

Lee Highway Alliance and Arlington County Board Move Forward with Plan to Rename Lee Highway

ARLINGTON, VA: With the Arlington County Board's support, the Lee Highway Alliance (LHA) is moving forward to rename Lee Highway. As stated by County Board Member, Katie Cristol: "My colleagues and I are glad to see neighborhood leaders as skilled at consensus-building as the Lee Highway Alliance begin this important conversation about our community's past – and our vision for our shared future."

LHA will develop a Working Group of stakeholders including the LHA Community Advisory Committee, civic associations, property owners, and business owners in the corridor. The Working Group will meet over the summer and into the fall, at which time a shortlist of names will be sent to the County Board.

It is presumed that the numbering as US Route 29 will be maintained by the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT), which is the owner of the highway. Arlington must reach consensus on the name with adjacent jurisdictions. Many years ago, the City of Falls Church renamed their portion of Lee Highway 'Washington Street.' Unlike Virginia counties, Virginia cities are not required to get approval from the Commonwealth.

Arlington already has successfully renamed one state highway within its borders. In April of 2019, the Arlington County Board voted unanimously to approve a resolution asking that the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) rename Arlington's 2.56 mile portion of Jefferson Davis Highway (Route 1) to Richmond Highway. Renaming Lee Highway would follow the same legislative process with the CTB or Virginia General Assembly providing final approval.

LHA is also working with the County and hundreds of stakeholders on Plan Lee Highway, an urban planning project to re-visualize the corridor. The goal is to make it more sustainable, attractive, walkable, welcoming and economically viable for residents and businesses. The comprehensive planning process also includes managing climate change and strengthening environmental safeguards, as well as updating Arlington's General Land Use Plan (GLUP).

Sandi Chesrown, Vice Chair of Plan Lee Highway and Vice President of LHA, noted: "We cannot change the history of Virginia. But the names of streets and highways matter and indicate a community's contemporary values. As we revitalize the corridor and our branding through Plan Lee Highway, together we will look to the future and arrive at a name that better reflects our identity, our aspirations, and our 'main street' character."