



**NATIONAL
LANDING**

PENTAGON CITY

CRYSTAL CITY

POTOMAC YARD

August 23, 2021

Matthew Mattauszek
Department of Community Planning, Housing, and Development
Arlington County
2100 Clarendon Blvd., Suite 700
Arlington, VA 22201

Dear Mr. Mattauszek:

On behalf of the Crystal City, Pentagon City, and Potomac Yard business community, the National Landing Business Improvement District (BID) offers the following comments after reviewing the County's **Draft Pentagon City Plan**.

Overall, the BID applauds County staff and the consultant team on an inclusive and open process that has welcomed discussion and constructive feedback throughout. In addition to a robust public meeting schedule and community dialogue, the Plan incorporates key ideas and themes from both the BID's Area Wide-Strategic Plan and the community's planning efforts encapsulated in the 22202 Livability Framework.

The Plan, however, could go further in articulating this shared vision for a Pentagon City that is a walkable, livable, urban center amidst the broader National Landing downtown. More specifically, the plan needs a clearly defined vision statement that offers a bold and inspirational outlook on the future Pentagon City and its place within National Landing, Arlington County, and the region.

The Plan must also strongly emphasize the *illustrative* nature of the Plan's renderings, illustrations, and visualizations. There is little doubt that these visual tools are important in helping the public understand the content and the intent of the plan. Past examples in the Crystal City and Rosslyn Sector Plans', however, suggest caution. Including a new "How to use the Plan" section into the document that serves as a narrative specifically targeted towards the Site Plan Review Committee, Commissions, and other citizen review bodies that focuses on the vision, principles, and regulatory framework of the Plan and cautions against strict adherence to the document's imagery may prove useful.

Finally, the BID would also like to reiterate several points made in its March 10th letter to staff around the Plan's need to:

- Accurately outline the community benefit asks and costs across all of Pentagon City to deliver more certainty and clarity around costs for development
- Incorporate sufficient flexibility to enable projects to respond to changing market conditions
- Consider Pentagon City as part of a collective downtown community with seamless connectivity to Crystal City, Aurora Highlands, Arlington Ridge, and the Pentagon

Pentagon City is poised for additional growth and development. A strong vision for a vibrant, inclusive, and sustainable downtown community combined with a recognition of the need for commensurate investments in multimodal infrastructure will best ensure that the area achieves the envisioned outcome. The BID looks forward to continuing to participate in the Pentagon City Plan effort and working towards implementation.

Sincerely,

Robert H. Mandle
Deputy Executive Director
National Landing Business Improvement District

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

**NATIONAL LANDING
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IMPROVEMENT
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DRAFT Pentagon City Plan Comments

- Pages 1 – 15: Though this section is titled “The Pentagon City Vision,” the whole plan can benefit from a more succinct Vision Statement that offers a hopeful and inspirational outlook on the future envisioned by the Plan.
- Page 35 – The Near-Term Illustrative Plan graphic could benefit from colors that differentiate between new and existing buildings.
- Page 37 – The infographics on Plan Use Mix are useful to understanding how the community will feel at build out. They would be even more helpful by including the entire Pentagon City area, not just the planning study since the actual community doesn’t strictly follow these boundaries.
- Pages 61, 65 – Additional detail is needed to fully understand how the envisioned Pentagon City bike infrastructure intersects with the rest of National Landing. In some cases, facility designs inside the boundary don’t match those outside the boundaries making for what might be a very disjointed bike network. A broader National Landing Bike and Micromobility Plan that builds on the intent of the Pentagon City plan and the Crystal City Sector Plan and the more recently approved Crystal City Bike Network Plan would be a useful next step.
- Page 80 – Plan may benefit from more clearly defining what “facing neighboring areas” means. Does this mean building fronts? Or does it simply mean adjacent to neighboring areas?
- Page 87 – Retail Map does not illustrate what existing planning guidance (i.e., Sector Plan and Retail Plan) calls for on the opposite side of South Eads Street just outside the boundary. Would be important to understand context.
- Page 105-106 - The Plan references possible design guidelines for the Wayfinding System of the “Green Ribbon” open space network. Given the BID’s Work Plan priority of initiating a National Landing-wide wayfinding planning and design effort, the Plan should clarify the illustrative nature of those elements. Developing successful wayfinding systems requires a massive planning and outreach effort that was not included in the scope of the current effort and should not hinder future flexibility in creating a world-class system.