



NATIONAL LANDING

PENTAGON CITY

CRYSTAL CITY

POTOMAC YARD

August 18, 2023

Secretary Pete Buttigieg
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave., SE
Washington, DC 20590

Subject: FY2024 Multimodal Project Discretionary Grant Program – Route 1 Letter of Support

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

On behalf of the National Landing Business Improvement District (BID) and the collective business community of Crystal City, Pentagon City, and Potomac Yard, I am pleased to provide this letter of support for the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) application with the U.S. Department of Transportation for the FY 2024 Multimodal Project Discretionary Grant Program (MPDG).

In late 2018, with the announcement of an agreement to bring [Amazon's new corporate headquarters to Crystal City](#), the Commonwealth of Virginia identified improvements to Route 1 as one of five transportation projects to be fully or partially funded by the Commonwealth. The Commonwealth's commitment to Amazon and the larger National Landing community is to improve safety, accessibility, and the pedestrian experience along Route 1. This grant request will allow Virginia to convert the Route 1 corridor in Arlington County into a multimodal urban boulevard that prioritizes pedestrian safety in a walkable environment. VDOT is developing multimodal solutions for Route 1 to meet National Landing's transportation needs with the coming of Amazon and other related developments. Since the 2022 MPDG application for this project, the design has been modified to enhance bicycle/pedestrian benefits and address rising infrastructure costs.

The purpose of this project is to identify enhanced multimodal connectivity and accommodations along and across Route 1 in Crystal City, to meet the changing transportation needs of this growing urban activity center. The need for this project is two-fold:

- Multimodal transportation demand is increasing from the creation of an additional Amazon U.S. Headquarters (HQ2) and other ongoing development in National Landing
- These areas are already heavily developed with limited space for expanding the footprint of the transportation network

The U.S. Department of Transportation's support will have the greatest impact for the following reasons:

- **Multimodal safety and reliability and congestion reduction:** Ultimately, a safe transportation network for people walking, biking, taking transit, and driving benefits the daily quality of life for its users. The Route 1 corridor will serve all users and connect existing and planned bicycle/pedestrian routes, as outlined in the Arlington County Master Transportation Plan. Providing safe and active transportation routes, lowering vehicle speeds, and reducing the overall number of vehicles on the corridor will help achieve the goals of the County's Vision Zero Plan.
- **State of good repair:** The transformation of Route 1 to an urban boulevard includes the removal of three bridge structures from the VDOT inventory, reducing long-term maintenance costs. Modifications to the I-395 interchange will remove a structurally deficient bridge and avoid future replacement or rehabilitation costs, while also extending the urban boulevard to the north which will contribute to lower speeds.

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- **Economic impacts, freight movement, and job creation:** This project has the potential to spur development with a connected pedestrian grid which will support the movement of Amazon employees and associated mixed-use development in the area. It increases the accessibility to job centers through the proposed access improvements. The project will create excess right-of-way which could result in additional developable land.
- **Climate change, resiliency, and the environment:** This project will result in reduced greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. New transit service, as well as enhanced opportunities for walking and biking are more environmentally friendly than single-occupant vehicle trips. VDOT is committed to implementing a robust travel demand management (TDM) strategy that is consistent with the results of the ongoing TDM study. Planned improvements to the Crystal City Metro Station and the Crystal City VRE Station also support the necessary mode shift.
- **Equity, multimodal options, and quality of life:** More travel choices will be made available, creating more walkable neighborhoods that result in a higher quality of life. The downtown area will become reconnected to create space for public transit, walking, and cycling. Allowing more households to live car-free will help mitigate the rising cost of living, especially when coupled with Arlington’s commitment to affordable housing.
- **Innovation areas:** This project provides multiple innovative solutions, such as a progressive design-build strategy and a pilot safety project to implement near-miss crash technology in National Landing. There is also the potential for value capture through land sales to further support National Landing elements.

This project satisfies all the merit criteria outlined in the federal grant opportunity, especially the priorities of providing economic, state-of-good-repair, environmental, and equity benefits.

This MPDG grant application has been developed to make a strategic request within the maximum allowed federal funding limit with the state funding the remaining cost. VDOT has also worked with the Governor and General Assembly to allocate funding sources for the required funding match.

Improvements to Route 1 in National Landing will produce significant, measurable benefits to the economy, health, and safety of local citizens while enhancing mobility. We recognize that VDOT is fully committed to this project and will readily apply expertise and plans already in place to efficiently implement this important initiative that is detailed in VDOT’s grant application.

We ask that you give this funding application every appropriate consideration.

Sincerely,



Robert H. Mandle
Deputy Executive Director
National Landing BID

Cc: Tracy Sayegh Gabriel, President and Executive Director, National Landing BID
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