

STATEMENT ON INTENDED INCENTIVES AGREEMENT BETWEEN ARLINGTON COUNTY AND AMAZON

Issued by the Crystal City Citizen Review Council, an Advisory Group for the County Board representing all area stakeholder groups (businesses, land-owners, area residents and key County Commissions):

--the overall view of the CCCRC on this promising development is strongly favorable; after the goals and expectations of the Crystal City Sector Plan have essentially been stymied for so long, this kind of 'resuscitation' brings renewed hope to Crystal City, Arlington and potentially our entire region; and it is fortuitous that the area now has the unbuilt land and vacant space to absorb the density required;

--the CCCRC asks the County to underscore publicly that the County's near-term financial situation requires a strong boost in the commercial tax revenues; the Amazon offer is very timely at a critical moment, when the retention and attraction of large tenants is difficult but absolutely critical;

--the CCCRC finds that the form and scope of the incentives to be provided to Amazon is appropriate and modest; they constitute an investment that is expected to yield extraordinary returns over time; the CCCRC also recognizes the valuable support provided by the Commonwealth in this regard;

--the CCCRC also urges the County to remind its citizens that Crystal City and adjacent areas play an invaluable role in providing resources for the benefit and viability of the County as a whole; the potential benefits of, and thus the support for, the Amazon agreement, are indeed a countywide priority;

--accordingly, a strengthening of the County's investment in the Crystal City/Pentagon City area will be needed for a period of time, in the form of adequate funding and staffing through the budget and CIP, in support and facilitation of the overall endeavors of land-owners, and specifically the arrival of Amazon;

--the CCCRC urges the County, just as the CCCRC intends to do, to work with Amazon to help ensure that business practices, regard for sustainability, and attention to the public realm around its HQ2, reflect the spirit of a good neighbor and community member seeking to become a cause for mutual pride;

-- while the Sector Plan provides room for both the influx directly related to Amazon and for an expected 'multiplier effect', the CCCRC finds it imperative that new Crystal City development conform with the Sector Plan, especially in terms of fundamentals such as density and a balanced land use mix;

--as noted in the Sector Plan, a major influx, even if more gradual than sudden, will lead to a broad spectrum of new and increased needs; the CCCRC urges the County to initiate a review of the readiness or action required to meet those needs, including contingency plans for different scenarios;

--important issues about housing and schools are initially more uncertain, but the known increase in day-time workers and residents will have a more immediate impact on commuter options and transit capacity, as well as on services, amenities and facilities; provisions for open space will be a key factor, as will the emphasis on walkability, both within Crystal City and for the integration with adjacent areas;

--CCCRC also underscores the importance of holistic community development rather than a piecemeal approach merely through individual Site Plan processes; similarly, successful development efforts will depend on full transparency and collaboration with all stakeholders, so that all relevant perspectives can be considered and a strong buy-in can be achieved; CCCRC can be an important conduit in this regard.

BOTTOM LINE: the CCCRC is united in expressing full support for a County agreement with Amazon, but also emphasizes the need for strong, ongoing County efforts to ensure the success of this vital endeavor.