



**NATIONAL
LANDING**

PENTAGON CITY

CRYSTAL CITY

POTOMAC YARD

July 12, 2021

Mr. Dan Reinhard, P.E.
Virginia Department of Transportation
4975 Alliance Drive
Fairfax, VA 22030

Dear Mr. Reinhard,

On behalf of the National Landing Business Improvement District (BID), the collective business communities of Crystal City, Pentagon City, and Potomac Yard, I am writing in support of the Virginia Department of Transportation's (VDOT) preferred concept that converts Route 1 from an elevated highway into a narrower, slower, and safer urban boulevard.

This proposed boulevard concept is an important step towards creating a more walkable, urban downtown. We applaud VDOT's outreach in working with the community, soliciting feedback, and making improvements that advance an interest in safety for the most vulnerable mobility users.

However, the concept as presented at the third public workshop for the Route 1 Multimodal Feasibility Study on Wednesday, June 16th should go further to address community concerns and ensure the new facility achieves the intended goals of improved pedestrian and bicycle safety and connectivity.

First, the scope of the project must be extended south to the Alexandria border. Implementing a consistent, urban boulevard treatment throughout the corridor communicates a clear message to drivers to drive cautiously. Most importantly, a corridor-wide approach would address existing at-grade intersections that the community has identified as being unsafe. Specifically, the intersections at 20th and 23rd Street South are most in need of a treatment commensurate with the future 18th and 15th Street intersections.

Secondly, Route 1 should be designed to slow traffic and deliver a safe, pedestrian-friendly experience and crossings consistent with a Vision Zero approach. Downtowns across the country, including those in the District of Columbia and Montgomery County have incorporated design standards aimed at safety such as narrower 10-foot travel lanes and max speeds of 25 miles per hour. VDOT should incorporate this best practice of adopting context-sensitive standards that reflect the environment and character of the community through which the roadway travels.

For Route 1 to truly be a multimodal transportation asset, protected bicycle and micromobility infrastructure must be incorporated along, but especially across the roadway. This can be achieved through the incorporation of a curb separated north/south facility combined with best-in-class physically protected intersections where east/west bicycle network connections can be made. These east/west connections are most critical at 18th and 15th Street South, but could also be incorporated at 23rd Street South to maximize safety and connectivity.

Finally, VDOT and Arlington County must work together to incorporate creative operational approaches to improving safety along the corridor. Automated traffic enforcement would improve adherence to speed limits and other traffic rules while providing revenue that could be reinvested in safety infrastructure improvements throughout the community. On-street parking could be incorporated during the off-peak hours to further reduce speeds and provide additional protection for the sidewalk and bicycle facility while furthering other economic development goals by supporting the area's restaurant and small-business community.

Route 1 has long divided our community and not lived up to its full potential. We urge VDOT and Arlington County to continue to evolve the preferred alternative for an at-grade, urban boulevard that incorporates the above suggestions which are proven strategies to make streets safer. A reimagined Route 1 can deliver a safer and more connected downtown community for all who live, work, and visit National Landing, but especially for our most vulnerable roadway users.

**NATIONAL LANDING
BUSINESS
IMPROVEMENT
DISTRICT**

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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Tracy Sayegh Gabriel". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial 'T'.

Tracy Sayegh Gabriel
President & Executive Director