


City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: OCTOBER 19, 2009

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: JAMES K. HARTMANN, CITY MANAGER 

SUBJECT: CONSIDERATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF A FUNDING ALLOCATION FROM THE NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION (NCR), URBAN AREA SECURITY INITIATIVE (UASI) TO SUPPORT REGIONAL EMERGENCY PLANNING, REGIONAL EXERCISES AND NATIONAL INCIDENT MANAGEMENT COMPLIANCE

ISSUE: City Council consideration of accepting funds in the amount of \$500,000 available to the City for a two year period, ending September 30, 2011, from the District of Columbia (D.C.) Homeland Security and Emergency Management Agency on behalf of the National Capital Region Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI). These funds will continue to support our involvement in Regional Emergency Management Planning, Regional Exercises, and National Incident Management Compliance.

RECOMMENDATION: That City Council:

- (1) Authorize the City Manager to accept the funding through the Urban Area Security Initiative in the amount of \$500,000; and
- (2) Authorize the City Manager to execute all the necessary documents that may be required.

BACKGROUND: The National Capital Region (NCR) has received \$58,006,500 in Urban Area Security Grant funds from the United States Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to support the regional efforts to prepare for and respond to disasters including terrorism. These funds were allocated by the NCR Chief Administrative Officers (CAOs) and the Senior Policy Group (SPG) in July 2009 (Attachment). The investment-area justifications and project plans were developed by various Metropolitan Washington Council of Government (COG) committees during meetings in December, 2008 and January, 2009. The investment justifications were then sent to DHS as a grant application on behalf of the entire National Capital Region.

DISCUSSION: Alexandria was notified on September 22, 2009 by the D.C. Homeland Security and Emergency Management Agency that the City is eligible to receive a total of \$500,000 directly, to be made available over a two-year period, to three separate activities, regional and local planning initiatives, regional and local training and exercises, and National Incident Management System (NIMS) compliance. It should be noted that a large share of the funds the NCR has received will be used for projects and programs at the regional and not the

jurisdictional level. These grants end on September 30, 2011. These grants are a continuation of a series of grants that we received in 2007 and 2008.

The grants currently support one position detailed from the Police Department to the Fire Department Office of Emergency Management, one position detailed from the Fire Department's Operations Division to the Office of Emergency Management, and one contractor. The grants provide \$125,000 for Exercises and training, \$125,000 for NIMS compliance activities, and \$250,000 for planning.

During the past several years, Alexandria has received grant funds from the UASI program for planning, training, NIMS compliance, and exercises. In both 2007 and 2008, we received \$125,000 for exercises and training. In both 2007 and 2008, we received \$125,000 for NIMS compliance. In 2007 we received \$250,000 for planning. With those funds we have completed many local draft plans, as well as many regional planning efforts, including, planning for the Presidential Inaugural events, H1N1 influenza, mass fatality management, family assistance center, alternate care facility, floods, debris management, continuity of operations, Woodrow Wilson Bridge response, local evacuation, pet sheltering, and regional evacuation. The City has also conducted many training sessions in the Incident Command System as required to comply with the NIMS requirements. Our City resources have been evaluated against national standards and the results have been entered into a statewide data base as well as regional data bases for later use, ensuring our compliance with the National Incident Management System.

Since first receiving these funds in 2007, the City has conducted many exercises and training sessions, including the recently completed "Chaos '09," a large full-scale exercise which involved the entire Northern Virginia region, as well as 17 hospitals that are members of the Northern Virginia Hospital Alliance. We have exercised our Police Department Special Weapons and Tactics Team, trained the law enforcement staff at Northern Virginia Community College, conducted an exercise of our response to a nuclear power plant failure at the Calvert Cliffs power plant, held over 12 small exercises of our new emergency response plan, and many other training and exercise activities.

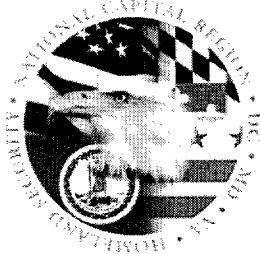
FISCAL IMPACT: There is no match requirement for these grant funds. City staff will administer the grant. The City will receive \$500,000 in grant funds.

ATTACHMENT: News Release

STAFF:

Adam K. Thiel, Fire Chief

Mark Penn, Emergency Management Coordinator



Attachment

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 24, 2009

For more information, contact:

Jo'Ellen Countee, District of Columbia Homeland Security
and Emergency Management Agency, 202-727-2985

Rick Abbruzzese, Maryland Governor's Communications Office, 410-974-2316

Bob Spieldenner, Virginia Department of Emergency Management, 804-897-6510

Merni Fitzgerald, Fairfax County Office of Public Affairs, 703-324-3189

National Capital Region Selects Homeland Security Projects to Fund

Officials announced today that they will use federal homeland security funds to strengthen their abilities to manage large, regional events. The money will be spent to increase security at Metro stations, assist law enforcement agencies to share information, expand traffic monitoring, provide shelter to people with special needs and deal with mass casualties.

The announcement came from local and state officials in the National Capital Region (NCR), representing the District of Columbia Mayor Adrian M. Fenty, Maryland Governor Martin O'Malley and Virginia Governor Timothy M. Kaine.

In June, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security awarded the NCR \$58,006,500 through the Urban Areas Security Initiative Program. Some of the projects to be funded include:

- **Bridge, Tunnel and Metro Station Security** (\$4.7 million): The region will buy additional video cameras to monitor critical bridges and tunnels. Similarly, more cameras will be added to Metro stations across the region. These cameras will help officials to monitor crowds or traffic during events, as well as more closely look for suspicious activity.

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National Capital Region Selects Homeland Security Projects to Fund (cont.)

- **Law Enforcement Information Sharing** (\$9.03 million): The region’s law enforcement information sharing system will be expanded, allowing officers to look up criminal records or other data from their cell phones or wireless devices. This system can only be used from police cars now, but mobile access will help officers during large events. Used by 98 local, state and federal law enforcement agencies, the system enables police from different jurisdictions to view and share each other’s criminal records and data.
- **Traffic Monitoring** (\$5.4 million): Traffic sensors will be installed along potential evacuation routes in D.C., Maryland and Virginia, allowing officials to monitor traffic volume and speed. While sensors have been installed on many highways, they will be placed on other major roads across the region. State and local traffic information systems also will be integrated, allowing the region to better manage traffic during a large event or evacuation. For example, state and local officials will be able to better coordinate traffic signal timing.
- **Shelter Supplies** (\$1.04 million): The region will improve its ability to shelter and care for people with special needs, pets and children. Additional staff will be trained to operate shelters for people with special needs, and the region will buy additional shelter supplies and equipment.
- **Patient Tracking System** (\$1.5 million): The region will implement an initiative that allows emergency rooms to track the real-time location of ambulances from every hospital in the region. ERs also will be able to monitor the treatment capacities at every hospital. This program will help the 34 hospitals in the region to treat a surge of injuries or casualties following a disaster.

The National Capital Region — which is comprised of 11 local jurisdictions, two states and the District of Columbia — prepares for and responds to disasters collaboratively. This unique regional structure, in the area that is home to the nation’s capital with the associated elevated risks, requires a regional effort to determine how to best allocate scarce resources.

The NCR’s elected officials, emergency management, law enforcement, fire and public health personnel; state homeland security offices; and nonprofit and private sectors work together across the region’s jurisdictional boundaries to identify and prioritize projects to improve the region’s emergency preparedness and response capabilities.

Past UASI grants have been used to prepare, train and equip law enforcement, fire, emergency medical services, transportation, public health and other first responders, improving their capabilities to prevent and respond to a wide range of potential hazards in the NCR.

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National Capital Region Selects Homeland Security Projects to Fund (cont.)

The funding has also been used to assist public safety officials to communicate across jurisdictional boundaries by enhancing interoperable communications; offer emergency alerts and notifications to the public; educate the public on disaster preparedness; assist special needs populations to prepare for major emergencies; increase medical readiness; and equip first responders to respond to all types of hazardous situations.

The National Capital Region invests in disaster preparations in an efficient, regionally coordinated manner, and focuses the region's homeland security spending on the greatest risks and needs.

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About the National Capital Region

The NCR encompasses the District of Columbia and parts of Maryland and Virginia, including the cities of Alexandria, Fairfax, Falls Church, Manassas and Manassas Park and the counties of Arlington, Fairfax, Loudoun, Prince William in Virginia and Montgomery and Prince George's in Maryland, which include the municipalities of Bowie, College Park, Gaithersburg, Greenbelt, Rockville and Takoma Park.

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