



TO:

Chief Penn & Captain Scott Linder
Arlington County Police Department

From:

Eric Cassel, President of Crystal City Civic Association
Kateri Garcia, President of Arlington Ridge Civic Association
Cory Giacobbe, President of Aurora Highlands Civic Association

Date: June 27, 2022

Subject: Crime in 22202

Good morning, Sirs,

We write you as leaders of the 22202 civic associations to urge you to take effective and immediate actions to address the alarming and growing incidents of violence and property crime in the area. The country is grappling with rising rates of criminal activity for reasons that are myriad and complex. We believe that what we are witnessing in 22202 reflects some of these national trends, but there are specific areas within the zip code that have a higher propensity for criminal activity and thus require extra attention from law enforcement. We are committed to working closely with Arlington County Board leadership and our law enforcement community to address these issues, reverse the negative trends, and better protect residents and visitors alike.

In recent weeks, there have been a number of incidents that underscore disturbing criminal activities quite unusual for this area. In late May, we learned of an incident where an armed robber violently assaulted a group of people on 23rd Street between Crystal Drive and Route 1, close to the Buchanan Apartments and Bowlero. We also learned that a woman was injured during a purse snatching near the 1300 block of Crystal Drive, also in late May. And residents of Arlington Ridge have reported occurrences of theft and vehicle crime – like the catalytic converter removed from a vehicle on 22nd St S while it was parked in a residential driveway. While we are always encouraged to hear that law enforcement professionals are taking all available measures to identify and detain suspects, as was done in the aftermath of robberies that happened in February of this year, we hope more can be done to protect the community through deterrence as well.

First, we kindly urge Arlington County Police Department (ACPD) to increase police presence in "hot spots" in Crystal City, chief among them is the 23rd Street corridor between Crystal Drive and Fern Street, and to conduct more drive-by patrols on neighboring residential streets in Aurora Highlands and Arlington Ridge. We have seen ACPD recently step up patrols throughout the area, including on weekends, and we hope that effort can become a standard practice going forward. We appreciate ACPD's commitment to ensuring its patrols are focused on deterring significant crimes and increasing trust in the community itself.

Second, we encourage you to work with the Arlington County Board and private establishments, including residential housing and commercial buildings, to ensure they are proactively taking

measures to discourage criminal activity near and on their establishments. For example, we hope you will encourage local businesses to implement reasonable security measures within and immediately outside of their establishments as necessary to protect both the community and their customers. For example, we encourage you to build on the example of your details in Clarendon who have worked to ensure bars and restaurants are staffed to avoid violence and other disturbances. We also believe that the County should suspend and/or revoke liquor licenses of businesses that are frequent sites of violence and other criminal activity should they fail to take reasonable and timely action to address these issues.

We understand 22202 and National Landing are changing rapidly with the arrival of the Amazon HQ2, more residents, and exciting new retail and entertainment. The additional 25,000 daily workers and retail shoppers in the coming years is going to require additional investment now to train and equip the police and ensure they are ready for the influx and ensure that safety is equitable and consistent across the neighborhood. We believe this is an opportunity for the community to collaborate with ACPD to develop proactive crime prevention strategies that will better prepare us for this future. We welcome the opportunity to better understand the assumptions APD is making regarding future security threats and how the County will be investing in ensuring everyone in the community feels safe and heard.



Kateri Garcia, President
Arlington Ridge CA



Cory Jacobbe, President
Aurora Highlands CA



Eric Cassel, President
Crystal City CA

CC: County Board
National Landing Bid