

Transportation;

- (2) Approve the application of up to \$300,000 to the Reconnecting Communities grant programs by October 13, 2022; and
- (3) Authorize the City Manager to submit an application for the Reconnecting Communities grant and execute any necessary agreements or actions to accept this funding.

BACKGROUND: In 2021, Congress passed the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act) to fund infrastructure improvement programs. This bill included funds for the Reconnecting Communities Grant Program, aimed at reconnecting communities that were previously cut off from economic opportunities by transportation infrastructure. Funding supports planning grants and capital construction grants, as well as technical assistance, to restore community connectivity through the removal, retrofit, mitigation, or replacement of eligible transportation infrastructure facilities.

DISCUSSION: The City is seeking technical assistance funding from the DOT to study the feasibility of a bicycle and pedestrian bridge over I-395 to connect the Landmark Mall site to the neighborhoods west of I-395. This will provide safe and direct access to jobs and amenities that will be available once West End Alexandria has been redeveloped. This connection was identified as a need in the updated Landmark/Van Dorn Small Area Plan (SAP) and the Coordinated Development District (CDD) Plan. This bridge is recommended in the 2022 Long Range Transportation Plan adopted by the Transportation Commission, the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority's (NVTVA's) TransAction Plan, and the Visualize 2045 Plan from the Transportation Planning Board.

In City planning documents, a bridge location could be between the I-395/Duke Street interchange to the south and Holmes Run stream to the north. The feasibility study would include public outreach and stakeholder meetings, recommendations for locations of bridge landings and alignments, a conceptual bridge design, and a cost estimate for a bicycle and pedestrian bridge. This study would help the City understand the next steps for providing this bridge and, if a bridge is deemed feasible, make the City more competitive for future grant funding for design and construction.

FISCAL IMPACT: The Reconnecting Communities planning grant requires a 20% local match. The cost estimate for the feasibility study is estimated to be up to \$300,000. Should the City receive the fully requested amount, the required match would be \$60,000. The match will be funded through the Transportation Project Planning CIP project, which was established in FY 2023 to help the City plan for capital projects and improve eligibility for grant funding.

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment 1: Resolution

Attachment 2: Transportation Commission Endorsement Letter (Unsigned)

Attachment 3: Presentation

STAFF:

Hillary Orr, Deputy Director, T&ES

Tarrence Moorer, Assistant Director, T&ES

Helen Lee, Environmental Program Manager, T&ES

Christopher Ziemann, Division Chief, T&ES

Megan Oleynik, Long Range Transportation Planner, T&ES