

May 20<sup>th</sup>, 2022

Dear Mr. Reinhard,

Given the importance of the Route 1 to our community, the members of the Livability 22202 group and the People Before Cars Coalition have been working together to identify a set of shared priorities to guide the boulevard project. While we may not agree on everything, we are united in ensuring the future Route 1 advances the County's Vision Zero goals by prioritizing the safety of vulnerable road users and reflects National Landing's status as a walkable, bikable, transit-oriented community.

By narrowing the existing roadway and improving problematic intersections between 23<sup>rd</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> Streets, the Phase 1 recommendations bring us closer to that goal, but we believe the project can and should go even further. To that end, we offer the following recommendations for your consideration as you continue to advance Phase 2 of the Route 1 feasibility study:

### **Design**

- Protected bike lanes: We support including one-way, protected bike lanes on both sides of the Route 1 boulevard. If we truly want to increase cycling to reduce driving, and if we want cyclists to be able to visit places along an at-grade Route 1 comfortably, safely, and conveniently, then we need to provide safe facilities for cyclists along Route 1, as well as on connecting streets. These facilities need to be separate from both the clear zone sidewalk and the travel lanes for everyone's safety.
- Hardened protective barriers at median: While we believe that signals should be timed to allow ample crossing time for pedestrians, we recognize there will be instances where pedestrians need to cross in multiple phases. To ensure their physical protection from vehicles while waiting in the median, we request VDOT update its proposed design to include crash rated barriers. The current design concept calls for "flexible posts".
- Narrower 18<sup>th</sup> Street South: We recommend reducing or removing the existing travel lanes on 18<sup>th</sup> Street and replacing them with wider sidewalks, landscaping and protected bike lanes. We request the VDOT study the impacts of those options as part of its Phase 2 work.
- Protected Intersections: The current concept includes painted bike lanes crossing Route 1 but does not provide physical protection for those lanes. We encourage VDOT to include fully protected intersections in its Phase 2 design.

### **Operations**

- Automated enforcement: Analysis by the National Landing BID found that 23<sup>rd</sup> Street, which has a red light camera has an average of one red light violation per hour, while 20<sup>th</sup> Street, which

does not, was observed to have 34 violations in one hour<sup>1</sup>. This disparity points to the importance of automated enforcement as a tool in promoting safety on Route 1. While we recognize expanded automated enforcement requires state legislation, we nonetheless encourage VDOT to recommend them in its final report as a signal of its intent.

- Dedicated signals for bikes and pedestrians: Given the high volume of pedestrian, bicycle and vehicle activity anticipated at Route 1 intersections, a signal plan that enables vehicle turns during bike and pedestrian phase would create unacceptable conflict. Instead, we recommend providing a dedicated, all-way (aka “Barnes Dance”) signal phase for bikes and pedestrians at all Route 1 intersections. At a minimum, there should be a Barnes Dance at 18<sup>th</sup> Street, with dedicated phases at all other intersections.
- 25 mph speed limit: Lower speeds save lives. A BID analysis found Route 1 drivers averaged 43 mph, or 8 mph over the 35 mile per hour (mph) speed limit, at 15<sup>th</sup> street, while further down at Montrose Road in Alexandria, where the limit is 25mph, the average speed was 27 mph.
- No right turn on red: Right turn on red policies create unsafe conditions by encouraging drivers to turn in conflict with pedestrian signals. Indeed, a BID analysis of the Route 1 offramp at 15<sup>th</sup> Street found that 69% (302 in one hour) of drivers do not stop at the red light, when the pedestrian has the right of way, while 19% stopped in the crosswalk before proceeding. Only 12% were observed making legal/compliant turns.
- On-Street Parking: Curbside parking along Route 1 can help improve safety by reducing speeds and providing an additional buffer between the roadway and sidewalk. We encourage VDOT to incorporate on-street parking into its operations plan for the project.

We appreciate your consideration of these recommendations and look forward to continuing to work with you and your team to design a Route 1 that reflects the goals and priorities of the National Landing community.

Respectfully,

People Before Cars Coalition (Arlington Families for Safe Streets, Washington Area Bicyclists Association, Sustainable Mobility for Arlington County, JBG SMITH, National Landing Business Improvement District, Coalition for Smarter Growth)

Livability 22202 (Crystal City Civic Association, Arlington Ridge Civic Association, Aurora Highlands Civic Association)

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<sup>1</sup> Based on APD data for 23<sup>rd</sup> Street red light camera between 2018-2021 and observation at 20<sup>th</sup> Street in December 2021.