



Alexandria Waterfront Commission

Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities

1108 Jefferson Street

Alexandria, Virginia 22314

February 18, 2022

Honorable Mayor and members of City Council:

Re: City's Proposal to Pilot the Closure of the Unit Block of King Street

The Waterfront Commission offers this letter of endorsement for a pilot program to open the unit block of King Street to pedestrians, as well as establishment of permanent curbside pickup/loading zones in the 100 blocks of North and South Union Street. This letter describes specific suggestions for improving proposed concepts to implement each proposal.

The Waterfront Commission supports the proposed temporary closure to traffic of the unit block of King Street and the northern portion of the strand. Opening these streets to pedestrian traffic will better link Waterfront Park to the existing pedestrian zone in the 100 block of King Street. This proposal is consistent with the Waterfront Small Area Plan, which included three separate recommendations to increase pedestrian access between the Waterfront and King Street.

We offer the following specific recommendations to improve this proposal:

- Center crosswalks and reconsider placement of barricades to facilitate pedestrian access to cross Union Street in the middle of King Street.
- Reconsider the placement of bicycle parking, to ensure it is sufficient and appropriately positioned to maximize access to the waterfront.
- Facilitate access by delivery vehicles servicing adjacent businesses by designating delivery hours and parking locations with a commitment by the City to enforce established regulations and pick-up/loading zone parking limits.

We encourage study of the pilot to inform a proposal to permanently open the unit block of King Street to pedestrians.

The Waterfront Commission also supports approval of permanent curbside pickup/loading zones in the 100 blocks of North and South Union Street. However, we encourage the City to adjust the boundaries of the parking zone to prohibit vehicle parking at existing spaces immediately adjacent to the intersection with King Street. This, coupled with refinement of crosswalks as described above, will provide for greater visibility of and for pedestrians crossing Union Street.

The Waterfront Commission is generally supportive of proposed refinements to the 100 block of King Street and appreciates continued efforts to optimize the features of this block.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this proposal.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Stephen Thayer", with a horizontal line extending to the right.

Stephen Thayer, Chair
Alexandria Waterfront Commission

cc: Traffic & Parking Board
Alexandria Waterfront Commission
James F. Parajon, City Manager
Emily Baker, Deputy City Manager
Debra Collins, Deputy City Manager
Yon Lambert, Director, Transportation & Environmental Services
Karl Moritz, Director, Planning & Zoning
James Spengler, Director, Recreation, Parks & Cultural Activities
Don Hayes, Acting Police Chief, Alexandria Police Department
Jack Browand, Staff Liaison, Alexandria Waterfront Commission