



October 12, 2023

Christian Dorsey
Arlington County Board
2100 Clarendon Blvd, Suite 300
Arlington, VA 22201

Dear Chair Dorsey,

The Arlington Chamber of Commerce supports revising the Request to Advertise (RTA) for the Langston Boulevard Area Plan to include two additional Plan Goals, the retention or expansion of retail and commercial use, and the provision of parking resources. We also request that the RTA include both language assigning values for bonus density calculation, and language directing the creation of a parking plan. We support the General Land Use Plan (GLUP) Map amendments, the Master Transportation Plan Map amendments, and the Zoning Ordinance amendments being advertised along with the Area Plan.

The revisions will broaden the scope of the RTA and provide the County Board with greater flexibility to work with Staff and the community to craft a more effective and comprehensive Area Plan. Including the retention or expansion of retail and commercial use and the provision of parking resources as additional Plan Goals allows for both policies to be considered as community benefits, comparable to those of the existing Plan Goals. Consideration of these provisions as community benefits will encourage builders and developers to provide these benefits, in exchange for greater density above the base recommendations.

We request the assignment of values for the creation and retention of small and large businesses for use in bonus density calculations. Assigning value to retention or creation will incentivize community-serving businesses of all sizes along the Langston Boulevard corridor, increasing the quality of life for residents.

We support including language within the RTA directing Staff to create a parking plan. A parking plan will incentivize sufficient, publicly accessible parking in the commercial priority areas. While the activity hubs in the Plan provide a degree of walkability, Langston Boulevard is neither a Metro Corridor nor a Premium Transit Corridor like Columbia Pike. Small businesses along Langston Boulevard that are in the Chamber's membership have expressed the importance of surface or publicly accessible parking for their businesses' success.

The Chamber is pleased at the inclusion of GLUP amendments to create a Langston Boulevard Planning District and to align certain designations with the Plan, to be adopted concurrently with the Area Plan. Waiting too long to finalize these essential changes will lead to abandoned or delayed projects and discourage developers and businesses from investing in the corridor.

As we near the final adoption of the Langston Boulevard Area Plan, we want to acknowledge the decade-long process leading up to this point. The Chamber expresses our sincere gratitude to Staff, to the Langston Boulevard Alliance, and to the volunteers for all of their hard work on behalf of the Plan.

For Langston Boulevard to truly realize its potential, it needs a proper balance of commercial and residential uses. The current RTA is well suited for encouraging residential development.

The addition of the proposed Plan Goals, bonus density values and the direction for a parking plan will balance the Area Plan to promote both residential and commercial development. We look forward to continued engagement with the County as we move toward the adoption of the Final Plan.

We thank you for your consideration of our comments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kate Bates". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kate Bates
President & CEO

CC: Vice-Chair Libby Garvey, Members Matt de Ferranti, Takis Karantonis and Tannia Talento, Arlington County Board; County Manager Mark Schwartz; CPHD Director Claude Williamson; Planning Director Anthony Fusarelli; Principal Planner Natasha Alfonso-Ahmed; Planner Jennifer Smith.