



Legislation Text

File #: 24-2143, Version: 1

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: MAY 21, 2024

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

THROUGH: JAMES F. PARAJON, CITY MANAGER

FROM: SARAH TAYLOR, ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER, LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR

DOCKET TITLE:

Consideration of a Resolution Identifying City of Alexandria Priorities for Federal Funding Opportunities and Requesting Congressional Delegation Support. [ROLL-CALL VOTE]

ISSUE: Consideration of a Resolution Identifying City of Alexandria Priorities for Federal Funding Opportunities and Requesting Congressional Delegation Support

RECOMMENDATION: That City Council endorse the Resolution Identifying City of Alexandria Priorities for Federal Funding Opportunities and Requesting Congressional Delegation Support for these local priorities and funding proposals.

BACKGROUND: In early 2021, the Senate and House Appropriations Committees announced the return of member requested funding, often colloquially referred to as “earmarks,” which were “banned” in 2011 after several high-profile cases of abuse and mismanagement. In the House, these funding opportunities are referred to as “Community Project Funding;” in the Senate, they are referred to as “Congressionally Directed Spending.”

Since their return, the City has worked closely with our Congressional delegation to identify, support, and secure funding from this source for several priority projects across the City, addressing needs in several key areas, including projects that address Council Priorities. These have included:

- In FY22:
 - Piloting of body worn cameras in the Alexandria Police Department (\$600,000)
 - Storm sewer improvements to mitigate recurrent flooding at Clifford Ave., Fulton St. and Manning St. (\$420,000), totaling \$1,020,000 in funding for these projects.

- In FY23
 - AHDC Arlandria Housing+ Project (\$1,500,000)
 - Full deployment of body worn cameras in the Alexandria Police Department (\$1,000,000)
 - The acceleration of the Notabene Drive, Four Mile Rd., and Old Dominion Blvd. flood mitigation project in Arlandria (\$750,000).
- In FY24:
 - On-route electric transit bus opportunity chargers (\$1,000,000)
 - Restoration of affordable housing at the 1022 Pendleton Street Boarding House (\$850,000),
 - Pilot crime and violence intervention and prevention programs in the city (\$670,000)
 - Establish a “Smart Mobility Lab” in partnership with Virginia Tech (\$963,000).

In late April 2024, the U.S. House and Senate Appropriations Chairs announced that members would be accepting proposals for Community Project Funding/Congressionally Directed Spending for programs and projects in the communities they represent and serve. This funding is seen as an important and valuable way for each member to communicate their federal budget priorities for the fiscal year and advocate for programs that are important to their constituents and benefit their states. Approved funding requests will be included in the consolidated FY 2025 Federal appropriations bill.

Community Project Funding/Congressionally Directed Spending provides members of Congress the opportunity to direct funding to priority projects in their districts/states and provide targeted assistance to their communities. These funding opportunities are intended to allow Members of Congress, who well understand the needs of their districts and states, to target funds for important projects that can solve policy problems, create jobs, invest in both people and infrastructure, and work to address the ongoing needs of families, businesses, neighborhoods and communities across our country.

In announcing this next round of Community Project Funding/Congressionally Directed Spending requests, the House and Senate Appropriations Committees have, again, established a set of rules and guidelines that prioritize accountability, transparency, and strong community support. The goals of these rules and guidelines are to produce a small number of projects with strong community support, a transparent process where no member, or their family can benefit, and where projects are audited to ensure money was spent as proposed and planned.

The funding opportunities through the Community Project Funding/Congressionally Directed Spending process are limited by the House and Senate Appropriations Chairs to certain agencies and accounts. Therefore, not all City projects and priorities were appropriate for these funding opportunities.

For the FY25 round of Community Project Funding/Congressionally Directed Spending, the City identified eight projects appropriate for funding, which have been submitted to Senator Mark Warner, Senator Tim Kaine, and Congressman Donald S. Beyer, Jr. for their consideration:

- Re-employment and upskilling programs and services (\$2 million, scalable);
- Affordable housing preservation in Arlandria neighborhood (\$1.5 million);
- Flash flooding “spot improvement” project (\$1.565 million);
- Resiliency of City emergency shelter (\$1.5 million);
- Emergency communications interoperability (\$650,000);

- Historic preservation and interpretation at Freedom House (\$2.5 million, scalable);
- Technology to support violence intervention and crime prevention (\$670,000);
- Ewald Park improvements (\$865,000).

These projects are clear priorities for the City and address significant recognized needs in the City of Alexandria in the areas of human services, community development, public health and safety, and infrastructure. They represent opportunities for the City to leverage the opportunity for Federal funding to either expand a currently successful program or accelerate a critical, priority project.

This Resolution is intended to express the support of Council for the City's Community Project Funding/Congressionally Directed Spending requests for Fiscal Year 2025. In addition, it requests support from Alexandria's Congressional delegation for these funding proposals and requests.

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