



July 12, 2021

Mr. Dan Reinhard, P.E.
Virginia Department of Transportation
4975 Alliance Drive
Fairfax, VA 22030

Dear Mr. Reinhard,

The Arlington Chamber of Commerce supports the Virginia Department of Transportation's (VDOT) recommended concept for converting Richmond Highway, U.S. 1, to an at-grade urban boulevard. Replacing the current elevated highway will be a major step in developing a cohesive, walkable community in National Landing. Moreover, we encourage VDOT to consider ways to address concerns raised in the community by extending the urban boulevard concept along Richmond Highway.

The current elevated highway design creates a physical and psychological barrier between the portions of National Landing on the east and west sides of Richmond Highway. Recreating Richmond Highway as an at-grade boulevard will allow it to function as a true community center with active sidewalks, street trees, building entrances, and opportunities for new development that engage residents, workers, and visitors in National Landing. The recommended concept will go a long way to realizing the vision of a vibrant and active urban boulevard.

Building on the project's current design and scope will help to address potential safety issues and further the goals that the proposed project sets out to achieve. The proposed changes at 15th and 18th Streets South will remedy the impact of the elevated highway, and extending the design concepts to existing at-grade intersections, particularly those at 20th and 23rd Street South, will enhance safety throughout the corridor. We further encourage VDOT to implement best practices and build infrastructure designed for all modes both along and across Richmond Highway as it is essential that Arlington's road network function for all users and all modes, including transit, cyclists, riders of shared mobility devices, pedestrians, and automobiles.

We 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, Arlington County Manager, Arlington County Department of Environmental Services Transportation Division