

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: APRIL 24, 2009

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: JAMES K. HARTMANN, CITY MANAGER

SUBJECT: BUDGET MEMO #120 : ABILITY TO AVOID WITTER
RECREATIONAL FIELDS COST OVERRUNS

This memo is in response to a question about potential cost overruns for the Witter fields project and the possibility that City money will be needed to complete the project.

On August 27, 2002, the City of Alexandria executed a Letter Modification to the 2000 Settlement Agreement between the City and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) relating to the replacement of the Woodrow Wilson Bridge and the decision to change substantially the design of the previously planned urban deck. This Letter Modification provided new alternative mitigation measures in the City, including funding for recreational fields on Witter Drive adjacent to Telegraph Road. In addition to funding for the acquisition of the property and the design of the facility, \$8 million is budgeted for construction at the Witter site.

The construction plans are currently being finalized, and construction is anticipated to begin in December, 2009. Early construction cost estimates exceeded the \$8 million budget for the project. Staff has been evaluating value engineering options to ensure that the cost estimate does not exceed the available funding. Some of the changes that have already been made include re-grading the site to minimize or eliminate the need for structural retaining walls, specifying materials and construction details for the rest room and pavilion structures that are readily available and reasonably priced and simplifying storm water management facilities.

In addition, staff has worked with the WWB project to acquire 40,000 cubic yards of fill material that will be needed for grading the site at no cost to the City, an estimated savings of \$1 million. This material has already been delivered to the site.

Finally, staff will be identifying further items in the project that could be eliminated or deferred. These items will be bid out as alternate bid items to allow for them to be cut from the scope if the contractor bids come in above the \$8 million budget. In this way, staff will seek to ensure that no City monies are necessary for the construction of the project. It appears at this time that staff will be successful in keeping this project within budget.