



February 26, 2021

Representative Alonzo Lopez., District 49
Representative Mark Levine, District 45
Representative Richard Sullivan, District 48
Senator Adam Ebbin, District 30

RE: Livability22202 Activities on VDOT's Feasibility Study of Route 1

To our Virginia Legislators:

We are the current presidents of the civic associations in the Livability 22202 coalition. We are writing to alert you to our concerns about the VDOT Route 1 Multimodal Improvements Study and the possible adverse impacts of this project upon our community.

Amazon's selection of Arlington County for the location of the new headquarters has spurred development in the newly named National Landing area, spanning Crystal City and Pentagon City. In 2019, three civic associations, Arlington Ridge, Aurora Highlands, and Crystal City, with a combined population of over 23,000 residents in the 22202 area initiated an effort, [Livability22202](#), to advocate for balanced development across the community. Since then, the Livability22202 group has worked closely with Arlington County planning staff and commissions, the National Landing Bid, JBGS, Amazon and other major developers and property owners to push for integrated holistic planning across the community. The level of collaboration among the stakeholders has been very positive. We have produced several reports, including a [housing](#) and [open space](#) report

As part of the [Amazon proposal](#), The Commonwealth of Virginia committed to providing up to \$295 million in infrastructure investments in northern Virginia, including making improvements to Route 1 in the National Landing area. Last summer VDOT began its [Route 1 Multimodal Improvements Study](#) to examine Route 1 in Arlington. Through this project, VDOT is reviewing the feasibility of several alternative designs for the highway, including bringing it down to street level as an "urban boulevard" as it passes through Crystal City. Lowering Route 1 would require removing the underpasses at 15th and 18th Streets. These underpasses currently provide safe East-West routes under Route 1 for pedestrians, cyclists, transit riders, and drivers.

In anticipation of VDOT Route 1 planning, Livability22202 activated its [Route 1 Working Group](#), which has held three public forums and coordinated the Livability22202 response to the first VDOT public meeting. We [responded](#) to VDOT with a substantive set of [comments](#) (19 pages). We appreciate their high level of engagement and professionalism, including their presentations and participation in the February 22 Livability22202 community meeting to

discuss the study. The Livability22202 Route 1 Working Group February 22 presentation is found [here](#); VDOT's presentation is [here](#); and, lastly, the meeting recording is [here](#).

VDOT has reached out to stakeholders through task force meetings and to the general public through virtual public engagements. The next VDOT virtual [Public Information Meeting](#) is Wednesday, March 3.

With the involvement of VDOT in the National Landing development, we want to make sure you are aware of this effort, which impacts us, your constituents. Our primary concern is safety. If Route 1 is brought down to grade at 15th and at 18th, our most vulnerable users will need to cross a major highway rather than safely cross underneath it. Residents, visitors, and workers, of all ages and abilities need safe and connected East-West crossings, whether walking, biking, driving, or using transit. Another safety concern is a potential increase in cut-through traffic on our local streets, if drivers on Route 1 are frustrated by the proposed "urban boulevard" design. An increase of traffic on our local streets will make crossing these streets more dangerous for everyone.

We hope to "see" you at the VDOT March 3 meeting. And we'd appreciate the opportunity to brief you on the Livability22202 effort and the particular issues that are relevant in the Route 1 feasibility study.

Sincerely,



Mike Pickford, President
Arlington Ridge CA

Scott Miles, President
Aurora Highlands CA

Carol Fuller, President
Crystal City CA

cc: Arlington County Board members
Mary Hynes, Northern Virginia representative, Commonwealth Transportation Board