



Legislation Text

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City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: OCTOBER 19, 2016

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

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

DOCKET TITLE:

Consideration of a Grant Application to the Virginia Housing Development Authority (VHDA) to Fund Consultant Costs Related to the FY 2018 Route 1 South Corridor Plan.

ISSUE: Submission of a City grant application in the amount of \$215,000 to the Virginia Housing Development Authority (VHDA) for consultant costs related to the upcoming Route 1 South Corridor Plan.

RECOMMENDATION: That City Council approve submission of a grant application for the planned upcoming Route 1 Study to VHDA in the amount of up to \$250,000.

BACKGROUND: In collaboration with the Department of Planning and Zoning, the Office of Housing is requesting that City Council approve the application for a \$215,000 grant from the VHDA for consultant costs and studies related to the upcoming Route 1 South Corridor Plan. A map of the area is attached. While the City has identified consultant costs totaling \$215,000 at this time, it has asked to reserve the option of accessing the full VHDA-allowed grant amount of \$250,000, subject to VHDA's approval, should a need for additional consulting services or studies be identified as the planning process progresses. The project was approved as part of the City Council adopted interdepartmental work plan for FY 2017 to FY 2018. While the community engagement portion of the planning process will not occur until FY 2018, a significant amount of preparation and planning is anticipated to begin in the second half of FY 2017. City staffing resources dedicated to all phases of the planning effort will be funded within the participating departments' budgeted resources.

The goals of the planning effort are to: 1) develop a framework and implementation strategy to preserve the affordable housing resources and augment the overall diversity of housing options in the City's Southwest Quadrant; 2) evaluate and prioritize strategies to revitalize the Route 1 South Corridor through targeted investments in streetscape, infrastructure, and transportation improvements; 3) help foster new economic

opportunities by exploring the potential redevelopment of underutilized commercial properties along the corridor; and 4) identify issues of local and citywide concern affecting circulation, safety, connectivity, open space, and use/condition of public facilities across the Southwest Quadrant. The primary focus of this study will be properties abutting the Route 1 corridor. The study area would not include the Lee Center or its surrounding outdoor recreational uses.

DISCUSSION: If the City's application is successful, the VHDA grant will fund consultant services comprising the following:

1. An economic market analysis to evaluate the demand for different land uses and estimate the level of density that is financially feasible and can be absorbed along the Route 1 South Corridor;
2. A housing analysis to evaluate scenarios under which affordable housing could realistically be preserved and/or expanded with a particular emphasis on the Heritage at Old Town and Olde Towne West III sites; and
3. Completion of the transportation analysis, including examining the underlying capacity of the transportation network, modeling the impact of different development options, and identifying short-, medium-, and long-term multimodal transportation recommendations and infrastructure improvements.

Housing and Planning staff have met with VHDA representatives who report that the agency is very interested in supporting this new City endeavor given the significant existing affordable housing resources within the Route 1 South Corridor. It is noted that VHDA provided \$10,000 in grant funds to the City for the Beauregard Small Area Plan with these monies used to conduct a survey of households living in the Plan Area who were to be impacted by the future redevelopment. The data collected through the survey helped staff analyze residents' housing needs which then informed the Plan's implementation and funding strategies regarding future committed affordable housing to be developed and preserved.

FISCAL IMPACT: City staff resources for the Route 1 South Corridor Plan will be provided within budgeted departmental resources.

ATTACHMENT: Map of Route 1 South Area

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