempt from CEQA per section 15061(b)(3), the common sense exemption. The common sense exemption can be applied when it can be seen with certainty that the activity will not have a significant effect on the environment. The proposed action will not result in any new development or physical change.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The total cost of this action is \$750,000 for the three-year term and two optional one-year extensions. In FY 2022, funding for this action will be addressed by the utilization of existing budget appropriations for Library Books within the Library Services Fund. Appropriations for the remaining terms of the contract will be submitted during the annual budget process for each respective fiscal year. There is no anticipated impact to other operational programs as a result of this action.

Respectfully submitted,



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Services

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for

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Approved by:



STEVE MERMELL
City Manager