City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: JUNE 13, 2018

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

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

DOCKET TITLE:
Public Hearing and approval of a waiver to the Special Event Policy to allow for programs and events on consecutive weekends at the Interim King Street Park at the Waterfront in support of the City's King Street Corridor Initiative.

ISSUE: Public Hearing and approval of a waiver to the Special Event Policy to allow for programs and events on consecutive weekends at the interim King Street Park at the Waterfront in support of the City's King Street Corridor Initiative.

RECOMMENDATION: That City Council hold a Public Hearing on the proposed pilot waiver to the Special Event Policy, and after the public hearing has concluded, approve the waiver to the Special Event Policy to allow for programs and events on consecutive weekends at the interim King Street Park at the Waterfront as discussed in this memorandum.

BACKGROUND: On January 21, 2012, City Council approved the Waterfront Small Area Plan which calls for programming public spaces and promoting the waterfront as a cultural destination. In Spring of 2018, the King Street Corridor Initiative, a coordinated effort between Visit Alexandria, Department of Recreation, Parks & Cultural Activities, Office of Historic Alexandria, Department of Transportation & Environmental Services, and the Department of Project Implementation was created. This initiative is designed to enhance Alexandria's quality of life and economic competitiveness through programming, beautification and marketing. The initiative is timed to capitalize on the opening of the interim King Street Park at the Waterfront to shine a spotlight on Alexandria and its waterfront. The programming portion of the initiative is essential to maintaining market share as waterfront destinations like The Wharf and other well-funded destinations upgrade their offerings.

On January 23, 2010, City Council approved the City's Special Events Policies and Procedures which limits the number of event occurrences in Old Town.

According to the Special Event Policy "Events in Old Town with anticipated attendance over 500 are limited to no more than one such event every other weekend in a calendar year. A weekend is defined as beginning Friday, 5 p.m. and continuing through Sunday, 6 p.m.".

Visit Alexandria, in partnership with the City departments are seeking a waiver on this policy for a pilot one year period from October 1, 2018 to September 30, 2019. A vast majority of programs of the King Street Corridor Initiative will be public space activation attracting fewer than 500 guests, as opposed to large-scale special events for which the not-on-consecutive-weekends policy was created to address. City protocol will be followed, and special events applications will go through the Special Events

Committee for review and approval. The requested waiver would allow for the committee to approve events that meet City requirements yet may occur on consecutive weekends. The waiver will be limited to up to ten sets of consecutive weekends during the FY 2019 pilot. After the pilot period, an evaluation of the waiver will take place to determine whether it should be continued.

The waiver would only apply to events occurring in the interim King Street Park at the Waterfront that Visit Alexandria, Recreation, Parks & Cultural Activities and Office of Historic Alexandria endorse as part of the King Street Corridor Initiative. No other special event permits will be issued for interim King Street Park at the Waterfront through FY 2019.

The Park & Recreation and Waterfront Commissions support the staff recommendation to provide a waiver of the nonconsecutive weekend events occurring in the interim King Street Park at the Waterfront for a period of one year. Staff will provide a briefing of this recommendation to members of the Old Town Civic Association on Monday, June 11 and will report the outcome of this briefing to Council before June 13.

DISCUSSION: The interim King Street Park at the Waterfront provides a new public plaza that will transform throughout the year with seasonal programming and ongoing activation including history programming such as mobile history exhibits, reenactors, tours and events; hands-on arts programs with the Mobile Art Lab and other local arts organizations and artists; rotating public art and related programming; small concerts and other performances; pop-up markets that highlight the region's makers and creators; programs featuring local foods and culinary traditions; and recreational activities such as oversized games, outdoor yoga and other classes.

FISCAL IMPACT: None. Event organizers are responsible for direct costs related to the King Street Corridor Initiative.

ATTACHMENT: Alexandria Waterfront Commission Letter of Support

STAFF:
Emily A. Baker, Deputy City Manager
Debra Collins, Deputy City Manager
James Spengler, Director, Recreation Parks & Cultural Activities
Gretchen Bulova, Director, Office of Historic Alexandria
Patricia Washington, President & CEO, Visit Alexandria
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