RESOLUTION OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF RICHMOND, SUPPORTING
SEED SAVING WITHIN THE CITY, SUPPORTING AND ENCOURAGING THE
EFFORTS OF SEED LIBRARIES TO FACILITATE SHARING OF LOCALLY
GROWN AND SAVED SEED, AND SUPPORTING ASSEMBLY BILL 1810 (AB 1810),
THE CALIFORNIA SEED EXCHANGE DEMOCRACY ACT, WHICH ALLOWS FOR
THE SHARING OF SEEDS BETWEEN INDIVIDUALS AND THROUGH SEED
LIBRARIES WITHOUT COST OR GERMINATION TESTING

WHEREAS, the City of Richmond wishes to promote access to healthy food for all
citizens, and Article 25 of the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights recognizes that
every person has the right to food; and

WHEREAS, seed libraries are nonprofit repositories of seed for the benefit of the public
where free seed is distributed to promote seed sharing, provide increased access to healthy food,
educate about seed saving skills, strengthen local food security, improve the health of our
community members, preserve and promote our local biodiversity, celebrate local varieties that
are important to our community’s cultural heritage and provide seed that is locally adapted to
local soils and climate; and

WHEREAS, gardening is a healthy activity supporting food access and promoting
physical activity; and

WHEREAS, humans have a history of sharing seeds that created and supported
civilizations for over 10,000 years; and

WHEREAS, in the US, we have lost over 90% of the vegetable varieties grown 100
years ago; and the three largest seed companies control over 50% of the market share in
commercial seeds; and

WHEREAS, the current industrial model of agriculture relies on a few, patented varieties
of seeds to produce the majority of the food in our food system, putting our food system at
considerable risk; and

WHEREAS, seed libraries and seed sharing have been able to preserve fruit and
vegetable varieties that have historical and cultural significance to communities; and

WHEREAS, many locally adapted varieties are only available through seed libraries and
not through commercial seed companies; and

WHEREAS, local seeds adapted to local soils and climate make our bio-regional food
system more resilient; and

WHEREAS, the City of Richmond supports strategies to strengthen community food
assets, including community gardens, seed banks, seed libraries, community kitchens and
community-supported agriculture farms; and

WHEREAS, the official legislative purpose of the California Seed Law is to protect
consumers who purchase seed from inadequately or illegally labeled seed and to promote fair
competition; and

WHEREAS, the sharing of seeds between individuals or facilitated by seed libraries is a
voluntary, community-based activity that does not take place within a marketplace and does not
involve a commercial transaction; and

WHEREAS, seed libraries do not “sell” seeds, as that term is commonly defined, nor are
the members of seed libraries “customers”; and
WHEREAS, there are nearly 50 seed libraries in California and at least one seed library in Richmond, and the Richmond Grows seed library located at the Richmond Public Library has disbursed thousands of seed packets to hundreds of library patrons over the past five years; and

WHEREAS, the seed libraries offer seed saving classes to educate members on best practices for saving seed and water conservation, the seed libraries protect our food supply and the seed libraries play an important role in strengthening our communities’ access to healthy food; and

WHEREAS, seed libraries and seed sharing facilitate access to healthy, locally grown food in food deserts where little may be available and many members of the community cannot afford to meet their family’s food budget; and

WHEREAS, seed sharing enables people to grow and feed wholesome food to their families, and by saving seed they can ensure their food supply in the future; and

WHEREAS, seed libraries and seed sharing protect and encourage seeds that have cultural and historical significance; and

WHEREAS, there are over 450 seed libraries in the United States with the longest one being in operation for over 15 years.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the City of Richmond supports and encourages the ongoing 10,000 year legacy of seed sharing between community members without legal barriers of labeling fees and germination testing; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the City Council of the City of Richmond supports and encourages the efforts of seed libraries to facilitate sharing of locally grown and saved seed; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the City of Richmond supports the work of our seed libraries in working with educators and community organizations to support seed saving, educate community members about the value of seed sharing, develop best practices to grow seed saving skills, and encourage voluntary and accurate seed labeling; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the City of Richmond supports Assembly Bill 1810 (AB 1810), The California Seed Exchange Democracy Act, that supports the sharing of seeds between individuals and through seed libraries by removing application of any labeling, testing and permitting requirements to interperson or seed library seed sharing; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the City Council directs staff to send a letter to AB 1810’s sponsor and the City of Richmond’s state representatives communicating the city’s support for AB 1810.

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I certify that the foregoing resolution was passed and adopted by the Council of the City of Richmond at a regular meeting thereof held March 1, 2016, by the following vote:

AYES: Councilmen Bates, Beckles, McLaughlin, Myrick, Pimplé, Vice Mayor Martinez, and Mayor Butt.

NOES: None.

ABSTENTIONS: None.

ABSENT: None.

PAMELA CHRISTIAN
CLERK OF THE CITY OF RICHMOND
(SEAL)

Approved:

TOM BUTT
Mayor

Approved as to form:

BRUCE GOODMAN
City Attorney

State of California  
County of Contra Costa  : ss.
City of Richmond  

I certify that the foregoing is a true copy of Resolution No. 22-16, finally passed and adopted by the City Council of the City of Richmond at a regular meeting held on March 1, 2016.

Pamela Christian, Clerk of the City of Richmond