



December 17, 2018

Paul Wiedefeld, General Manager
Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority
600 5th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20001

Dear General Manager Wiedefeld:

On behalf of the Arlington Chamber of Commerce, I am writing to express support for the proposed second entrances for the Ballston-MU and Crystal City Metrorail stations. Establishing second entrances will offer safer, more convenient service for Metrorail riders as these neighborhoods continue to grow. Moreover, with the planned growth in these neighborhoods centered closer to the proposed second entrances than to the existing portals, building these station entrances both will aid in economic development and encourage people coming to work and live in these areas to see Metrorail as the most convenient way of getting to and from these locations.

Weekday daily ridership at the Ballston station is already heavy, and we expect it to increase significantly, as planned development in Ballston increases trips to and from the area, and the opening of Silver Line phase 2 makes Metrorail travel more accessible for more Northern Virginians. Notably, much of this rapidly growing high-density, mixed-use development is centered around the intersection of North Glebe Road and North Fairfax Drive, some blocks from the current entrance, but closer and more convenient to a new west entrance for the Ballston station. Included in this planned development are 2,700 additional apartment units in Ballston in the next five years. A west entrance also improves passenger experience and safety by reducing congestion at this station's main entrance and improving egress in the event of an emergency.

The Crystal City station is already highly used, and overall trips to and from Crystal City will only increase as a result of redevelopment there. The second entrance will facilitate long-planned growth along Crystal Drive, and the project will also deliver an additional elevator access to the station. Moreover, the many passengers who transfer at Crystal City between Virginia Railway Express (VRE) and Metrorail currently experience a long, circuitous, and hilly passage between the modes. A new entrance near Crystal Drive at the east end of the station will provide easier access for transfers to and from the relocated VRE station platform, whose northern entrance will be right across Crystal Drive, and the Metroway station at the corner of Crystal Drive and 18th Street S, and more direct access to offices, shops, and residences along Crystal Drive. Indeed, the plans to build a second entrance at Crystal City have featured heavily in the proposals for infrastructure improvements tied to the location of the new Amazon headquarters in Arlington.

For these reasons, the second entry points at Ballston-MU and Crystal City are necessary for the safe operations of these stations and the further economic development of these nodes which employ people from throughout the Greater Washington region. The Chamber encourages WMATA to approve the concept design plan for the Crystal City east entrance and to provide support to Arlington County during preliminary engineering and final design there, and asks WMATA to assist Arlington County and other stakeholders in updating the design plan for the Ballston west entrance.

Thank you for your consideration of these 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: WMATA Board Chair Jack Evans, Directors Clarence C. Crawford, Jim Corcoran, David Horner, Corbett A. Price, Michael Goldman, Christian Dorsey, and Steve McMillin, and Alternate Directors Tom Bulger, Malcolm Augustine, Catherine Hudgins, Jeff Marootian, Paul C. Smedberg, and Anthony E. Costa