



September 8, 2022

Dear Mayor Wilson, Members of the Alexandria City Council, and the Department of Transportation and Environmental Services,

The Alexandria Parent Teacher Association Council (PTAC) would like to voice its support for the sidewalk continuation project on Polk Avenue. As detailed in PTAC's April 18, 2022 letter to Mayor Wilson and the Alexandria City Council, one of PTAC's top priorities is to ensure that Alexandria City Public School (ACPS) students, families, and staff can travel to and from school safely.

Filling this sidewalk gap would provide a more continuous path for students and their families who walk to Polk Elementary and Francis C. Hammond Middle School. The project aligns with recommendations from the 2018 Safe Routes to School Walk Audit for Polk Elementary, and supports the adopted Alexandria Mobility Plan policy to provide a safe, connected sidewalk network.

PTAC applauds the City's Traffic & Parking Board for their unanimous vote in July to recommend removal of nine on-street parking spaces on Polk Avenue to allow for the installation of the proposed sidewalk. PTAC requests the City's continued support for the Polk sidewalk project in light of the appeal that will be heard at City Council Public Hearing on 17 September.

The March crash involving a nine-year-old student who sustained serious injuries at Jefferson Houston School, and the June crash in neighboring Fairfax County that killed two Oakton High School students and critically injured a third, highlight the importance of efforts like the Polk sidewalk project to strengthen pedestrian safety at and near Alexandria's schools. Such projects are even more critical in light of the recent ACPS guidance encouraging families returning for the 2022-2023 school year to consider alternatives to bus service due to the driver shortage.

PTAC appreciates your continued support for the Polk sidewalk project, as well as other efforts to improve pedestrian safety at and near Alexandria's schools.

Thank you,

Alexandria PTA Council Executive Board 2022-2023

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