



# MEMORANDUM

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**To:** Mayor and Members of the City Council

**From:** Rich Olson, City Manager

**Date:** November 10, 2016

**Re:** Consideration – Authorization to Submit Application to Tourism Development Authority for Highway 17 Association

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***BACKGROUND:***

The Highway 17 Association is an organization that has been working for several years toward having US Highway 17/64 completely four-laned throughout North Carolina, from its border with Virginia to its border with South Carolina. The organization also serves as a lobbyist in an effort to get the state to make other improvements to the highway as a means of facilitating economic development along the U.S. 17 corridor. Significant progress has been made in recent years toward this effort.

In addition, the Association has been a staunch advocate for a new interstate highway planned to connect Norfolk and Raleigh, which will open a high-speed, unobstructed route between the Virginia port and the Research Triangle. The highway, to be called Interstate 87, has been officially approved as part of the Interstate Highway System, but it may take as long as 20 years to construct. The Association will continue to play an important role in helping to move this initiative forward.

***ANALYSIS:***

Since fiscal year 2011-2012 the City has provided an annual contribution to the Highway 17 Association. The first year, the Council provided funding through a Community Support Grant; however, since that time requests for funding have been made through the Tourism Development Authority.

Staff has received a request for Elizabeth City's support for the Association for fiscal year 2016-2017 (see attached). It is staff's recommendation that the Council consider providing funding by application to the TDA in the amount of \$1,000.

***FINANCIAL:***

The Finance Committee discussed this matter during their meeting of November 9, 2016. Upon motion made by Councilman Donnelly, seconded by Mayor Peel, the Committee recommended approval by the City Council.

***STAFF RECOMMENDATION:***

By motion, authorize City staff to make application to the TDA in the amount of \$1,000 for the Highway 17 Association for fiscal year 2016-2017.