



March 18, 2020

Arlington County Board  
2100 Clarendon Boulevard, Suite 300  
Arlington, VA 22201

Dear Chair Garvey,

The Arlington Chamber of Commerce supports the Phased Development Site Plan No. 454 and Site Plan No. 421 for the redevelopment of 1900 Crystal Drive. We further support allowing vehicular traffic on the east-west shared street in this development. Vehicular access is critical to the viability of the retail in this project, is contemplated by the Master Transportation Plan, and will help to alleviate congestion on Crystal Drive.

A truly shared street, with vehicular access, will provide patrons of all needs access to the retailers on the east-west connector street, and will support the retailers' businesses. The shared street will be designed to be comfortable for pedestrians to coexist with vehicular traffic, with pedestrians having priority. A pedestrian-only street, however, could be a barrier for individuals for whom walking is a challenge. A car-free street will also replicate the sort of plaza environment that we know is not conducive to retail success. A true street experience, which prioritizes pedestrians without feeling like an empty plaza, will support these retailers.

A shared street that allows cars is contemplated in the Master Transportation Plan and will help alleviate congestion on Crystal Drive. The Master Transportation Plan defines a shared street as "a local street where the needs of motor vehicles are generally secondary to the needs of pedestrians, bicyclists, and other roadway users." (2016 Streets Element, page 29) While allowing for restrictions, the definition of a shared street generally includes vehicular traffic. Moreover, if vehicles are not allowed to turn onto the east-west connector street, they are likely to queue for passenger pick-up and drop-off on Crystal Drive, exacerbating the existing congestion problems there. Allowing vehicle access will help to improve traffic flow in Crystal City.

We believe this development will help to add vibrancy to and improve circulation in Crystal City, and encourage you to support it as proposed. 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: Arlington County Board Vice Chair Erik Gutshall and members Katie Cristol, Matt de Ferranti, and Christian Dorsey; County Manager Mark Schwartz