



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

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On behalf of the Crystal City, Pentagon City, and Potomac Yard business community, the National Landing Business Improvement District (BID) would like to provide comment on Virginia Department's Transportation's (VDOT) Route Phase 2 Report.

We want to commend VDOT for navigating stakeholders and community members through the Phase 2 process. VDOT has been a good partner in listening to all the feedback and being flexible where able to implement the community's recommendations. We overwhelmingly support the vision VDOT has laid before us in the final Phase 2 Report.

Recognizing that the project is still in an early stage of design, we offer the following recommendations to help ensure the final project achieves the full potential envisioned in this report.

Travel Lane Width

One of the goals of urbanizing Route 1 is to transform this fast-moving highway into a safe, walkable urban boulevard. This goal becomes more challenging if the travel lanes remain 11 feet. Various studies show wider lanes encourage faster vehicle speeds. According to the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials Green Book, 10 feet lanes should be considered the minimum standard for urban boulevards like Route 1. Additionally, the gutter pan width should be considered part of the curb lane width calculation. Adding it helps to understand the actual width of the curb lane, and we'd like the report to reflect the total ROW lane width, which is 13 feet.

Creative Operations and Enforcement Tactics

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 should be incorporated 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. Given that Arlington must receive support from the Commonwealth to manage on-street parking on this facility, the BID seeks the inclusion of this recommendation within the final report. Safety-focused operational improvements like right-on-red restrictions, tight curb radii to slow turning vehicles, and leading pedestrian intervals and bike signals should be used to further prioritize walking, biking and transit.

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Buffer Between Walk Zone and Roll Zone

We applaud the inclusion of the protected bike lane/roll zone in the project but remain concerned about whether the design will be effective in separating people walking and rolling. Similar facilities, such as the one on Maine Avenue SW near the Wharf in DC, see frequent user conflict with pedestrians conflicting onto the bike facility. ***We urge the project team to be intentional and clear about this demarcation as the design advances***- perhaps by making the sidewalk and the roll zone different colors, using different materials, or including a grade change or physical barrier such as a planting strip between the sidewalk and roll zone. A simple paint stripe would certainly be insufficient.

Median Refuge Protection

The current design provides ample median refuges for pedestrians who are unable to cross Route 1 in one light cycle. However, these refuges lack physical barriers to protect vulnerable users from vehicles leaving the roadway. A standard curb is not sufficient and will not stop a vehicle. Instead, we need crash rated barriers to protect users in these locations. Such barriers exist on similar facilities within the National Highway System such as Route 9A (the West Side Highway) in New York City and are appropriate for locations where a high number of vulnerable users will be surrounded by fast-moving traffic.

15th Street Intersection


The overall design of 15th Street is much improved from its current condition with the addition of protected bike infrastructure at the intersection and restriction of right turns on red. However, the inclusion of a “double” left turn lane from eastbound 15th street to northbound Route 1 puts driver convenience over the needs of other users by unnecessarily widening the intersection and increasing the risk of “multiple threat” crashes in an area we are trying to make safer for pedestrians. ***We encourage VDOT to remove the 2nd left turn lane and use the space to narrow the intersection.***

Placemaking

Lastly, we want to emphasize our continued support of the vision of transforming this highway into an urban boulevard. A big component in doing this will be all the placemaking interventions like landscaping, seating, public art, and sidewalk design that does not preclude outdoor café seating. A great precedent in National Landing is South Eads Street between 12th Street and 15th Street.

We look forward to continuing working with VDOT in completing this important project.

Sincerely,



Tracy Sayegh Gabriel
President & CEO
National Landing BID