

NORTHERN VIRGINIA TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY

MEMORANDUM

FOR: Chair Phyllis J. Randall and Members
Northern Virginia Transportation Authority

FROM: Monica Backmon, Chief Executive Officer

DATE: February 2, 2023

SUBJECT: Approval of Letter of Endorsement for Arlington County's Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity Application

1. **Purpose:** To seek Northern Virginia Transportation Authority (NVTA) endorsement of Arlington County's Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) application.
2. **Suggested Motion:** *I move Authority approval of the Letter of Endorsement for Arlington County's Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity application.*
3. **Background:** As is customary among NVTA partnerships, requests for the Authority's endorsement are received from regional agencies and local jurisdictions embraced by the Authority. To help fund their transportation projects, these regional agencies and local jurisdictions pursue sources of funding through federal grants and programs. Per Code of Virginia, NVTA will serve as an advocate for the transportation needs of Northern Virginia before the state and federal governments. NVTA has received a request for endorsement from Arlington County on their application under the U.S. Department of Transportation's Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) discretionary grant program.
 - A. **Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity Discretionary Grant**
The U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) published a Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for \$1.5 billion in grant funding through the RAISE grants. The original notice was amended on January 3, 2023, to reflect additional funding made available. In total, the Department now has at least \$2.275 billion (but no more than \$2.299 billion) available for the FY2023 RAISE Grant Program. RAISE was formerly known as BUILD and TIGER. Application deadline is 11:59:59 Eastern on February 28, 2023.

The RAISE program enables the USDOT to achieve national objectives, examining initiatives that promise to invest in road, rail, transit, and port projects on their merits to help ensure that taxpayers are getting the highest value for every dollar invested.

B. RAISE Program Criteria:

Projects for RAISE funding will be evaluated based on merit criteria which includes safety, environmental sustainability, quality of life, economic competitiveness, opportunity, state of good repair, innovation, and partnership. Within these criteria, the Department is encouraging applicants to consider how their projects can address climate change,

ensure racial equity, and remove barriers to opportunity as well as create workforce development opportunities.

- Half of the funding will go to projects in rural areas, and half of the funding will go to projects in urban areas. At least \$15 million in funding is guaranteed to go towards projects located in Areas of Persistent Poverty or Historically Disadvantaged Communities, and projects located in these areas will be eligible for up to 100 percent federal cost share, as directed by Congress in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.

4. Project Scope Under Arlington County's RAISE Application

The Arlington Memorial Trail will construct a ten-foot-wide pedestrian and bicycle trail on the west side of Richmond Highway (VA 110), connecting Memorial Avenue with Columbia Pike. The Arlington Memorial Trail provides a direct connection to the Arlington Cemetery Metrorail station. North of Memorial Avenue, a trail along VA 110 already exists to connect non-motorized travelers to the National Marine Corps Memorial ("Iwo Jima" Memorial) complex, where further connections can be made to the robust bicycle and pedestrian network of the Rosslyn-Ballston (R-B) Corridor.

In addition, at the southern end of the Arlington Memorial Trail, cyclists and pedestrians will be able to connect to Columbia Pike and connect to Pentagon City via South Joyce Street following the reconstruction of the Columbia Pike/VA 27/Joyce Street interchange. The Arlington Memorial Trail will provide a missing link in the regional non-motorized network that will complete a safe bicycle and pedestrian connection between all three of the County's major development and transit corridors.

Attachments:

- A. Arlington County's Request for Endorsement Letter**
- B. Draft Letter of Endorsement for Arlington County's RAISE Application**



DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES
Division of Transportation
2100 Clarendon Boulevard, Suite 900, Arlington, VA 22201
TEL 703-228-3640 www.arlingtonva.us

January 24, 2023

Monica Backmon
Chief Executive Officer
Northern Virginia Transportation Authority
3040 Williams Drive, Suite 200
Fairfax, VA 22031

Dear Ms. Backmon,

I am writing to request NVTA's endorsement of Arlington County's project application to the United States Department of Transportation for the Fiscal Year (FY) 2023 Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) Program for the Arlington Memorial Trail, previously known as the Arlington National Cemetery (ANC) Wall Trail.

The Arlington Memorial Trail will construct a ten-foot wide pedestrian and bicycle trail on the west side of Richmond Highway (VA 110), connecting Memorial Avenue with Columbia Pike. The project is included in the Authority's TransAction long range plan (Project ID: 72) and constructing it will advance the Authority's goal of implementing multimodal transportation improvements across Northern Virginia. The Arlington Memorial Trail provides a direct connection to the Arlington Cemetery Metrorail station. North of Memorial Avenue, a trail along VA 110 already exists to connect non-motorized travelers to the National Marine Corps Memorial ("Two Jima" Memorial) complex, where further connections can be made to the robust bicycle and pedestrian network of the Rosslyn-Ballston (R-B) Corridor.

In addition, at the southern end of the Arlington Memorial Trail, cyclists and pedestrians will be able to connect to Columbia Pike and connect to Pentagon City via South Joyce Street following the reconstruction of the Columbia Pike / VA 27 / Joyce Street interchange, which is proceeding as part of the Defense Access Roads (DAR) project associated with the ANC Southern Expansion. Accordingly, the Arlington Memorial Trail is providing a missing link in the regional non-motorized network that will complete a safe bicycle and pedestrian connection between all three of the County's major development and transit corridors.

This project is currently in design and has a cost estimate of \$25 million. Since the County's FY 2022 RAISE application, the County has continued advancing design of the Arlington Memorial Trail using local funding. A RAISE award on the project would accelerate the construction timeline.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration of this request. If you have any questions about this request, please contact Rich Roisman, Regional Transportation Planning Program Coordinator, at (571) 302-0234 or rroisman@arlingtonva.us.

Sincerely,



Hui Wang
Deputy Director of Transportation and Development Services



Northern Virginia Transportation Authority
The Authority for Transportation in Northern Virginia

February 9, 2023

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg
Secretary of Transportation
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Re: NVTA Endorsement of Arlington County's RAISE Grant Program Application

Secretary Buttigieg,

On behalf of the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority (NVTA), I am pleased to express our full support of the Arlington County's 2023 RAISE grant program application. Funding from this grant for this project will improve active transportation options, environmental sustainability, quality of life, and multimodal connectivity while also partnering and collaborating with other Northern Virginia active transportation network stakeholders.

The Arlington Memorial Trail project ("Project") provides a missing link in the regional non-motorized network that will complete a safe bicycle and pedestrian connection between all three of the County's major development and transit corridors. It will construct a ten-foot-wide pedestrian and bicycle trail on the west side of Richmond Highway (VA 110), connecting Memorial Avenue with Columbia Pike, and a direct connection to the Arlington Cemetery Metrorail station. North of Memorial Avenue, a trail along VA 110 already exists to connect non-motorized travelers to the National Marine Corps Memorial ("Iwo Jima" Memorial) complex, where further connections can be made to the robust bicycle and pedestrian network of the Rosslyn-Ballston (R-B) Corridor. The Arlington Memorial Trail will provide a missing link in the regional non-motorized network that will complete a safe bicycle and pedestrian connection between all three of the County's major development and transit corridors.

The project is included the Authority's TransAction long range plan (Project ID: 72) and constructing it will advance the Authority's goal of implementing multimodal transportation improvements across Northern Virginia. Thus, reducing dependence on vehicular travels, and provide travel options that are safe, equitable, and sustainable. All these project impacts align well with NVTA's core values of Safety, Equity, and Sustainability.

Thank you for your consideration of the Arlington County's RAISE grant program application as well as your time and attention.

Best Regards,

Phyllis J. Randall
Chair

Cc: Hui Wang, Deputy Director, Transportation and Development Services, Arlington County
Monica Backmon, Chief Executive Officer, NVTA