



**THE PEOPLE BEFORE  
CARS COALITION  
UNITES LOCAL  
STAKEHOLDERS  
AROUND SHARED  
PRIORITIES TO  
CREATE A SAFER AND  
MORE ACCESSIBLE  
TRANSPORTATION  
NETWORK ACROSS  
NATIONAL LANDING.**

October 28, 2021

**Matt Mattauszek**

Master Planner, Crystal City/Pentagon City Planning Coordinator  
Arlington County Department of Community Planning, Housing & Development  
(CPHD)  
2100 Clarendon Boulevard  
Arlington, VA 22201

Dear Mr. Mattauszek:

On behalf of the People Before Cars Coalition, please accept this letter outlining our feedback on the draft Pentagon City Planning Document.

The Coalition exists to push forward several shared priorities to create a safe and more accessible transportation network within National Landing. The lead stakeholders include: the National Landing Business Improvement District (BID), a public-private partnership promoting a vibrant National Landing community; Sustainable Mobility for Arlington County, an advocacy organization that promotes smart transportation options for residents; Arlington Families for Safe Streets, a community voice advocating for safer and equitable mobility; Washington Area Bicyclist Association, a nonprofit supporting a just transportation system, and JBG SMITH, the largest property owner and developer in National Landing.

The Coalition champions Vision Zero principles and prioritizes people-first planning and design for upcoming projects in National Landing. As such we strongly support the document's vision for Pentagon City as part of a "dynamic downtown for Arlington and the region," as well as the stated planning principles such as "Places for People" and "Provide safe, inviting transportation choices that make driving unnecessary." Achieving this vision and adhering to these principles will require a bigger commitment and vision from the County to remake the existing street network and transportation system.

### **Transit**

The document's Transit section is light on details. Timely initiation of 16M bus service connecting Crystal City, Pentagon City and Columbia Pike with a one seat ride will be critical to ensuring that Pentagon City can grow while maintaining excellent mobility for the neighborhood's residents, new and old, as well as providing enhanced access to existing and new jobs in National Landing for the Columbia Pike Corridor and its growing residential population. This critical element of the transit and mobility network should be explicitly included in the plan.

While the plan calls for the completion of the existing Transitway to Pentagon City, it is important that this critical transportation facility return maximum benefit given its capital cost. This document should commit to the future expansion of the Transitway's operating hours to at least 6am-10pm. If transitway lanes are not needed during the height of rush hour, then they also aren't necessary outside of rush hour. It appears that post-pandemic travel patterns are shifting to include significantly more travel throughout the work day reinforcing the need to increase the operating hours of the Transitway.

### **Bike Network**

The Coalition is committed to an interconnected network of bike facilities throughout National Landing. In order to provide the safest possible network, these facilities must embody best-in-class designs and utilize high-quality materials that provide real protection to people biking such as curbs or crash-rated planters.







Making the facility as safe as possible will expand demand and shift ridership away from sidewalks thereby improving safety and preserving space for people walking.

The coalition is strongly supportive of the plan's inclusion of protected bike lanes on Joyce Street from Army Navy Drive to Hayes Street and on Fern Street from Army Navy Drive to 15th Street, but the remainder of the network shown in the document is lacking. The plan appears to show a protected bike lane only in the southbound direction on Hayes Street while leaving northbound travelers with the same unsafe painted bike lane that currently exists and is consistently blocked by transit and pick-up and drop-off activities. This plan needs protected bike lanes on Hayes Street in both directions.

Another major gap in the network is the lack of a consistent, low-stress bike facility on 15th Street between Hayes Street and planned facilities to the east in Crystal City. With no bike infrastructure planned for 14th, 13th or 12th Streets, the lack of a contiguous facility on 15th would leave the equivalent of a 7-block gap between east-west connections for those on two wheels. This illustrates how the County cannot rely exclusively on redevelopment to connect the bike network in National Landing. Some County capital projects will be necessary to retrofit already rebuilt streetscapes like 15th Street between Hayes and Elm Street and should be included in the Pentagon City Plan.

### **Vision Zero**

The Vision Zero section is missing several operational tools that the County can and should be pursuing within National Landing. Most importantly, utilization of automated enforcement systems for red light running, no-right-turn-on-red violations, and speeding along Route 1 and other arterial streets throughout National Landing would encourage safe driving and reduce injuries. Revenue from an automated enforcement program can be reinvested towards Vision Zero projects in National Landing and immediate neighborhoods. Another important strategy is the universal incorporation of pedestrian recall and "rest in walk" signal timing at all at-grade intersections throughout National Landing so people walking never need to push a button for the ability to safely cross the street.

These tools are necessary to create the safe, walkable, people-focused downtown that the Coalition and the Pentagon City Plan envisions.

National Landing is undergoing a dramatic transformation. The People Before Cars Coalition is committed to transforming the area into a downtown where we can live, work and play without needing a car. The Pentagon City Plan embraces that same vision, but needs the additional transportation priorities outlined above to be successful. The Coalition commends Arlington County for pursuing a vision of Pentagon City as part of a dynamic downtown that prioritizes safe, inviting transportation choices that make driving unnecessary.

Collectively from the People Before Cars Coalition Stakeholders,

#### **Gillian Burgess**

President of the Board, Arlington Families for Safe Streets

#### **Jay Corbalis**

Vice President, Public Affairs JBG SMITH

#### **Tracy Sayegh Gabriel**

President & Executive Director, National Landing BID

#### **Jeremiah Lowery**

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#### **Chris Slatt**

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