



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

September 24, 2021

Mr. Dan Reinhard, P.E.
Virginia Department of Transportation
4975 Alliance Drive
Fairfax, VA 22030

Dear Mr. Reinhard,

On behalf of the People Before Cars Coalition, please accept this letter outlining support for the Virginia Department of Transportation's (VDOT) recommendation to convert Route 1 from an elevated highway into a safe, multimodal urban boulevard included in their Route 1 Multimodal Improvements Study Phase 1 Draft Report. The letter also outlines some key recommendations for how the proposal can go further to truly ensure a street is safe and that works for us all.

The Coalition [announced its formation around shared priorities](#), creating 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. Transforming Route 1 into a human-scaled, safe multi-modal urban corridor is a shared top priority. We applaud VDOT's commitment to urbanizing Route 1 into a people-centric, urban design and have highlighted the several report findings that are of importance to the Coalition, and additional ways in which the report should go further to ensure a safe, comfortable street for all users. In addition to the specific requests outlined in provided attachment, these additional actions should be taken:

- **Urbanize Route 1**- Removing auto-centric barriers of an elevated highway, prioritizes human-scaled movements and offers easier and safer accessibility for those walking, biking, and taking transit. Equally important is the specific design of the adjoining sidewalks as well as the associated land uses along the corridor. Decisions about landscape and inclusion of biophilic principles, sidewalk treatments, and locations of building entrances should all be considered to ensure a vibrant Route 1.
- **Extend Project Scope** - Extending the project's scope all the way to the Alexandria border offers a more comprehensive, corridor-wide approach to improving Route 1 and would include the intersections at 20th and 23rd Street South. Specifically, the intersections at 20th and 23rd Street South are most in need of a treatment commensurate with the future 18th and 15th Street intersections.
- **Apply Vision Zero Principles** - A people first design for an urbanized Route 1 should slow traffic and deliver a safe, pedestrian-friendly experience and crossings consistent with a Vision Zero approach. Downtowns across the country, including those in the District of Columbia and Montgomery County, have incorporated design standards aimed at safety such as narrower 10-foot travel lanes and maximum speeds of 25 miles per hour. While VDOT's recommended approach to further study lowering the speed limit to 25 miles per hour is commendable, the Coalition recommends adopting other context-sensitive standards that reflect the environment and character of the community through which the roadway travels.





- **Take a People Before Cars Approach** - For Route 1 to truly be a multimodal transportation asset, protected bicycle and micromobility infrastructure must be incorporated along, and especially across the roadway. This can be achieved through the incorporation of a curb separated north/south facility combined with best-in-class physically protected intersections where east/west bicycle network connections can be made. These east/west connections are most critical at 18th and 15th Street South but could also be incorporated at 23rd Street South to maximize safety and connectivity. The Coalition supports additional analysis of the 23rd Street intersection as crucial connection offering dedicated safe space for people to bike and ride micromobility vehicles.
- **Secure VDOT and Arlington County support for 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. 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.
- **Manage Demand** - To ensure a safe and functional street, the Coalition highlights the need for a comprehensive program to educate and encourage the use of flexible telework, transit, and the rest of National Landing's rich mobility options.

National Landing is undergoing a dramatic transformation; we created the People Before Cars Coalition to make sure it transforms into a downtown where we can live, work and play without needing a car. VDOT's recommended approach to urbanizing Route 1 is a step closer to that transformation and would be enhanced by the improvements suggested above. The Coalition commends VDOT and Arlington County for pursuing a safer, multimodal, connected urban approach for a reimagined Route 1.

Collectively from the People Before Cars Coalition Stakeholders,

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