



July 16, 2025

Arlington County Board  
2100 Clarendon Blvd  
Suite 300  
Arlington, VA 22201

Dear Chair Karantonis and Members of the Board,

On behalf of the Board of Directors of Arlington Families for Safe Streets we request that the County authorize the rebuilding of the pedestrian bridge over east bound Langston Boulevard.

We do not believe improvements to at-grade street crossing on Langston Blvd should be deferred or diluted in any way because the County's rebuilding a pedestrian bridge. The two strategies are not mutually exclusive. We encourage the County to make robust pedestrian street safety design changes at Langston & Ft. Myers. Despite all the street level changes the County is considering, pedestrian crashes will still happen because of the human error factor. A driver of a vehicle and/or a pedestrian will use bad judgement that could end up in a tragedy. We have had too many gut-wrenching conversations with family members who lost loved ones to an errant driver of 5,000 lbs. of metal crashing into their family member. These fatalities happen to Moms, Dads, and Children. Equally distressing are the conversations with a crash survivor who is permanently crippled, physically and/or cognitively. All these situations could have been avoided!

A pedestrian bridge nullifies the chances of a vulnerable road user being crashed into when trying to cross into Gateway Park. We are aware that there are some urban planners who question the wisdom of installing a pedestrian bridge. We understand and agree with their point in general, but we believe there are exceptions to that policy. Otherwise, why is the County rebuilding two out of the three existing ped bridges? Why does VDOT still occasionally build a pedestrian bridge?

Undoubtedly, many people will continue to cross Langston Blvd at the street level. That is human nature and that is why we strongly support improvements of the street crossings. By not rebuilding this 3<sup>rd</sup> ped bridge the County will deny the elderly, the handicapped, the parents of children and the people who want to be 100% sure that they can avoid vehicle / vulnerable road use conflicts. With the prospect of Gateway Park's surrounding residential population doubling in the foreseeable future, my colleagues and I are hopeful that the County will rebuild the 3<sup>rd</sup> ped bridge. The cost of this 3<sup>rd</sup> bridge could be subsidized by the County providing some modest increase in the developer's building allowance. We owe it to the lives and well-being of everyone to have the option of a 100% safe crossing via a ped bridge across East Langston Blvd. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Michael Doyle  
Founding Member  
Arlington Families for Safe Streets (Arl FSS)

Ruth Shearer  
President

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