



Legislation Text

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City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: OCTOBER 19, 2021

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

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

DOCKET TITLE:

Resolution Approving a \$10 million Grant Application to the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) and Virginia Resources Authority (VRA)'s for the Virginia Community Flood Preparedness Fund (CFPF) Grant Program for the Waterfront Flood Mitigation Project. [ROLL-CALL VOTE]

ISSUE: Consideration of a competitive grant application to the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) and Virginia Resources Authority (VRA) for up to \$10 million for the FY 2021 Virginia Community Flood Preparedness Fund (CFPF) grant program for the Waterfront Flood Mitigation Project (Project).

RECOMMENDATION: That City Council:

- (1) Adopt the attached resolution authorizing the City Manager ("the Authorized Representative") to submit a competitive grant application to DCR for a grant request and potential award of up to \$10 million for planning and design costs, from the FY 2021 Virginia Community Flood Preparedness Fund for the planning and design activities associated with the City's Waterfront Flood Mitigation Project ("Project");
- (2) Authorize the City Manager to enter into any agreements that may be required to receive these funds should the requested allocation be approved, and to provide certification of Council's commitment to fund the City's local share; and
- (3) Commit to fund its local share of engineering and construction costs and to fund the remaining costs of implementing the Project to complete planning and design activities covered under the grant award.

BACKGROUND: The Virginia Flood Preparedness Fund (Fund) grant program supports regions and

localities in Virginia to reduce the impacts of flooding, including flooding driven by climate change. The Fund prioritizes projects that are in concert with local floodplain management standards, local resiliency plans and the Virginia Coastal Resiliency Master Plan. The Fund provides funding to coastal and inland communities to complete vulnerability assessments; to develop and implement flood prevention and protection projects and studies in areas that are subject to recurrent flooding; to mitigate future flood damage; and to develop mitigation measures and projects to bolster flood preparedness and resilience. A total of \$17 million is available for the Round 2 grant solicitation (due November 5, 2021). The program provides a minimum of \$1,000 with no maximum funding award. The Round 2 solicitation requires cost share funding of up to 50% for flood prevention and protection planning studies and design, and up to a 40% match share for implementation projects (construction). Each application submitted must be for a discrete project to be completed after the beginning of the application period and not later than 3 years from the date of the executed agreement. Department of Project Implementation (DPI) has submitted non-binding preapplication materials and intends to apply for FY 2021 Round 2 funding solicitation for anticipated design and planning costs.

DISCUSSION: The City of Alexandria's (City's) waterfront lies within the Potomac River watershed and frequently experiences flooding (including backflow of river outfalls, overtopping of the existing bulkhead and inundation of storm sewers), which affects businesses, residents, and infrastructure along the waterfront. Since 2010, the City has been working to identify the various causes of flooding in the waterfront area. The City has identified and evaluated potential mitigation measures and is finalizing engineering recommendations to address stormwater and flood impact management.

The current scope of the Waterfront Flood Mitigation Project expected to cost \$200 million. The project is identified in the City's Capital Improvement Program (CIP) with funding for \$102 million. The goals of the project are to address localized flooding due to insufficient storm sewer capacity in historic areas, overtopping of low-lying shorelines and bulkheads, and to meet the public space and amenity goals and objectives of the Waterfront Small Area Plan and the Council-adopted 2014 Waterfront Plan. DPI seeks to pursue up to \$10 million in grant funding for planning and design activities from the FY 2021 Virginia Community Flood Preparedness Fund Grant Round 2.

FISCAL IMPACT: The Fund requires funds to be available at the time of application in late CY 2021/early CY 2022 to meet the match requirement as well as to demonstrate the City's ability to pay for the remaining portion of the planning and design costs not covered by the grant and associated match funding. The City's Waterfront Implementation Project is identified in the City's CIP with a current funding level of \$102 million over three fiscal years, including \$22 million in FY 2022. The current planning and design cost estimate is \$20 million. The Fund required cost share would cover 50% (or up to \$10 million) of the project's planning and design costs. The City would be required to provide funding for the remaining planning and design costs. If awarded, the grant could reduce the CIP funds needed for planning and design and allow for those funds to be moved to construction. Should this grant not be approved, elements of the project may have to be phased, or otherwise de-scoped, to keep costs within current CIP funding.

ATTACHMENT: Resolution

STAFF:

Emily A. Baker, Deputy City Manager

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