

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: JUNE 19, 2019

TO: MEMBERS OF THE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

FROM: HILLARY ORR, DEPUTY DIRECTOR, T&ES

SUBJECT: AGENDA ITEM #6 – TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES SET-ASIDE /
REVENUE SHARING GRANT APPLICATIONS

ISSUE: Consideration of Grant Applications to the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) for Transportation Projects eligible under the Transportation Alternatives (TA) Set-Aside and the Revenue Sharing Program.

RECOMMENDATION: That the Transportation Commission:

1. Endorse the grant application for the TA Set-Aside program in FY 2020-2021 that gives staff the flexibility of applying for one of two projects (based on City Council's recommendation).
2. Endorse the grant application for the VDOT Revenue Sharing Grant at an amount not to exceed \$5 million to provide funding for resurfacing and/or reconstruction in FY 2022 and FY 2023.

BACKGROUND:

Transportation Alternatives (TA) Set-Aside

The TA Set-Aside program is a state administered, federally funded grant program for engineering projects that support non-motorized travel. TA grants are awarded every two years. Each application can include funding requests for up to two projects covering two years. The maximum award is \$1 million dollars for each project. Federal Transportation Alternatives Set-aside funding can reimburse up to a maximum 80% of eligible project costs. A local match contribution of 20% or more is required to pay for the remaining project costs.

In 2016, the City applied for \$800,000 for the Holmes Run Trail Connector to provide a connection on the south side of Holmes Run between Ripley Street and North Pickett Street, which was a priority project from the Bicycle and Pedestrian chapters of the Transportation Master Plan. The City received \$424,619 from this program.

For the FY 2020-2021 application process, staff is presenting the Transportation Commission with two applications to endorse, however staff will only apply for one project. Staff's priority is to fund the construction of a sidewalk on Seminary Road between Zabriskie Drive and St. Stephens Road. City Council will render a decision on this project in September 2019. If Council does not approve this project, staff will apply for funding to re-construct the washed-out portion of the Holmes Run Trail at Dora Kelly.

VDOT Revenue Sharing Grant

The Commonwealth of Virginia's Revenue Sharing Program provides funding for use by a county, city, or town to construct, reconstruct, improve, or maintain the highway systems within such county, city, or town and for eligible rural additions in certain counties of the Commonwealth. Locality funds are matched, dollar for dollar, with state funds, with certain limitations on the amount of state funds authorized per locality. Applications for revenue sharing funds can be made for multiple types of projects including reconstruction and maintenance. Reconstruction focuses on streets in the worst condition and includes significant road base remediation along with milling and paving. The City received Revenue Sharing funding for FY 2020 and FY 2021 for reconstruction of several streets on the paving schedule.

DISCUSSION:

TA Set-Side Grant: Seminary Road New Sidewalk Project

Staff is proposing that the City apply for an amount not to exceed \$1.5 million to construct the sidewalk on the north side of Seminary Road approximately from Zabriskie Street to St. Stephens Road.

This segment was also identified as a priority sidewalk project in the 2016 Pedestrian Plan. It would close one of the major remaining sidewalk gaps in the City today, in close proximity to a park, a synagogue with an early childhood learning center, a theological seminary, two bus stops, and a post office, thereby improving mobility and safety in the corridor. This project is currently unfunded.

On June 24th, the Traffic and Parking Board will make a recommendation to City Council to accept, reject, or modify staff's recommendation. Council will consider this recommendation and make a final recommendation to the Director of T&ES in September. If Council's recommendation does not include this sidewalk portion, staff would apply for the reconstruction of the Holmes Run Trail at Dora Kelly.

TA Set-Aside Grant: Holmes Run Trail at Dora Kelly

The Holmes Run Trail at Dora Kelly is located on the west bank of Holmes Run stream, just north of Beauregard St. The existing Holmes Run Trail adjacent to the west bank collapsed in Fall 2018. Access to the trail has been restricted at Morgan Street, however users have been moving the barriers to continue to access the trail. At the existing low water crossing, there are already some initial signs of erosion and undermining. This is a priority project for the Department of Recreation, Parks, and Cultural Activities (RPCA) because of health & safety

concerns of users continuing to access the trail. It is also a major gap in Holmes Run. The estimated project cost for this project is approximately \$1.7 million including funding for design.

Revenue Sharing:

Staff is preparing an application for the entire paving program for FY 2022 and FY 2023, to be submitted to City Council for approval in September. The City typically applies for approximately half of the City's paving budget, which results in a \$2-3 million grant application. Staff will develop the full list of projects and finalize a dollar amount for the application not to exceed \$5 million per year over the two year grant period.