



# FY 20 BUDGET MEMO # 35

---

DATE: April 29, 2019

TO: The Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

THROUGH: Robert A. Stalzer, City Manager *RA Stalzer*  
Chris Bruno, Director of Economic Development  
John Sabo, Chair, Economic Development Authority

FROM: Danette Nguyen, Business Development Associate

SUBJECT: Inquiry Regarding the Cost of the 2019 GMU Homecoming Programs to the Economic Development Authority.

At the request of the Economic Development Office, the Economic Development Authority partnered with George Mason University in 2019 to celebrate the University's Homecoming program with a grant of **\$10,000.00**. This partnership is consistent with the EDA's stated goal of enhancing the level of partnership between the University and the city's business community. This general category of programmatic allocations was presented by the Economic Development Director during the FY19 budget hearings.

Program Background:

The 2019 Homecoming Program ("Homecoming") was a week-long event taking place from Monday, February 18<sup>th</sup> through Saturday, February 23<sup>rd</sup>. Homecoming consisted of three unique participation opportunities for Old Town Fairfax City businesses, provided for by the Economic Development Authority. In total, over 30 Old Town Fairfax City businesses participated in the participation opportunities:

1. Paint the City Green
2. Patriots in the City
3. Homecoming Tip-Off Party

Grant Allocation:

**This is an Economic Development Authority driven initiative.** As such, the Homecoming opportunities were funded by the EDA with a grant of **\$10,000.00**. This \$10,000 commitment funded the development of marketing collateral, content creation, advertising, promotional material, event development and management, and creative development/staff time. A general list of activities and materials is listed below.

Consistent with the Office’s new policy of requiring every economic development program, whether it be a grant, purchase of services, award, or sponsorship, to be managed under a strict compliance agreement, the Economic Development Authority entered into a support agreement with the University for the following marketing and branding commitments:

<b>Item</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Quantity</b>	<b>Measurement/Outcome</b>
“Patriots in the City”	GMU designed, printed, and distributed the tri-fold map highlighting Old Town Fairfax businesses and discounts during Homecoming week.	Over 30 city business participants  5,000 maps printed	The map was available to the Mason community at 9 GMU sponsored events, over 30 city locations, 3 websites, and across multiple social media channels.
“Paint the City Green”	Storefront window painting competition and cleanup between student organizations and athletic teams to create Mason spirit in the city and connected student with city businesses.	25 city business participants	The competition allowed 20 Mason student athletic teams and organizations to interact directly with city businesses and over 2,000 organic reach/engagements on the EDA Facebook page alone.
“Tip Off Party”	Informational tables provided to city businesses for on-campus kick-off pep rally.	25 city business participants	The “Tip Off Party” provided city businesses access to over 600 students that were in attendance for the 2019 pep rally.
Door Hangers	Designed, produced, distributed by GMU with Homecoming information, city logo, and EDA Homecoming website and promotion details	5,000 door hangers printed	Door hangers connected over 40+ resident halls and more than 6,500 GMU student residents with information on city businesses and Homecoming opportunities.
Schedule Cards	GMU produced and distributed 4.25”x5.5” sticker schedule cards with city logo and EDA Homecoming website information.	3,750	Scheduled cards were available at 9 GMU sponsored Homecoming events. Ensuring frequent touch points with GMU students throughout the week.
Proclamation Requested	City recognized February as Mason Month in support of GMU’s Homecoming program at the request of the University.	N/A	Presentation attended by GMU leadership team, 5 athletic teams, 5 GMU offices, Greek organizations, and Mason students. Fairfax Connection published an article about the proclamation to their website audience of 96,000 users/month and 165,000 page views/month.
Online Marketing	City and participating businesses were recognized across GMU social media channels and websites.	N/A	Provided city and city participating businesses brand recognition across 4 GMU social media channels, 2 GMU websites, and the GMU Alumni site.

Game Day Tickets	VIP Homecoming game day tickets, passes to the Green Coat Society Hospitality Room with pregame meal, and parking passes.	7 VIP tickets provided	Tickets and passes were estimated to be valued at \$1,260. Additionally, the presentation of the “Paint the City Green” winner was announced at half time giving City Councilmembers and EDA Commissioners a new platform to engagement with GMU’s community.
------------------	---	------------------------	---

The collaboration between the EDA and the University was unprecedented. The participation opportunities identified in the program’s inaugural year not only provided businesses with a new way to engage with the University community, it established a destination event within Old Town Fairfax. Additionally, Homecoming efforts created business programming opportunities that is consistent with the EDA’s strategic goals and allowed businesses to leverage the program by providing direct connection to GMU offices and student organizations.