



FY 2026 – Q1 BOARD MEETING

NATIONAL LANDING BID

Thursday, July 24, 2025, 11:00 am – 1:00 pm

1550 Crystal Drive Suite 420 Arlington VA 22202

Meeting Minutes

Members Present:

Christina Brady Stacey Brayboy, Mark Carrier, Kimberly Driggins, Nick Giacobbe, Aubrey Fenton, Franki Fitterer, Chris Madoo, Donna Marquez, Andrea Murray, Dolores Navia, Abbey Oklak, Mara Olguin, Robert (Robbie) Peck, Regina Rees, Harmar Thompson

Members Absent:

Ashleigh De La Torre, Aubrey Dennis-King Fenton, Judy Freshman, Catherine Anchin, Joe Oyler, Heena Feeney, Katharine Ange, Kingdon Gould, Gary Cook, Shavini Fernando, Patrick Philippi

Members Virtual:

Shannon Flanagan-Watson, Freddie Lutz, Rock Harper

Staff Present:

Tracy Sayegh Gabriel, Rob Mandle, Malaika Scriven, Madeline Long, Elissa Staley, Haroni Tewolde

Others Present:

None

Welcome & Introductions

- Donna Marquez welcomed attendees.
- Board Chair, Kimberly Driggins, reviewed the agenda and welcomed new board directors.
- All meeting attendees introduced themselves.

Chair's Report

Recent Wins

- Annual Meeting: Successful event with over 200 attendees at Amazon's HQ2 and nine National Landing restaurants.
- Spring Events: Jazz @ Met (with DC Jazz Festival, MoCA, Amazon), Fit @ The Fountain, and Fridays at the Fountain.

- Retail Openings: Nearly a dozen openings including Bar Chinois, Club Studio, and La Posada.
- C2100 & 2200 Adaptive Reuse: The BID submitted a July letter of support for JBG SMITH's 2100 and 2200 Crystal Drive conversion project of two vacant office buildings to future residential and hotel uses. Arlington County Board approved the project on July 19.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

Motion on Approval of FY2025 Q4 Board Meeting Minutes

- Motion: Robbie Peck
- Seconded: Stacey Brayboy
- Abstention: New Board members abstaining- Nick Giacobbe
- Discussion: None
- Approved Unanimously
- Opposed: None

Treasurer's Report (Robert Peck)

End of Year Soft-Close:

- At fiscal year-end, BID staff completes a "soft-close," to provide a pre-audit snapshot of financials. While subject to change from late invoices and the audit, this gives the Board a relatively accurate picture of our financial position and enables the Board to make decisions on necessary carry-over requests as well as required County Manager notification if there are significant variances in spending relative to the approved budget.
- Unspent operating funds totaled \$445k, comparable to last year's \$426k, largely due to delayed major initiatives: Branding Refresh, Innovation District Formation, Green Print Vision, 12th Street Construction Fencing Enhancement, Placemaking Toolkit implementation, and establishment of the Trust for National Landing. Each of these projects had substantial planned spending as we approached the end of the fiscal year, which was not realized.
- Substantive variances in program area spending relative to budget occurred:
 - o Administration/Management exceeded budget due to office relocation and personnel changes
 - o Economic Development and Public Realm were substantially underbudget as we prepared to roll out placemaking initiatives in alignment with the Placemaking Toolkit, initiative

landscape enhancements, and launch a long-planned effort to develop a Green Ribbon Vision district-wide

- Additional factors:
 - Nearly \$110k in unbudgeted income offset reduced assessment revenue; no appeals reserve drawdown was needed despite the 1.7% decline in assessment revenue.
 - An accounting formula error misallocated actuals, understating administration and overstating other program areas.
- Reserves- there are also approximately \$378k in unspent reserve funds.
 - This includes the Operating Contingency in the amount of \$259k; and approximately \$119k for the Brand refresh that have not yet been spent.
 - After accounting for \$121k in new office capitalization, carryover totals are ~\$324K in operating funds, or ~\$702k including reserves.

County Manager Letter & Reserve Funds:

The BID's service agreement requires notice to the County Manager for carryovers and program variances >\$50k.

- **BID staff recommended two reserve funds for FY2026:**
 - (1) Maintain the operating contingency by transferring FY2025's fund fully into FY2026. The BID's FY2026 budget anticipates a small contribution to fill the reserve to its 5% capacity.
 - (2) Project Reserve Fund for the six main projects already underway totaling \$441k.
- Any fluctuations in final carryover fund amounts resulting from the Audit will be applied to the Project Reserve.

Questions and Discussion

- Christina Brady asked what sets the maximum for the operating contingency reserve of 5%?
Response from Tracy: It is based on the Service Agreement.
- Dolores Navia asked about the breakdown of expenses – program versus administrative. Robbie shared that many costs are assigned/allocated to their respective program areas (i.e., staff time for transportation is allocated to the Transportation program area)
- Dolores asked does public realm and beautification include safety programs? Rob shared that public realm and beautification mostly includes banner programs, art, landscape maintenance, and enhancements. The budget also supports Path Forward.

Motion to approve a request to the County Manager to carry over unspent FY2025 Operating Funds and Reserve funds into 1) a Program Reserve Fund of \$441,400; and 2) the FY2026 Operating Contingency Reserve fund of approximately \$261,100

- Motion: Donna Marquez
- Seconded: Mara Olguin
- Abstention: Shannon Flanagan-Watson
- Discussion: None
- Approved Unanimously
- Opposed: None

FY2026 Budget

Robbie provided context regarding the spending approach for FY2026.

- **Revenue Outlook:** BID expects a slight 0.5% decrease in assessment revenue. Commercial property values declined 3.6%, while residential (+1.6%) and hotel (+1.7%) saw modest gains.
- **Budget Pressure:** Uncertainty around commercial assessments and potential appeals may affect FY2026 and beyond. Staff will remain cautious pending December assessment appeals.
- **Reserves:** Rob noted significant reserves to carry over; goal is to reduce reliance on these balances. Tracy added that surpluses are common due to multi-year project rollovers.

Robbie closed the Treasurer's Report by sharing that a soft-close snapshot and financial reports are included in the materials provided.

Questions and Discussion

- Christina Brady asked about the accounting firm's reliability. Robert described the formula error and confirmed confidence in the firm.
- Mark Carrier asked about payment timing given the strong cash balance. Robert stated the County issues payments in January (post-appeals) and July (workplan-based).
- A question was raised about investing cash balances. Staff noted funds are not currently invested; interest-bearing options could be considered.
- Harmar Thompson noted slower building deliveries and appeals-driven valuation reductions; supported maintaining a cushion.
- The Board discussed whether to adjust the assessment rate (unchanged since formation; ~one-third of Rosslyn's).

- Mark Carrier asked about exceeding the County's 5% reserve cap. Staff noted this would require reopening the service agreement and could be explored.

Committee Report Outs

Board Committees

Kimberly provided an overview of the Board Committee

Audit Committee Updates

- Discussion led by Robbie Peck
- Preparation for FY2025 Audit was underway.
- TKR to provide audit findings ahead of the Q2 board meeting in October; formal deadline November 1.
- Treasurer serves as Chair; Board Chair Kimberly Driggins is a required member; elected member: Abbey Oklak.

Transportation Committee

- Discussion led by Harmar Thompson
- Bike Month (May) welcomed 300+ participants; Pride Crosswalks updated; CC2DCA funding discussed.
- The June 11, 2025 meeting: updates on Long Bridge, Alexandria Fourth Track, VRE/Amtrak station integration, CC2DCA connector; WMATA Better Bus redesign (route numbering, payment technology).
- The BID and County are collaborating to offer improved signage and placemaking interventions to support affected businesses, improve pedestrian access, and to offer easy access transitway project information through QR codes.
- Anticipated in FY2026: 30% designs for CC2DCA and Route 1, signage reform, refreshed Mobility Next assets; next meeting in September.
- On signage reform, a first round passed the prior weekend; further comprehensive reforms, including digital/interactive options aligned with the Innovation District, were recommended.
- A member noted more confidence in CC2DCA achieving 30% design than Route 1; Route 1 design direction expected in the fall; potential delay to next administration.

Questions and Discussion

- A board member asked about signage reform. Staff noted that an initial round of updates had recently passed to improve the signage approval process, but additional reforms are needed to address signage and wayfinding more comprehensively.
- The member suggested exploring digital and interactive signage to reflect the Innovation District identity, noting that signage has been an ongoing challenge since the BID's formation.
- Dolores Navia commented that the CC2DCA project is more likely to reach 30% design completion before Route 1. She added that Route 1's design direction is expected in the fall and may be delayed until the next administration.

Equity Committee

- Discussion was led by Donna Marquez.
- The June 16, 2025 Equity Committee meeting concluded FY2025 with the following Heritage Month highlights:
 - June 18: Juneteenth Commemoration — screening of Segregated by Design followed by a panel discussion featuring Monique Bryant, Executive Director of Challenging Racism, and Arlova Vonhm, Zoning Administrator for Arlington County.
 - June 25: Pride Happy Hour and Drag Sing-Along at Freddie's.
- The Committee is seeking a co-chair.
- Stacey Brayboy volunteered to join the Equity Committee.

23rd Street Committee

- Discussion was led by Freddie Lutz.
- The BID continues to track foot traffic on 23rd Street. Overall visitation was slightly lower than last year; however, weekends remain strong with steady activity between 5:00 and 11:00 p.m.
- Foot traffic data will now be shared quarterly to better inform marketing and activation strategies.
- 23rd Street continues to perform well on the Open Rewards platform with high customer engagement. The Committee opted not to hold an Oktoberfest event this year, instead focusing on targeted rewards campaigns and encouraging businesses to promote themselves through the new microsite.
- A video reel highlighting 23rd Street as a late-night destination is in development. The Committee also discussed strategies to increase lunch-hour visitation and overall visibility.

- Members discussed ongoing concerns related to zoning, cleanliness, and rodent control. Several businesses shared that these issues affect both perception and operations. An interim meeting will be scheduled to focus on trash and alley operations and explore collective solutions.
- The BID is reassessing the structure and frequency of these meetings and gathering stakeholder feedback to ensure they meet community needs.

Marketing Committee

- Discussion was led by Franki Fritter
- The Marketing and Communications Committee met on July 1, 2025, and discussed the following:
 - Q4 Metrics: 97M+ media impressions and \$900K+ in estimated ad value across numerous placements.
 - Upcoming Press Opportunities: Coverage expected in The Washingtonian, The Washington Post, FOX, WUSA9, and CoStar in August.
 - Photography Updates: Sam Kittner's new skyline and area images were showcased. Remaining shoots include Pentagon City skyline and 1900 Crystal Drive retail/nightlife.
 - Priority Collateral: Development of a tourism one-pager for hotel/destination marketing; Welcome to the Neighborhood business toolkit with editable map; and a trifold brochure (who/what/why of National Landing) for the IDA Conference and related events.
 - Website and Messaging: The Committee discussed addressing perceptions of limited parking and access through the upcoming website overhaul, emphasizing storytelling around the area's vibrant dining, retail, and business sectors, and exploring more experiential marketing opportunities.
 - Brand Refresh RFP: Reviewed project timeline and strategy; feedback requested from members. Kimberly Driggins recommended Street Sense for the RFP.
 - Stakeholder Input: Suggested ideas included an interactive map (transit, parking, amenities) and tailored outreach for B2B and B2C audiences. Board members were invited to share additional needs and ideas.

Planning & Development Committee

- Discussion was led by Andrea Murray
- The Planning and Development Committee met on June 5, 2025, and discussed the following:

- o Annual Meeting: Reviewed the success of the event, including the debut of the Market Dashboard and Market Insights Summary Report as new tools for storytelling and stakeholder engagement.
- o Small Business Support: Provided updates on the Open Rewards program, highlighting strong ROI, the current PRIDE throttle, and top-performing businesses.
- o Development Activity: Reviewed updates on active, on-hold, and renewal-seeking development projects.
- o FY2026 Initiatives: Discussed Phase II of the Innovation District Business Plan; the upcoming RFQ for placemaking activations at the 12th Street and Airport Access underpasses; and the pending Green Print RFP, focused on strategically connecting public spaces.
- o Public Art Collaboration: Continued coordination with Arlington County to identify priority sites for public art implementation through the County's Public Art Program.
- The Committee looks forward to continued progress on these initiatives and will reconvene at its next scheduled meeting (date TBD).

FY2026 Work Plan Priorities

- FY25 Annual Report provided for committee to review before the next board meeting (also in virtual packets)
- FY26 Work Plan priorities include:
 - o The FY2025 Annual Report was provided for committee review ahead of the next board meeting (also included in virtual packets).
 - o FY2026 Work Plan priorities include:
 - Strategic Plan Implementation: Focus on the Innovation District and Flagship Event.
 - Culture: Advance cultural programming across the district.
 - CC2DCA: Continue advocacy and coordination on the project.
 - Brand: Implement ongoing brand and marketing initiatives.
 - Green Ribbon Vision: Identify opportunities to expand and highlight the district's connected green network.
 - Equity: Strengthen equity-centered initiatives.
 - Ambassador Program: Explore feasibility and determine whether to prioritize this initiative. Staff noted that limited available space and significant costs (estimated in

the multi-million dollar range) currently constrain implementation. Data and wayfinding improvements will be analyzed before further discussion.

- Tourism Improvement District: Mark Carrier noted the County's evaluation of an increase to the transient occupancy tax that could generate approximately \$5.5 million in additional funding for a countywide tourism improvement district. He highlighted potential coordination opportunities pending agreement on the appropriate structure and governance.

Questions and Discussion:

- A board member asked whether the \$150,000 allocation would be shared among Innovation District members. Staff explained that the funding would support an initial ramp-up phase prior to a potential three-year commitment, with a long-term goal of \$1.5 million.
- Arlington Economic Development (AED) has allocated \$150,000 toward the effort, and both Amazon and Virginia Tech are participating in related discussions.
- Andrea Murray shared that AI Unlocked will take place in National Landing on October 3–4, 2025. The free, primarily outdoor event is expected to draw over 5,000 attendees and is hosted by SCSP, a nonprofit focused on AI and national security.
- Abbey Oklak asked whether the event and related efforts are covered within the existing BID budget. Tracy Gabriel confirmed they are, noting this represents a strong opportunity to further position the area as a hub for innovation.

Motion that the National Landing Business Improvement District (BID) allocate \$150,000 to support the launch and establishment of an organization to manage, operate, and oversee the National Landing Innovation District

- Motion: HarmarThompson
- Seconded: Christina Brady
- Abstention: None
- Discussion: None
- Approved Unanimously
- Opposed: None

Trust for New Landing/CC2DCA

- Tracy reported that the Trust for National Landing is ready to launch and is preparing to complete the IRS filing process.
- The Executive Committee is serving as the initial Board of Directors for the Trust.
- Seed funding of \$100,000 has been budgeted to support the Trust's launch and early operations.
- Tracy also highlighted CC2DCA as a key initiative and recommended submitting a letter to the Department of Environmental Services (DES) regarding landscape maintenance support for the project.

Motion authorizing the National Landing Business Improvement District (BID) to allocate up to \$100,000 in FY2026 operating funds to support the launch of the Trust.

- Motion: Abbey Oklak
- Seconded: Robbie Peck
- Abstention: Regina Rees
- Discussion:
- Approved Unanimously
- Opposed: None

Motion authorizing the National Landing Business Improvement District (BID) to support utilizing the Trust for National Landing to provide public realm and landscape maintenance services for CC2DCA.

- Motion: Robbie Peck
- Seconded: Harmar Thompson
- Abstention: None
- Discussion:
- Approved Unanimously
- Opposed: None

Closing Remarks

- Kimberly closed the meeting and thanked everyone
- Rob reminded board directors to fill out the Conflict of Interest (COI) Forms and provide to Haroni before leaving. As a reminder, conflicts aren't prohibited, they just need to be disclosed.
- Next Board meeting is on **Wednesday, October 30th**