



Albemarle County

Legislation Text

File #: 19-169, **Version:** 1

AGENDA DATE: 3/6/2019

TITLE:

Resolution of Support for U.S. Department of Transportation Grant

SUBJECT/PROPOSAL/REQUEST: Resolution of support for U.S. Department of Transportation grant to expand autonomous vehicle testing associated with Project Knight Rider

ITEM TYPE: Consent Action Item

STAFF CONTACT(S): Richardson, Walker, Kamptner, DeLoria, Johnson, Newberry

PRESENTER (S): Roger Johnson, Albemarle County Economic Development Director; Brad Sheffield, CEO, JAUNT

LEGAL REVIEW: Yes

REVIEWED BY: Jeffrey B. Richardson

BACKGROUND: In December 2018, the County entered into a partnership with Perrone Robotics and JAUNT to pilot test an autonomous neighborhood electric vehicle (NEV) in the Crozet area. The County contributed \$238,000 for this economic and community development project via the County's Economic Development Authority. This partnership was code-named Project Knight Rider.

Shortly after the announcement of the partnership, the project garnered interest from both the private and public sectors. The University of Virginia (UVA.) expressed an interest in conducting research on aspects of the pilot and subsequently joined the project. The project team, consisting of representatives from the County, Perrone Robotics, JAUNT, and UVA., has been meeting regularly in preparation for a March launch date. Recently, the team met with Cathy McGhee of the VDOT Office of Innovation and VDOT's Research Council to determine their interest in the project.

STRATEGIC PLAN: Grant awards provide funding to projects supporting the County's Strategic Plan, the County's Mission to enhance the well-being and quality of life for all citizens for the highest level of public service, and the County's Vision of fostering a thriving economy.

DISCUSSION: Following the meeting with Cathy McGhee, the project team determined this project may qualify for a U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) Automated Driving System (ADS) Demonstration Grant. Up to \$60,000,000 in federal grant funding is available to eligible entities for demonstration projects that test the safe integration of automated driving systems. These grants aim to gather significant safety data to inform rulemaking and foster collaboration among state and local governments, universities, and private partners; and test the safe integration of ADS on the nation's transportation infrastructure. Grant applications are due on March 21, 2019. Awardees will be announced in Spring 2019.

The University of Virginia agreed to serve as the lead applicant for a \$10,000,000 ADS grant, in partnership with the County, JAUNT, and Perrone to expand this project. Although there is expected to be a small direct

benefit, the County has standing on the project team and will receive a significant indirect benefit.

The receipt of this grant will expand the original scope of the Project Knight Rider. It will also delay or perhaps obviate the need for the creation of a lawful entity to oversee the project. Staff is requesting a Resolution of Support for the application for this U.S. DOT ADS Demonstration Grant.

BUDGET IMPACT: No additional cash expenditure is expected. An award would provide \$10,000,000 of additional resources to the partnership and increase the time County staff members (and adjuncts) are directly engaged in this pilot. With the expanded scope, County staff requested the cost of labor for the expansion be recouped through the grant in the amount of \$238,784.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the Board of Supervisors adopt the attached Resolution of Support (Attachment A).

ATTACHMENTS:

A - Resolution of Support