



**December 2, 2022**

Honorable Katie Cristol  
Chair  
Arlington County Board  
2100 Clarendon Boulevard  
Arlington, VA 22201

Mr. Mark Schwartz  
County Manager  
Arlington County  
2100 Clarendon Boulevard  
Arlington, VA 22201

**Dear Ms. Cristol and Mr. Schwartz:**

Plan Langston Boulevard is an important component of Arlington County's effort to meet the housing needs of its growing and diverse population. The NAACP Arlington Branch appreciates the time and effort Arlington County staff have put into developing the Plan Langston Boulevard Preliminary Concept Plan (PCP) since planning began in 2016. We think that the PCP includes many positive developments related to housing and environmental sustainability. However, we have significant concerns with several core components of the PCP.

First, the PCP fails to align with Arlington County's Affordable Housing Master Plan (AHMP) goals for the Langston Boulevard corridor. The AHMP calls for the creation or preservation of 2,500 affordable housing units along Langston Boulevard by 2040. The PCP would fall 1,000 units short of that goal. It is imperative that Arlington County make every effort to meet their affordable housing goals and Langston Boulevard is critically important to ensuring the geographic distribution of affordable housing units in north Arlington. The county's potential failure to attempt to meet their AHMP goals would be to neglect the very real and growing needs of low-income residents throughout our community. Incentivizing the development of diverse, integrated neighborhoods in which low-income residents can thrive is critical to meeting Arlington's commitment to equity. The PCP must treat affordable housing and low-income residents as a critical component of the redeveloped Langston Boulevard and recognize the importance of economically diverse neighborhoods.

Second, the residential edge areas that were removed from the Preliminary Concept Plan should be reincorporated into the plan. The needs of current and future Arlington residents require the county to rethink plans that incorporate detached single-family homes next to thin corridors of dense, transit rich streets. The demands for increased housing supply and need to prioritize dense housing next to public transit necessitate rezoning residential land around major transit corridors like Langston Boulevard to incentivize denser and taller housing.

Third, the county must do more to engage Black and Brown residents, renters, and low-income residents during land use and planning efforts. The county prioritized the public engagement of current homeowners along Langston Boulevard at the expense of renters and residents who have been excluded from living along Langston Boulevard because of restrictive zoning. The resulting PCP represents compromises made to achieve buy-in from local homeowners which negatively impact the needs of minority and low-income residents throughout the rest of the county. While we appreciate the active engagement with leaders from the historically black neighborhood, High View Park/Hall's Hill, more must be done. We again call on the county to meaningfully reform their public engagement process to lift up the voices of historically marginalized residents and adequately plan for the needs of more diverse, future residents. While the PCP is under public consideration in early 2023, we urge the county to redouble efforts to engage with Black and Brown residents, renters, and low-income residents from across the community to gather their feedback and make important changes to the final Plan Langston Boulevard.

The Plan Langston Boulevard PCP moves the county closer to creating a more diverse "Green Main Street." The NAACP Arlington Branch strongly urges the county to make the necessary changes to ensure it is in alignment with the AHMP goals for the corridor and adequately incentivizes the creation and preservation of diverse, affordable housing.

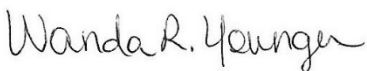
Sincerely,



Julius D. "J.D." Spain, Sr.  
President, NAACP Arlington Branch



Kellen M. MacBeth  
Housing Committee Chair, NAACP Arlington Branch



Wanda R. Younger  
Branch Secretary NAACP Arlington Branch

cc: Arlington County Board Members  
Samia Byrd, Chief Race and Equity Officer, Deputy County Manager  
Claude Williamson, Director, CPHD  
Anthony Fusarelli, Jr., CPHD Planning Director  
Anne Venezia, CPHD Housing Director  
Daniel Weir, Chair, Planning Commission  
Eric Berkey, Chair, Housing Commission  
NAACP Arlington Executive Committee & Members