



**NATIONAL
LANDING**
PENTAGON CITY
CRYSTAL CITY
POTOMAC YARD

November 29, 2022

Amit Bose
Administrator
Federal Railroad Administration
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Administrator Bose,

On behalf of the National Landing Business Improvement District (BID) and the collective business communities of Crystal City, Pentagon City, and Potomac Yard, I am writing to express our support for Amtrak in its application for FY22 Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI) Program funding for the Crystal City High Level Platform Project (Project).

Amtrak, in partnership with the Virginia Passenger Rail Authority (VPRA) and Virginia Railway Express (VRE), is embarking on an incredible opportunity to bring intercity rail service to National Landing-- Arlington County's most walkable urban downtown. Promoting sound smart growth principles and land use planning, the National Landing BID is thrilled to support this important rail connection for our growing district. With over \$4B in currently planned infrastructure investments, National Landing is positioned to be one of the nation's best-connected downtowns with unparalleled transportation assets. Amazon's HQ2 development and Virginia Tech's \$1B innovation campus currently under construction anticipate these critical infrastructure investments and are capitalizing on these improvements as advantages for attracting top tech talent seeking strong transportation connections within vibrant urban areas.

Extending intercity rail service to National Landing will also provide safe, equitable, and sustainable transportation opportunities for this growing regional center by supporting job creation and offering unprecedented economic benefits, not only for our district, but also for the region. The Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOG) forecasts a 77 percent population increase and employment growth of 30% by 2045 for this area. Providing a new Amtrak station here will support existing and projected mobility demands of our region by offering a direct rail Amtrak connection between Crystal City and destination centers along the Northeast Corridor such as Washington, DC, New York, NY and Boston, MA to the north and other Virginia municipalities to the south such as Richmond, Roanoke, and Newport News.

Extending Amtrak to National Landing will also improve the local transportation network by offering greater pedestrian and bicycle connectivity to National Landing's current walkable downtown and provide added connectivity to the nearby Mount Vernon Trail. Regional rail connections will also benefit from this additional Amtrak station as a contiguous VRE stop is planned to be located along the same platform, offering a seamless connection between intercity and regional travel. Additionally, Arlington County is currently exploring a direct intermodal connection from the Amtrak/VRE station to the Washington National Airport, leveraging a unique opportunity for visitors to be within a 5-minute walk from a national airport to the commercial heart of Crystal City.

The National Landing BID encourages Amtrak to comply with the American Disability Act (ADA) specifications as it pursues this important project. Specifically, the Project is proposed to construct an 850-foot high-level platform. To provide ADA-Accessible service to both Amtrak and VRE customers, the Crystal City location will include both high and low-level platforms. The BID encourages Amtrak to construct both platforms according to ADA guidelines.

As the scope of this CRISI application is construction, the National Landing BID encourages the project's design phase to be completed in Fiscal Year 2023 allowing for a complete and thorough design effort necessary to support construction efforts in a timely manner, should this grant be awarded.

The National Landing BID eagerly supports Amtrak's application for the CRISI Program grant to fund this Project. Expanding the national rail network by adding a new station where demand already exists and is expected to increase substantially, greatly incentivizes economic development and business activity in National Landing and throughout the greater Washington DC region. If we do not offer these next generational transportation improvements now, then our national transportation network could negatively impact opportunities to offer an equitable, accessible and environmentally sound transportation system here in National Landing and the Northeast Corridor. We strongly support this project and will continue to advocate for this important rail connection through to implementation.

Thank you for your consideration of this important Project and please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions.

Sincerely,



Tracy Sayegh Gabriel
President & Executive Director
National Landing BID