



July 15, 2023

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

**Re: Item 58 – Zoning Amendments related to the FOOD Study and Item 59- Outdoor Café process**

Dear Chair Dorsey and Members of the County Board:

On behalf of the Crystal City, Pentagon City, and Potomac Yard business community, the National Landing Business Improvement District (BID) would like to express its **support for Item #58 and Item #59 related to supporting the Future of Outdoor Dining (FOOD) Study recommendations to permanently allow Temporary Outdoor Seating Area's (TOSA).**

The National Landing BID commends the County's quick action in creating an updated and more streamlined process to make Temporary Outdoor Seating Areas (TOSAs) permanent. In National Landing, TOSAs have enabled existing businesses to respond to customer demand for more outdoor seating, especially along the 23<sup>rd</sup> Street Restaurant Row.

The restaurant community has faced major challenges and obstacles to success remain including low office occupancy due to hybrid work, supply chain issues, rising prices, and a shortage of labor. These challenges demonstrate the need to maintain the County's flexible approach to outdoor dining.

We encourage the County to leverage the FOOD Study recommendations to streamline a permanent regulatory approach to outdoor dining throughout the County:

- Consider a regulatory framework that enables TOSAs located on private parking that previously needed to meet parking minimums to become permanent in metro corridors;
- Allow establishments to seek live entertainment and music use permits within the outdoor seating area to support street activation goals; and
- Relax total restaurant capacity restrictions that require one-for-one reductions in indoor seating for each additional outdoor seat to be more consistent with industry standards and practices in neighboring jurisdictions.

Outdoor dining spaces within commercial areas are important tools to support local and small businesses, meet our collective goals for a vibrant streetscape, and facilitate talent attraction efforts in today's economic development environment. We look forward to continued partnership in ensuring a flexible regulatory environment to support small businesses.

Sincerely,

Tracy Sayegh Gabriel  
President & Executive Director  
National Landing Business Improvement District

**NATIONAL LANDING  
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