



January 11, 2021

Dan Reinhard
VDOT P.E., Project Manager
4975 Alliance Drive
Fairfax, VA 22030

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

Dear Mr. Reinhard,

Thank you and VDOT for hosting the Public Information Meeting on the Multimodal Improvements Study for Route 1 December 16 and extending the public comment period to January 11. The Livability22202 community is vitally interested in the outcome of the study and how the principles we have enunciated in our [Framework and Action Plan](#) of November 2019 will be addressed in the final VDOT recommendations. Providing safe, convenient, connected, comfortable east-west Route 1 crossings for people of all ages and abilities and for all modes of transportation is a Livability22202 priority and the most important goal of the Working Group.

We are pleased that VDOT described that the feasibility study "aims to provide sufficient information to make the best decision on a future project on Route 1 in Crystal City" in the VDOT Public Information Meeting No. 1, December 16, 2020. And we are also pleased that the study will include both an "analysis of existing configuration and analysis of concepts presented in the Crystal City Sector Plan," along with exploring an at-grade urban boulevard. We are also in agreement that if the study develops an understanding "of potential costs and issues/solutions for constructability and multimodal access," the Crystal City community and Arlington County will be able to make informed decisions about the future of Route 1.

With these goals in mind, we believe that the formulation of the alternatives for consideration, and the nature of the modeling undertaken to evaluate them will be critical to the outcomes of the study. Issues will include the selection of design concepts for Route 1 as a whole, as well as concepts for individual intersections and cross streets. Assumptions in the study regarding projections for future traffic volumes, peak hour volumes, transit use, and modal splits will also be critical. Because of the importance of the existing conditions data and planning assumptions, it is important that these be shared with the public now, during the early stages of the study formulation, rather than at the end of the study, or worse, not at all. While we are aware that sharing this background information and judgments about the future requires a little more effort from your consultant team up-front, we believe that it will save time overall and build public trust in the results of the study.

The attached Appendices, which address our concerns and explore some of our ideas, are divided into four broad sections:

- A. Livability22202 Community Goals and Priorities
- B. Missing information and Data in the “Existing Conditions” Presentation
- C. Clarification of VDOT Study Concepts
- D. Livability22202 Alternative Concepts

Livability22202 Community goals and priorities

Livability22202’s Route 1 Working Group began working virtually this summer. Since then, members participated in a general Livability22202 virtual meeting and hosted two public meetings specifically on Route 1. Records from these meetings are available through the Working Group section of the [Livability22202 website](#). Many of the Working Group members, as members of the VDOT Task Force, are actively involved in the development and dissemination of VDOT project information. While the status quo is not desirable to anyone, it does currently provide safe east-west connections for all modes. Given that at-grade intersections sacrifice safety and connectivity between neighborhoods for maximum aesthetic benefit, we have serious concerns. Our overarching goals are spelled out in **Appendix A**.

Missing information and data in the “Existing Conditions” Presentation

The VDOT Public Information Meeting No. 1 of December 16 was identified as a presentation of existing conditions in the project schedule. While we appreciate the inclusion of information from the VDOT survey, and a few slides showing crash data and average speeds, we assume that a much more complete set of existing conditions data has been collected in order to undertake this important work. We assume that this would include data for both vehicular and transit uses, historic patterns and growth trends, and expected development densities and assumptions for trip generation from area build-out. Livability22202 is interested in having the opportunity to review this data and develop an understanding of it in order to build our ability to support the results of the study. To this end, we request that VDOT provide us a list of data sets collected to date, as set forth in **Appendix B**, including any existing conditions reports prepared by the consultant team, and follow up shortly with the full data distribution to the public.

Clarification of VDOT Study Concepts

Livability22202 recognizes the importance of clearly defining the parameters for each VDOT alternative to ensure the community understands what is under consideration. Therefore, in addition to asking for consideration of the community concepts described in **Appendix D**, Livability22202 requests that VDOT recognize the importance of clearly defining the parameters for each of VDOT alternative to ensure the community understands what is under consideration. To this end, the descriptions in **Appendix C** document current Livability22202 understanding of what the three VDOT configurations consist of:

- Alternative 1: At-Grade Urban Boulevard
- Alternative 2: Existing Elevated Route 1
- Alternative 3: Crystal City Sector Plan Concept

Livability22202 Alternative Concepts

The VDOT Public Information Meeting No. 1 of December 16 presentation notes on page seven that “the current Route 1 feasibility study will examine at-grade, existing elevated, and Sector Plan configurations.” The Route 1 corridor is an important road for the local residents and through travel. We have discussed extensively with the community many possible alternatives, in addition to VDOT’s three concepts. We therefore request consideration of one or more additional concepts combining elements of all three options, which we describe in **Appendix D** as “Livability22202 Alternative Concepts.”

Lastly, we appreciate the effort that is going into the study and look forward to reviewing the engineering results. A study of Route 1 in this area is long overdue. We just hope a broad stakeholder review of multiple alternatives, based on the best available data, is the next step. When the relevant parties decide to discuss alternatives that fully consider community concerns and to generate new alternatives that balance all stakeholder needs, we are ready to offer alternatives and participate in their discussion. Until this happens, we endorse the Crystal City Sector Plan as the best alternative.

Sincerely,



Mike Pickford, President
Arlington Ridge CA

Scott Miles, President
Aurora Highlands CA

Carol Fuller, President
Crystal City CA

Attachments:

- A. Appendix A – Livability22202 Community Goals and Priorities
- B. Appendix B – Existing Conditions - Missing Information and Data in the “Existing Conditions” Presentation
- C. Appendix C – Clarification of VDOT Study Concepts
- D. Appendix D – Livability22202 Alternative Concepts

cc: County Board Members
Dennis Leach, Director, DES
Bob Duffy, Planning Director, Community Planning Housing and Development