



February 9, 2022

Subject: ARCA Comments on Pentagon City Sector Plan (PCSP)

Dear County Board,

The Arlington Ridge Civic Association (ARCA) has been a part of the Pentagon City Planning process since it began and is an active member in all Livability22202 efforts. ARCA membership at-large values improvements in public facilities, green/open space, and transportation promised by the PCSP. We have welcomed engagements with County staff on the visioning of Pentagon City, and were pleased to see both the identification of need and action plans for the expansion of public facilities and services in the plan and implementation matrix. We also approve of language establishing zones along the RiverHouse property to preserve existing tree canopy, and would like to see it reinforced in the Implementation Matrix.

Nevertheless, we believe that in order to realize the vision described in the PCSP, where community members have access to employment, schools, multi-modal transit, open space, and other essential services, the plan needs more clarity and assurances. Additionally, ARCA represents a significant number of citizens who feel that their voices have not been heard within the process and that large increases in density are being pursued without rationale and the appropriate studies to ensure the area can absorb the density. For this reason, the ARCA Board (pursuant to the attached resolution) respectfully requests the County Board postpone consideration of the Pentagon City Sector Plan in order to advertise and host a town hall meeting for citizens of the 22202 area and integrate their concerns into the plan. ARCA also believes a more comprehensive study should be required to determine the compatibility of the proposed changes with the surrounding neighborhoods and consistent with the County's relevant Long Range Planning guidelines.

Public Facilities:

- Public Facilities section (1.6) includes significantly more detail with regard to public schools. The inclusion of projected K-12 students in the area is a welcome addition, however it does not adequately convey the projected need since it lacks information on the existing number of students in the area, either attending local 22202 schools and/or being bused out of the area, and the student enrollment numbers consistent with elementary, middle, and high school facilities.
- There is also little discussion of the important relationship between education and equity, and the critical role a local school plays when so few residents would have access to personally owned vehicles. Additional language should be included in the equity section of the Vision and Guiding principles that speaks to the value of relationship between local schools and thriving communities, as is described by the Livability22202 vision and in APS Policy B-2.1 Boundaries.¹
- There continues to be concern in the community about the whether or not the relocation of Joyce street is an effective use of resources and community benefits. While the proposed expansion of Virginia Highlands Park (VHP) would create a valuable contiguous park space, it seems prudent

¹ <https://www.apsva.us/engage/fall-2021-boundary-process/#policy>

to make a final determination in the VHP master planning efforts and/or the RH phased development plans.

- The need for a community center and library congruous with the expected population is a good addition to the plan, but the plan should go further to require, within the implementation matrix, inclusion of these facilities in the upcoming County Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), in the case that they cannot be achieved via a community benefit. Similarly, the implementation matrix should require inclusion of a new 22202 elementary school in the next Arlington Public Schools (APS) CIP.
- Lastly, the VHP master planning process will be significantly more complicated than a typical park planning process - requiring the reevaluation of park uses, potential location of a new school, library, and community center, and existing transit routes - and should include representation from community members in addition to the indicated County departments and associated planning staff.

Transportation:

- The Critical Questions and Strategies section discusses transportation modeling examining vehicle volumes and trips, and the need to supplement with analysis of other transportation modes for a full picture of how travel behavior may continue to change. And while the plan sets ambitious goals for reducing the mode split, it is vague about how to accomplish them and lacks a process to remediate situations, either before or within site specific planning efforts, where the initial analysis and commitments around trip generations were inaccurate. It is also noted that there is a need to “identify transportation questions that require further study over time, addressing more specific projects, sites, information, and community priorities.” ARCA believes that the following items require further study:
 1. The monitoring of site-based trip generation Performance Metrics identified in the Implementation Matrix should be expanded to include the monitoring of existing intersections of concern and traffic volumes on major corridors. 22202 has a few major arteries (23rd Street, Arlington Ridge, Army Navy Drive, Route 1 in addition to those described in the plan) that traverse or are adjacent to the area. These areas should be monitored to ensure the increased development density doesn't amplify existing problems or induce new congestion bottlenecks. The measures should include more frequent measurement tools than annual traffic surveys and utilize the many existing and developing sources of real time traffic data to manage mobility. The performance measures should include a metric for traffic diverted through residential streets.
 2. The Implementation Matrix should include the evaluation of traffic mitigation measures that could be developed and implemented to maintain the viability and safety of these major corridors and intersections. Traffic demand management tools such as speed control devices (including the call for or support of any necessary legislation), coordinated traffic signalization, restricted travel times for certain streets, ramped up enforcement and other mitigation measures need to be evaluated for use to ensure the mobility performance metrics are achieved.
 3. Study of multi-modal transit trends from neighboring communities into Pentagon City, to include pedestrian, bike, and multimodal access. Recommendations to improve access for community members whose ability to use POVs for transit to the area will be diminished, to include additional public transit options from Arlington Ridge into Pentagon City.
- ARCA remains concerned that one of, if not the most, congested intersections in 22202 - Route 1 and 23rd Street - is largely omitted from the both the PCSP and the VDOT planning efforts for improvements to the Route 1 corridor. ARCA has been told that Phase 2 of VDOT's Route 1 analysis will incorporate the recommendations found in the Sector Plan once adopted by the County Board and the resulting analysis will address future traffic conditions and inform the feasibility or appropriateness of continuing to consider potential changes along Route 1. While

not within the boundary of the PCSP, there should be specific mention within the transportation section and the implementation matrix regarding coordination between Arlington County and VDOT on roadway improvements that affect the area of the study, to include Route 1 and other intersections of concern.

- As we have stated before, the plan highlights the significance of the Hayes Street Corridor/Pentagon City Metro Entrance to the mobility of the community and to successful implementation of the PDSP. The PCSP itself identifies issues with current conditions in this area; the corridor is an existing High Injury Network Corridor, the bus stops in this area already serve as many bus passengers as some Metro stations serve rail passengers, private shuttles need close access to this metro station and the current area is inadequate to accommodate both boarding, alighting, and staging. The plan also proposes several additions that have the potential to exacerbate the problems if not properly designed and managed. The following should be included as requirements in the follow-up Hayes St study:
 - Analysis of multiple designs to improve the mobility options of the Hayes Street/Pentagon City Metro corridor. Include proposed designs to improve bus connectivity, drop-off/pickup activity, and the increased bike and pedestrian traffic. Include alternatives to improve the dropoff/pickup design of the Crystal City metro to alleviate demand on Pentagon City.
 - Detailed analysis of the transit demand using available SmartCard and other active management data that can more accurately predict the induced transit ridership from the increased density and Traffic Demand Management strategies outlined in the plan.
 - Comparison of metro stations that have similar transit ridership and the same number of entrances as the Pentagon City metro station.

Public Engagement:

- It is evident there is a disconnect between what the County and community members consider successful community engagement. It would behoove the County to develop clear requirements for successful engagement, that include attempts to communicate with a pre-determined percentage of citizens representing a variety of demographic groups via digital, in-person, flyers, and postal mailers.
- The County should leverage multi-media advances to deliver content in a more accessible way on planning websites - to include interactive digital versions of plans with concise overviews of key sections, short videos describing the plan, and infographics, among others.

We look forward to continued engagement with the county to ensure the Pentagon City Sector Plan meets the current and future needs of community members.



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