



Legislation Text

File #: 21-0104, Version: 1

Resolution to Amend the Fiscal Year 2021 Council Approved Budget to Accept and Appropriate \$700,000 of Federal Funds from Joint Base Langley-Eustis (Langley Air Force Base) to the Capital Projects Fund for the Tree Timbering/Harvesting Project

PURPOSE/BACKGROUND:

Joint Base Langley-Eustis (JBLE), Langley Air Force Base (LAFB) requested the City of Hampton to remove trees on city owned property in the flight approach zone off the southwest end of the active runway. The height of trees in this area is directly impacting safety of flight operations specifically navigational aids used for flight operations. The City has contracted with a vendor who has provided a plan to inventory, evaluate, cut, remove and sell timber on approximately 118 acres of the city owned forested land. The negotiated contract price is \$700,000 which does not include the price of selling the harvested timber which is currently estimated to be between \$100,000 - \$150,000 dollars and will be determined during the course of the project. LAFB has set aside \$1.6M to cover the costs of the tree timbering project and will upon being invoiced by the city make the appropriate payments. This arrangement is enabled through the existing Cooperative Agreement with the U.S. Air Force governing the acquisitions and management of properties in the vicinity of the Clear Zone.

The City has received the appropriate permits/waivers from the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) and the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) to proceed with the timber/harvesting project with one stipulation that replanting of trees must be done post-harvest. LAFB understands this requirement and agrees. Both the City and LAFB realize that this project may need to occur again within the next 20-25 years contingent upon how fast the trees grow back. This project will meet all applicable regulatory requirements of the City Code and state and federal environmental laws.

Project management will be overseen by Bruce Sturk, Director Federal Facilities Support in coordination with LAFB flight operations staff.

Impact:

The City will recoup cost to sell and timber/harvest trees on City-owned properties inside the LAFB flight approach zone.

Recommendation:

Approve the resolution.

WHEREAS, Joint Base Langley-Eustis, Langley Air Force Base (LAFB) has requested the City of Hampton to timber approximately 118 acres of City owned land residing in the clear zone and accident potential zones of the installation's active runway off the southwest area of N. Armistead Boulevard;

WHEREAS, the area and land owned by the City of Hampton is heavily wooded and impacting safety of flight operations for F-22 and T-38 navigational systems;

WHEREAS, LAFB will be increasing the flight operations at the airfield with the arrival of the F-22 formal training unit (FTU) responsible for the initial F-22 pilot training starting June 2021 with the addition of 700 new jobs;

WHEREAS, the City of Hampton has a long standing strong relationship with LAFB and is willing to support LAFB with their request for the harvesting of timber in the flight approach zone and;

WHEREAS, the City has contracted with a company to harvest and, to offset the costs of the timbering, to then sell the City owned timber and replant trees in accordance with the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality & United States Army Corps of Engineers regulatory guidelines;

WHEREAS, the City of Hampton and LAFB are parties to a 2015 cooperative agreement, which has been amended over time, which enables LAFB to contribute funds to the City of Hampton for the voluntary acquisition of real property interests within the "Area of Concern," as identified in the agreement, near the installation;

WHEREAS, through the cooperative agreement, the City and LAFB have partnered to facilitate acquisition of several parcels of property within the Area of Concern and to convey restrictive use easements to LAFB;

WHEREAS, such restrictive use easements allow the City and LAFB to collectively manage the parcels to facilitate safe flight operations;

WHEREAS, the cooperative agreement also allows LAFB to contribute funds to the City of Hampton for other "allowable transaction costs," as may be agreed by the parties, which may be incurred in the performance of the cooperative agreement, and the City and LAFB have agreed that allowable transaction costs includes the above-described timbering necessary to meet Air Force requirements for safe operations;

WHEREAS, the cooperative agreement enables the City of Hampton to invoice and receive payment (s) from LAFB in order to conduct the above-described work in support of safety of flight operations, and;

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved that the City Council of the City of Hampton, Virginia hereby amends its Fiscal Year 2021 Council Approved Budget to accept and appropriate \$700,000 from LAFB to the Capital Projects Fund for the tree timbering/harvesting project, and any related supplemental funding in accordance with the cooperative agreement.