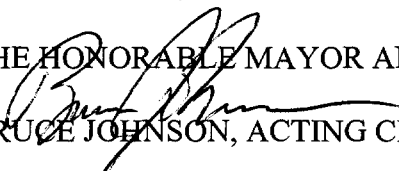


City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: SEPTEMBER 6, 2011

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM:  BRUCE JOHNSON, ACTING CITY MANAGER

SUBJECT: CONSIDERATION OF RATIFICATION OF SUBMISSION OF AN APPLICATION TO THE FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION TO FUND AN ALTERNATIVES ANALYSIS STUDY OF HIGH CAPACITY TRANSIT CORRIDOR C (VAN DORN-BEAUREGARD AREA)

ISSUE: Ratification of submission of an application to the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) to conduct an Alternatives Analysis study of High Capacity Transit Corridor C

RECOMMENDATION: That City Council ratify the submission of an application to the Federal Transit Administration for \$800,000 to conduct an Alternatives Analysis Study of High Capacity Transit Corridor C.

DISCUSSION: On June 27, 2011, the Federal Transit Administration published a Notice of Availability of discretionary funds for the Alternatives Analysis Program. FTA required grant applications be submitted by July 29, 2011. This short application timeframe did not allow City staff to prepare and present the application to Council for approval before the final Fiscal Year 2011 session on June 28, 2011, or to wait until Council's legislative session started in September. This is a highly competitive grant competition with only \$2.5 million available nationally in federal FY 2011.

City staff considered whether the City had any projects which were eligible for these funds. On May 19, 2011, the Corridor Work Group had recommended a specific transitway routing and mode for Transit Corridor C, the Van Dorn-Beauregard corridor. (The recommendations are being presented to Council for receipt in a separate docket item and public hearing on September 17.)

Filing an application for FTA Alternatives Analysis funds was a natural way to fund the next phase of the work needed in this corridor. Generally, transit practice dictates that after a preliminary decision has been made regarding a transit corridor, such as was done for Corridor C, it is necessary for a project to have a more rigorous analysis done through an Alternatives Analysis Process. This process tests various alternatives rigorously using models, analysis, and community input. The final output of this work is a Locally Preferred Alternative, which will

need to be endorsed by City Council, and which would be necessary to obtain different types of federal funding such as Small Start and New Start funds.

City Council reserved real estate tax revenue funds in the Fiscal Year 2012 real estate tax for transportation improvements including funding the work necessary to build the transitway in Corridor C. In the adopted FY 2012 budget, \$2,100,000 was identified to do this work and other subsequent work necessary to proceed building the transitway, such as an environmental assessment. If the City receives this grant, it will offset \$800,000 of City funds planned for this project, which can then be applied to the Corridor C project. The City will need to provide a match of \$200,000 from this source. After staff determined that this grant was feasible and necessary for the City's transit program, the Department of Transportation and Environmental Services prepared an application for the funds, the City Manager authorized its submittal, and the City submitted the application in time to meet the grant's deadline. This docket item requests that City Council ratify this application.

FISCAL IMPACT: The City will need to provide a \$200,000 match if the application is approved. The FY 2012-2021 Approved CIP includes \$2.1 million in FY 2012 for this project from real estate tax revenues reserved for transportation improvements. This grant application will potentially save the City \$800,000, which can be used for other aspects of the transitway corridor project.

STAFF:

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