

8. CONSIDERATION OF A JOINT APPLICATION WITH THE CITY OF FRANKLIN FOR FUNDING FROM THE AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY INDUSTRIES DEVELOPMENT FUND

In creating the Agriculture and Forestry Industries Development Fund (AFID) during the 2012 General Assembly session, Governor McDonnell set aside funding to encourage localities to think strategically about how they can better support and integrate agriculture and forestry-based industries into their community's overall economic development efforts.

These AFID Planning Grants give local governments the flexibility to undertake the kind of planning, study, or local initiative they think best to grow and support agriculture and forestry-based businesses in their community and region. The competitive grant program allows individual localities to apply for up to \$20,000 in matching funds, or up to \$35,000 for multi-jurisdictional applications, to undertake efforts that support their agriculture and forestry-based businesses.

Through the leadership efforts of International Paper and the Paul D. Camp Workforce Development Center, a *Southeast Virginia Logging Capacity Task Force* was recently formed with a mission of increasing the overall logging capacity in our region by providing training and other resources for companies that work directly in the logging industry and/or its related supply-chain. The Community College was successful in obtaining a \$12,000 grant to start this Task Force and hire a part time coordinator.

In addition, the Task Force is also the beneficiary of a \$5,000 grant from the International Paper Foundation, which they would like to leverage and use for the local match requirements of the Agriculture and Forestry Industries Development Grant.

Because the AFID funding is available only to local governments, Mrs. Amanda Jarratt has volunteered to prepare a \$5,000 grant application on behalf of the City of Franklin and Southampton County to be used to further the work and efforts of the *Southeast Virginia Logging Capacity Task Force*. Because the matching funds would be provided by the Task Force, no local funding is required.

The City of Franklin will also be considering this request.

Given the reliance of many of our local industries (International Paper, Enviva, S.T. Tissue, Dominion Power, etc.) on the regional "wood basket," we clearly have a vested interest in partnering with the industry to improve the harvesting and transportation of wood resources.

MOTION REQUIRED:

If the Board is so inclined, a motion is required to authorize submittal of a grant funding request as outlined hereinabove.



Governor Bob McDonnell

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Local Planning Grants Now Available from Governor's Agriculture and Forestry Industries Development Fund

– \$250,000 for FY2013 in matching funds for local agribusiness and forestry development effort –

RICHMOND - Governor Bob McDonnell announced today a new tool for local governments to support their local agriculture- and forestry-based industries. The flexible new grant program encourages localities to think strategically about how to plan for agriculture and forestry businesses that can help their community and their region prosper. Part of the recently announced Governor's Agriculture and Forestry Industries Development Fund (AFID), these smaller planning grants complement AFID's existing program, which offers larger grants to assist local governments to support new or expanding processing facilities using Virginia-grown products.

"I am pleased that localities now have a new tool for economic development planning that focuses on agriculture and forestry, the Commonwealth's two largest industries," said Governor McDonnell, who has made agriculture and forestry key components of his overall economic development and jobs-creation agenda. "That is why I included funding in my new AFID program for local governments to creatively consider and plan for these industries when charting their economic futures."

The creation of the AFID was part of Governor McDonnell's jobs-creation and economic development agenda during the 2012 session of the General Assembly. Senator Bill Stanley (R - Glade Hill) and Delegate Steve Landes (R - Augusta) sponsored the AFID legislation, which is funded at \$1 million in each year of the biennium. AFID funds are broken into two categories with \$750,000 going to large grants to assist local efforts in expanding current or attracting new agriculture and forestry processing facilities using Virginia-grown products and \$250,000 dedicated to small grants to assist localities in improving local economic development efforts relating to agribusiness. The guidelines being released today are for applicant localities seeking an AFID grant to improve local economic development efforts around agribusiness. Guidelines for the grants to assist localities in expanding current or attracting new agricultural and forestry processing facilities were released earlier this year (<http://www.governor.virginia.gov/news/viewRelease.cfm?id=1393>).

"The AFID program is an excellent new tool in Virginia's economic development and jobs-creation portfolio and will further enhance Virginia's reputation as one of the best states to do business," said Lieutenant Governor Bill Bolling. Agriculture and forestry typically are significant economic drivers in rural Virginia, and these AFID competitive planning grants will help to build and grow on the existing strengths of our rural communities. These grants are further proof that we are doing everything we can to attract new agriculture- and forestry-related facilities to Virginia."

The competitive grant program allows individual localities to apply for up to \$20,000 in matching funds, or up to \$35,000 for multi-jurisdictional applications, to undertake efforts that support agriculture and forestry-based businesses. These efforts might include developing a strategic plan for agriculture and forestry economic development, creating new local policies and zoning ordinances that better support these industries, or funding feasibility studies and predevelopment work for new facilities that bring significant and lasting benefits to the local agriculture and forestry sectors.

"We wanted a program that was flexible, allowed for innovation, and most importantly, gave local farm and forestland owners a greater voice when it came to planning for local economic development," said Todd Haymore, Secretary of Agriculture and Forestry. "To receive one of these planning grants, a community must demonstrate active participation of a board, committee or working group representing agriculture and/or forestry interests in the locality. This group must not only have the needed expertise to carry out the purposes of the grant, but must also have the broad support of the local agricultural and forestland community, as well as their local government."

Any locality may apply for these new AFID planning grants, and a locality may only receive one planning grant at a time, excluding participation in multi-jurisdictional projects. Localities are required to provide a dollar-for-dollar local match, with in-kind donations, such as staff time, acceptable for up to 50 percent of the local match requirement. Applicants must clearly explain the project's purpose, the specific issue(s) to be addressed, why it is important for this project to be undertaken, what the specific goals or objectives of the project are, what the particular deliverables of the project are, and how grant funds and local match will be used.

Localities interested in applying for an AFID planning grant should first reach out to their local and regional agricultural and forestry community to discuss potential projects, as well as local economic development professionals and other key stakeholders. A two-page program description and the required grant application are available at: <http://www.vdacs.virginia.gov/agribusiness/planning.shtml>.

Localities also may wish to participate in one of two virtual application workshops, which will be held Tuesday, Dec. 11, 2012 and Wednesday, Jan. 16, 2013.

The application deadline for the initial round of the AFID planning grants is March 1, 2013. Award announcements are expected to be made in April. For additional information about the program and the application workshops, e-mail Stephen Versen, AFID program contact at the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (VDACS) at stephen.versen@vdacs.virginia.gov.

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