



Legislation Text

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City of Alexandria, Virginia

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MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** JUNE 17, 2020

**TO:** THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

**FROM:** MARK B. JINKS, CITY MANAGER /s/

**DOCKET TITLE:**

Consideration of a resolution to support the County of Arlington's Mount Vernon Trail Enhancement Project Grant Application for Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) SMART SCALE funding.

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**ISSUE:** Consider approval of a resolution to support Arlington's Grant Application for Mt. Vernon Trail Enhancement that includes the portion of the trail in Alexandria north of Jones Point Park for FY 2026 to FY 2027 SMART SCALE funding.

**RECOMMENDATION:** That City Council:

1. Adopt the attached resolution in support of Arlington's grant application for Mt. Vernon Trail Enhancement to include safety and capacity improvements to the trail within the City of Alexandria; and
2. Authorize the City Manager to execute all necessary documents that may be required.

**BACKGROUND:** On March 10, 2020, City Council passed a resolution that authorized the City submission of five FY 2026 to FY 2027 SMART SCALE applications to VDOT and authorized the City Manager to execute all necessary documents that may be required. However, the National Park Service recently contacted City staff and requested a resolution of support for a project that originated in Arlington County, but which could be expanded to the City of Alexandria. The resolution must be submitted as part of application materials to VDOT, which is expected to make awards in June 2021 for projects scheduled in FY 2026.

**DISCUSSION:** The County of Arlington submitted a SMART SCALE pre-application in partnership with the National Park Service (NPS) to reconstruct portions of the Mount Vernon Trail within Arlington County. Per recommendations in the NPS-commissioned Mount Vernon Trail Corridor Study released in May 2020 (Attachment 2), NPS is interested in extending the project to address safety and capacity concerns at the S-curve north of Daingerfield Island, the structurally deficient wooden bridge (bridge 28) south of Daingerfield Island, and general state of good repair and crowding concerns along the portion of the trail in Alexandria north of Jones Point Park.

In coordination with Alexandria staff, Arlington has received permission from VDOT to update its pre-application to include the Alexandria portion of the trail. This change will not count against the maximum of four projects that Alexandria can apply for in this current SMART SCALE application period.

These improvements are consistent with the City's Transportation Master Plan, which seeks improved access and safety for all users

on trails and cited conflicts between users on high-traffic trails like the Mount Vernon Trail as a major safety concern raised during the planning process. By extending the project boundaries and unifying the Alexandria and Arlington portions of the project, the NPS will be able to address the needs along the corridor more quickly and cost-effectively. The project will require National Environmental Policy Act compliance, which will include a complete public process and stakeholder engagement.

**FISCAL IMPACT:** There is no fiscal impact to the City of Alexandria if Council adopts this resolution. Funding provided through SMART SCALE does not require any City matching funds. Arlington County will apply for up to \$20 million in SMART SCALE funding. Arlington County will manage the grant and the National Park Service will be responsible for construction.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

1. Resolution of Support
2. NPS-commissioned Mt. Vernon Trail Corridor Study, May 2020

**STAFF:**

Emily A. Baker, Deputy City Manager  
Yon Lambert, Director, T&ES  
James Spengler, Director, RPCA  
Hillary Orr, Deputy Director, T&ES, Transportation,  
Christopher Ziemann, Division Chief, Transportation Planning, T&ES  
Steve Sindiong, Capital Projects Program Manager, T&ES