

April 27, 2021

Dear Members of the Economic Development Authority,

As president of the board of directors of Downtown Greens, and on behalf of the rest of the board and many of our members, volunteers, and donors, I submit this letter as an addendum to our Letter of Intent.

As we reflect on our more than 25 year legacy in Fredericksburg, rather than stagnating, our organization has experienced a renaissance in both its character and mission. We have grown increasingly flexible and responsive to the needs of our program participants, immediate neighbors, and the Fredericksburg area as a whole. We have sought to foster an organization more reflective of and more beneficial to the area's underrepresented population from our Board composition which is predominantly female and People of Color, to the families we serve.

As one of the youngest members of a majority minority Board, and as a black man, it is humbling to be a part of an organization that genuinely seeks to empower those on the margins. Though we are sometimes seen as a "feel good" organization more concerned with the aesthetics of a community than its practicalities, we see our work as both romantic and very practical.

In addition to the less tangible role we play in fostering community, providing life skills, and maintaining safe spaces in Fredericksburg, we have begun to partner with other organizations to more immediately and explicitly address food and environmental apartheid and other socioeconomic issues. Beyond addressing many of the tangential factors that underlie a robust economy (access to healthy food, mental wellness, community cohesiveness) we are increasingly using our infrastructure to be a vehicle that more immediately benefits city residents and the local economy.

Beyond our volunteer and internship opportunities, beyond fostering basic business skills with our youth through their participation at the Farmer's Market, we have laid the groundwork for vocational development programs that would allow Fredericksburg area residents to develop much needed niche skills.

We are honored to be a part of the mosaic of individuals, families, businesses, non-profits, clubs, and so many more that seek to make Fredericksburg the best city we can. Regardless of the outcome of the current negotiations, I am confident that Downtown Greens will continue to be a uniquely positive force capable of serving a myriad of roles, but, again, humbly request your consideration as we seek to expand our ability to serve the area.

Regards,



Brad Smith, President, Board of Directors