



October 17, 2022
Mr. Mark Schwartz
Arlington County Manager
2100 Wilson Boulevard, Suite 302
Arlington, VA 22201

Dear Mr. Schwartz,

The Arlington Chamber of Commerce urges the County to work with telecommunications companies to facilitate the expeditious buildout of network infrastructure.

Since 2018, Crown Castle has sought to deploy fiber and 103 small cells in Arlington County. Both types of infrastructure are critical for expanding the capacity of wireless networks and enabling 5G, the next generation of wireless connectivity. However, Crown Castle's efforts to build a world-class communications network have been stymied by the slow processing of permit applications submitted by Crown Castle and their deployment partners, Dominion Energy and Verizon. It regularly takes the County over a year to process fiber permits, compared to a standard timeframe of 30-60 days across the region. This disparity is a disincentive to invest in this critical infrastructure in Arlington.

The construction of communications infrastructure will deliver an important economic boost to the region. Today, the wireless industry in Virginia generates \$10.6 billion annually in GDP and supports 103,000 jobs. That impact will grow with the rollout of 5G. CTIA estimates that the buildout of 5G will generate over \$22 billion in GDP and 62,000 new jobs in the Washington D.C. metropolitan area in the next ten years. 5G will transform major industries, supporting a new wave of innovation from transportation to public safety, healthcare, and education.

It is imperative that Arlington is able to provide the communication networks that consumers, businesses and their employees demand, and not risk falling behind in deploying the digital infrastructure needed to meet our everyday needs; and attracting more investment by accommodating innovation, advanced technologies and growth in the needs of Arlington homes, businesses and institutions.

To maintain Arlington's competitiveness, the County should facilitate the buildout of communication infrastructure in a timely and predictable fashion. Affirmative steps to make the permitting process flow more quickly and efficiently will help to ensure Arlington has the connectivity it needs to remain a thriving regional hub. We appreciate your assistance in ensuring that the permitting process for fiber moves forward in a more expedient manner.

Sincerely,

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

Kate Bates
President & CEO
Arlington Chamber of Commerce

CC: Greg Emanuel, Director, Department of Environmental Services; Ben Aiken, Director of Constituent Services; and Katelyn Thomas, Business Ombudsperson.