City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: MAY 16, 2011

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: BRUCE JOHNSON, ACTING CITY MANAGER

SUBJECT: CONSIDERATION OF PARTICIPATION AS CO-APPLICANT FOR A REGIONAL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE GRANT FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF A TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT FUND

ISSUE: City participation with Prince George’s County and the District of Columbia in a grant application to the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOG).

RECOMMENDATION: That City Council endorse the application by the City of Alexandria, Prince George’s County and the District of Columbia to the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments for a $60,000 regional technical assistance grant related to establishing a regional transit-oriented Development Fund.

DISCUSSION: As part of its Region Forward initiative, which the City has endorsed, MWCOG wishes to establish a regional affordable housing fund for Transit Oriented Development (TOD) projects as a means to address the region’s jobs-housing imbalance. As a first step, COG staff invited the District of Columbia, along with one Virginia jurisdiction (Alexandria) and one Maryland jurisdiction (Prince George’s County) to apply for a technical assistance grant under COG’s Transportation/Land-Use Connections (TLC) Program. Prince George’s County is serving as the lead applicant. In order to meet the COG established deadline, the Acting City Manager submitted a letter of support to COG for the application contingent upon approval by City Council.

The proposed technical assistance grant, in the amount of $60,000, would be used by COG staff to fund an analysis of regional housing demand and supply within MWCOG’s designated regional activity centers that would provide the research and planning framework for the development of the Region Forward Transit Oriented Development Fund. The analysis would be designed to identify the regional activity centers with the most severe housing supply-demand gaps, and target investment to those areas. The MWCOG-identified regional activity centers in Alexandria are the Carlyle/Eisenhower East area, the Old Town/Braddock area, and the Beauregard Corridor area (see attached map). The analysis would include current and future housing demand based on employment projections and socioeconomic trends; future housing supply projections by housing type, price/income level, and location; and assessment of future housing shortages by income level and location.
If the application is successful, COG staff would oversee the analysis and, should a regional TOD Fund be developed, would also have the lead responsibility for administering the fund. The benefit to Alexandria of such a fund is the potential for additional financial resources to address housing needs in one or more of the regional activity centers within the City. The San Francisco area, Seattle and Denver have established similar funds.

**FISCAL IMPACT:** There is no direct fiscal impact to the City, as COG would administer the technical assistance funds. No City match is required. Funding of the TOD fund is contemplated to originate from private funds from philanthropic groups, general foundations, bank foundations, the National Housing Trust, and/or the Enterprise Foundation.

**ATTACHMENT:**
Attachment 1: Map of Regional Activity Centers

**STAFF:**
Mark Jinks, Deputy City Manager
Mildrilyn Davis, Director, Office of Housing