

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: APRIL 16, 2009

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF THE CITY COUNCIL

FROM: JAMES K. HARTMANN, CITY MANAGER

SUBJECT: BUDGET MEMO # 107 : POTENTIAL SAVINGS FROM KING STREET TREE LIGHTING

This memorandum is in response to the following question from Councilman Krupicka: What are the potential savings from turning off King Street tree lighting 3 quarters of a year?

The cost of the King Street tree lighting program is comprised of several elements, including labor costs (both contractor and City staff time); supplies and materials (the actual lights); and electricity. The total cost of a 3 month lighting program is \$56,860 and the total cost of a 12 month program is \$99,210. The 12 month estimate assumes that the lighting will be replaced once per year. The chart below provides a cost breakdown for a 3 month program and a 12 month program.

King Street Tree Lighting Estimates		
Cost Estimates	3 Months	12 Months
City Staffing	\$15,000	\$15,000
Contractors	\$20,000	\$20,000
Materials	\$8,000	\$8,000
Electricity	\$13,860	\$56,210
TOTAL	\$56,860	\$99,210

* Electricity estimates based on \$0.77 per tree per day (about 200 trees total)

If the King Street tree lighting program was scaled back to a 3 month program, the City would save \$42,350. The King Street fall year lighting program has been very well received by retail, restaurant and hotel operators, and cutting it at a time when many King Street small businesses are struggling would be negatively perceived by those businesses and many affect their bottom line.

One cost savings idea that Parks and Recreation is pursuing is seeing how the Gadsby's lights with the tree light projects could be rewired so the plug which the tree lights connect to is tied into the photo-electric cell sensor which turns the Gadsby's light on only when it is dark. If this rewiring (cost and technical feasibility not yet known) was

implemented it may be possible to reduce the electricity use costs by as much as \$28,000 per year. Parks and Recreation and T&ES staff will be pursuing this idea.