



Legislation Text

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City of Alexandria, Virginia

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MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** MARCH 18, 2021

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

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

**DOCKET TITLE:**

Approval of a Grant Application to the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOG) Regional Safety Program.

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**ISSUE:** City sponsorship of Alexandria Families for Safe Streets (AFSS) grant application.

**RECOMMENDATION:** That City Council approve the City sponsoring the Alexandria Families for Safe Streets (AFSS) grant application of up to \$60,000 to the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOG) Regional Safety Pilot grant program.

**DISCUSSION:** The Alexandria Police Department (APD) is seeking to City sponsorship for AFSS in their efforts to apply for grant funding offered through the MWCOG Regional Safety Pilot program. The Regional Safety Pilot Program provides short-term consulting services to member jurisdictions or agencies to assist with planning or preliminary engineering projects that address roadway safety issues. Examples include studies, planning, or design projects that will improve roadway safety and lead to a reduction in fatal and serious injury crashes on the jurisdiction's roadways. The program provides consultant assistance of up to \$60,000 for studies or planning projects. AFSS seeks to pursue this grant funding to expand and improve upon their traffic safety efforts.

**BACKGROUND:** AFSS is a coalition partner with the City of Alexandria. AFSS' mission is to, "bring the community together to create safe streets for all people to walk and bike, by telling the impact stories, educating the general public, and education policymakers about policies and investments that eliminate traffic-related fatalities and injuries in our city."

AFSS is the creator and manager of a "near miss" program which provides community members with the means and opportunity to report "near miss" crashes, or perhaps better explained, events where a disastrous crash was narrowly avoided. AFSS receives these "near miss" reports and seeks to strategically engage various stakeholders, such as the Police Department and the Traffic & Engineering Department. Despite early

successes with the Near Miss Program, AFSS recognizes the opportunity to enhance their technology. This enhancement objective is aimed at creating a more user-friendly program to expand use and impact of the Near Miss Program.

To facilitate the advancement of the Near Miss Program, AFSS is looking to the above referenced MWCOG Regional Safety Pilot Program as an opportunity to be awarded grant funding. If awarded, AFSS intends to use these grant funds to enhance the data analytics of the Near Miss Program for the purpose of accomplishing the following program improvements:

- Develop the AFSS Near Miss Program platform to be more robust, user friendly, and cooperative application that can work in concert with Alex311 as well as other neighboring jurisdiction platforms.
- Provide more dynamic data analytic features and data sets.
- Upgrade the Near Miss platform to function with smartphone applications.
- Explore the feasibility of artificial intelligence algorithms to accomplish predictive analytics.

The MWCOG Regional Safety Pilot Grant Program is only available to MWCOG Transportation Plan Board (TPB) members, such as the City of Alexandria. That said, MWCOG will permit outside entities to apply for grant funding so long as they are sponsored by a member agency. The Alexandria Police Department is willing to sponsor and facilitate the AFSS grant application which is due and will be submitted on March 22. Prior to MWCOG consideration of this application, approval from City Council is being sought. It was not until midweek that the City sponsorship need was clear and that MWCOG would accept a sponsorship letter after the grant application deadline, hence the late posting of this docket memorandum.

**FISCAL IMPACT:** This request comes with no anticipated fiscal impacts to the City of Alexandria. Recipients of the Regional Safety Pilot grant program are eligible for \$60,000 in assistance for studies or planning. In accordance with the grant, any awarded funding will not be given directly to the City of Alexandria or AFSS, but rather, will be directly funded to the consultant assigned to assist AFSS in their program efforts.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

None

**STAFF:**

Michael L. Brown, Alexandria Police  
Don Hayes, Alexandria Police Department  
Jamie Bridgeman, Alexandria Police Department  
Brenda D'Sylva, Alexandria Police Department  
Jason North, Alexandria Police Department