

CRYSTAL CITY INSIDER

The monthly newsletter of the Crystal City Civic Association



November 2024



ANNIVERSARY EDITION – 10 YEARS!

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PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Annual Meeting marks 10th birthday; guests to speak on park, tenant issues

Our 10th anniversary Annual Meeting will take place on Nov. 20 at 7 p.m. at our usual location, 251 18th St. For those who attend in person, we will have some special goodies. The meeting will include a presentation by the county parks department on the planned Metro Square Park, which is to run between the current Metro entrance and the station's new entrance on Crystal Drive. Arlington County officials will also give a talk on landlord-tenant relationships. With a large number of renters, our community has a special interest in learning about rights and issues related to resolving conflicts. We also hope to have a special guest.

Our Annual Meeting will also have elections for two officers: Communications Director and Membership Liaison (see story on Page 4). Zoom registration for the Annual Meeting is [here](#).

County staff wants more housing at JBG Smith projects



Block W is off of Crystal Drive just north of the airport road.

In a rare occurrence, the county planning staff is going to recommend that the County Board *not* approve a new development. In all the years I have been observing local development, I don't recall the staff outright rejecting a development project. At issue is [Block W](#), now the site of volleyball and basketball courts and an off-ramp from the airport road. JBG Smith wants to tear down the ramp and build rental housing on the parcel. According to the developer, county staff objects to the project because it does not have enough density. In other words, the county wants a taller building, with more units. At our last meeting, you may recall an airport authority representative vigorously opposed removing the ramp because of its importance to commercial and emergency vehicles.

With two organizations now against the project, I doubt it will go through as planned. JBGS may ask the Civic Association to send a letter supporting the project. If you have thoughts on the issue, email them to [me](#).

Another JBGS project, [RiverHouse](#), is also facing county opposition for insufficient density. County staff wants taller buildings on the site, which would block some views from Arlington Ridge. JBGS had already planned to increase the number of units from 2,605 to

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3,191; the county wants to see a number closer to 5,427, the Sector Plan limit. The county is on the warpath to significantly increase housing in the area.

Speak up on the future of local transit

The county is seeking resident comments on two matters: the County Transportation Plan and 18th Street redevelopment. Arlington's current master transportation plan was adopted in 2007. Officials want to update it to guide transportation investments over the next two decades. If you want to have your voice heard regarding traffic density, modes of transit, and traffic patterns, visit [this site](#) to fill out a questionnaire and comment on an interactive map. The 18th Street project calls for narrowing the corridor from four lanes to two between Crystal Drive and Clark/Bell Street. For additional information and to offer comments, visit [here](#).

- Eric Cassel, CCCA President

CIVIC ASSOCIATION AND LIVABILITY 22202 ISSUES

Save the Date: CCCA annual meeting and elections: November 20, 2024

The CCCA will elect two members to the board at our annual meeting on Nov. 20. Nominations close on Nov. 5 to fill the positions of Membership Liaison and Communications Director. Email the [Elections Committee](#) if you or someone you know is interested.

So far, we have only heard from Matthew Scott Fuzi, who would like to become Membership Liaison.

Renew your CCCA Membership for 2025

CCCA dues of \$10 are on an annual basis, Jan. 1-Dec. 31. You can renew your membership online via [PayPal](#) or by check to our Treasurer (see last page of the newsletter). The deadline for renewals to continue receiving newsletters and emails is Feb. 28, 2025. Although our sister civic associations in 22202 charge \$20 or more for annual dues, we have not increased ours since the CCCA was established in January 2014.

Happy birthday to us! But why are we only 10 years old?

Crystal City started taking shape more than 60 years ago, yet only now are we celebrating our 10th anniversary as a neighborhood association. What took us so long? And what finally spurred us to organize?

The short answer to the first question is that for decades the neighborhood was under the rule – and, for the most part, ownership – of its founding developers. As to the second question, the short answer is that those original overseers grew older and sold to out-of-state owners. Without local district representation – Arlington County’s board members are elected at large – the residents were left to fend for themselves.

Now here is the longer answer:

Robert H. Smith and his brother-in-law Robert P. Kogod began building Crystal City in the 1960s after taking the reins of Charles E. Smith Cos., founded by Robert’s father. The older Smith, who came to America from Russia at age 10, capitalized on the postwar housing boom to create an enterprise that became one of the Washington area’s largest builders, developers, and property managers (see story on Page 8).



Robert H. Smith oversaw Crystal City from Waterford House.

Robert was no absentee landlord. He and his wife, the artist Clarice Smith, lived in Waterford House on Crystal Drive for years. They put their personal touch on the community. Waterford House was one of many buildings constructed by the Smith Company. Amenities, including garages, were arranged to be shared by multiple buildings. Consequently, virtually the entire residential and business community depended on the Charles E. Smith Cos. for basic services.

The family of businesses began to break up at the turn of this century. The residential division was merged into Archstone in late 2001, and the commercial division was sold to Vornado, a New York real estate trust, becoming Vornado/Charles E. Smith. Over time, it became evident that the different companies were pursuing different priorities. The interests of the developers were diverging from those of the residents. A public-private partnership, the Crystal City (now National Landing) Business Improvement District, known as the BID, was created in 2006 to represent the interests of the commercial sector.

The residents of Crystal City, meanwhile, had no representation. When the county asked for feedback from our area, there was no single person or group to respond. Still, many of us informally participated in the development of the county’s [Crystal City Sector Plan](#), adopted in 2010, which recommended the

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creation of a civic association. Over the next few years, residents of three condominium buildings and several rental buildings joined together to form the Crystal City Civic Association. Sandra Bordon agreed to become our first president and Christer Ahl, our first vice president, and we held our first general meeting in November 2014.

Until COVID, we met in the party room at the Crystal Park condominiums. Early on, we struggled to become known and to persuade managers of apartment buildings to publicize the association's activities and meetings. We did receive some support from the BID. We received more cooperation from developers and managers when Vornado spun off its Washington area properties to the JBG Companies in 2017, resulting in JBG Smith Properties (JBGS). As the largest real estate company in the area, JBGS focused increasingly on developing multifamily properties. In 2018, when Tracy Gabriel became the president and CEO of the Crystal City BID, she joined with JBGS in supporting our CCCA events and expansion. We held joint Happy Hours for renters and sponsored several years of National Night Out with the police and fire departments. That partnership served us well until the recent economic downturn, when JBGS appeared to focus more on its bottom line than community interests. We can see that playing out now as the company is shutting down retail in the Underground. On the positive side, we acquired a new partner in 2019, when Amazon announced it would build its second headquarters (HQ2) in our area, emphasizing community engagement and insisting on native plants in the new Metropolitan Park. In 2020, we welcomed Amazon to the neighborhood at a joint community meeting hosted by the Westin Hotel for 250 participants.



Yes, once there was a library in the Underground.

(22202) – Aurora Highlands and Arlington Ridge – realized that we needed to be assertive before development overwhelmed us. Following a series of workshops in 2019, we published our “manifesto” – A [Livability Framework](#) for 22202 and an [Action Plan](#). The county quickly recognized the potential of our combined efforts and urged developers to pay attention to our documents and coordinate with us. To

Pre-COVID, we succeeded in persuading Arlington County to place a temporary pop-up library in the Underground. It thrived for three years, but closed after JBGS began to deemphasize retail in the Underground. Although we had received assurances for a permanent library – negotiating for it as a community benefit in two site plans on Crystal Drive and 20th Street – the county and JBGS essentially reneged on the agreement this year.

We have had continuing success in the following areas:

Livability 22202. When Amazon HQ2 was announced, we and the other two civic groups that make up our zip code area

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this day, we hold regular meetings with JBGS and occasionally with Dweck Properties and others, participating in Site Plan Review Committees for developments.

The concept for a “Green Ribbon” of pathways emerged out of Livability22202: a ped-bike network of biophilic trails surrounded by plants and trees that would attract birds and bees. With the county behind the effort, many developers have incorporated “Green Ribbon” pathways into their plans. We have further promoted environmental activity by joining with the [Friends of Urban Agriculture \(FOUA\)](#) to sponsor the [Highlands Urban Garden \(HUG\)](#) at Virginia Highlands Park, a small demonstration project that since 2020 has shown how urban agriculture can transform a small area.

Getting developers’ attention. As residents’ lifestyles change, so do their building needs. For example, we convinced JBGS to change the 1st floor of its Americana Apartment building to accommodate package deliveries (Amazon) and pickups/drop-offs (Uber). Without our input, the building would have relegated all of this activity to the bike lane on the street. On a broader scale, we weighed in when JBGS announced its commercial overhaul of the Water Park. We were able to limit the number of kiosks facing Crystal Drive and reduce their footprint – maximizing greenery and the visibility of the central fountain.



Eric Cassel, CCCA president, cuts ribbon for the spray park at the 6th Street edge of Long Bridge Park in 2015. At right are then County Board members Katie Cristol and Libby Garvey. Standing at far right is Mark Schwartz, county manager.

the bridge will not open until 2031, the mere fact that Long Bridge Park will be connected to the Mount Vernon Trail and then to Washington is a major achievement. In recent years, we have participated in

Long Bridge Park. While primary planning for the park predated the association, many of our members as individuals played a role in the early years. Consider, for example, that the original design did not include the pedestrian walkway along the water from Crystal Drive to the sports center.

Transportation. We have spent countless hours trying to make improvements in location, style, and substance of transit projects. With the cycling community, we pushed for a dedicated pedestrian/bike bridge over the Potomac. While

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Virginia Department of Transportation meetings on its Route 1 Multimodal Improvements Study, pushing residential interests, particularly those of bikers and pedestrians. Early on, we supported the BID's proposal for a pedestrian/bike bridge to Reagan National Airport; as you can read elsewhere in the newsletter, the CC2DCA project is now underway.



Crystal City emerged from a dilapidated landscape.

Developer's son shares the history of Crystal City

For the newsletter in 2018, former CCAA president Carol Fuller interviewed David Bruce Smith, the son of Crystal City developer Robert H. Smith, about the district's history. Here is her article:

David Bruce Smith is the son of Robert H. Smith, the developer of Crystal City. He is a journalist and publisher who published the magazine *Crystal City Etcetera* from 1990 to 2003. The concept of the magazine was to show the invisible side of Crystal City.

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Smith's father, Robert H. Smith, and uncle, Robert Kogod, traveled the country looking at various development projects before deciding to work in the Arlington area. According to David Bruce Smith, the origin story for "Crystal City" is wrong. His father and uncle were impressed by an apartment building they had seen in Dallas with a crystal chandelier. As a result of that trip, they decided to install a crystal chandelier and name their first project of two apartment buildings on S. Eads Street "Crystal House" and their entire project "Crystal City." Thus, the name "Crystal City" did not result from the building of "Crystal House," but was the inspiration for it.

According to Mr. Smith, there was no master plan for Crystal City. It was instead the result of a series of lucky opportunities. The location at the time was a dilapidated area of junk yards, industrial sites, cheap motels, and a drive-in movie theater. They negotiated a 99-year lease with the brick company, Washington Terra Cotta, for an existing strip mall and built Crystal House I. Robert Smith's father, Charles E. Smith, was skeptical of the project and advised his son to landscape the area nicely and "get **out** of this." However, Robert Smith believed that people would come over the bridge to the airport and the area would grow; he was right.

Development over the next 26 years, with many buildings taking on the name of "Crystal," was somewhat haphazard, with Smith negotiating with a variety of partners. Plaza 6, an office building on the southwest corner of the block generally bounded by 20th Street to the north, Crystal Drive to the east, 23rd Street to the south, and South Clark Street and Jefferson Davis Highway to the west, was bought by a dentist by the name of Kapiloff. Other partners included the Washington Terra Cotta company.

Smith recounted the story of 1969, when he was in 6th grade, of his mother coming to talk with him after a meeting she and his father had just had with Arlington County. They were proposing to move the railroad tracks 100 feet to accommodate the building of Crystal Park. It took 15 years to do so, but Crystal Park I was built in 1984. Crystal Gateway, in 1981; Waterford House (named after the crystal), in 1986; Water Park Towers (named for the Water Park), in 1987. The last building was Crystal Gateway North at 201 S. 12th Street, an office building.

The Underground was innovative when it was built in 1976 and catered to the many government agencies. Until the mid-90s, Crystal City was pretty much vacant in the evenings after 5 pm.

On January 2, 2002, the Smith properties were sold to Vornado. Mr. Smith says he has not been involved with Crystal City since 2003. However, he remembered fondly the days years ago when he was living in Washington DC, driving across the bridge to swim at Crystal Gateway in the mornings—then, only a 5-minute drive.

INFORMATION AND EVENTS – ARLINGTON COUNTY

Don't forget to VOTE!

This is the big one – the presidential election on Nov. 5.

Early Voting: Ends Saturday, Nov. 2. Don't forget that you can do it, usually in 5 minutes, at the Long Bridge Aquatic Center, regardless of the precinct where you normally vote. Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-7 p.m.; Saturday, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.



Mail Ballot: Ballots returned by mail must be postmarked on or before Nov. 5 and received by 12 p.m., Nov. 8. Issued mail ballots can be dropped off at your precinct on Election Day or exchanged at the polls for a regular ballot.

Election Day: Polls are open 6 a.m.-7 p.m. We have two precincts in Crystal City: 106 Crystal City at 251 18th Street S (conference room) and 150 Crystal Plaza at 2111 Richmond Hwy. Expect lines, as large turnout is anticipated.

What's on the ballot ([sample ballot here](#))?

- US president, senator, congressman (8th District)
- County Board (1 seat) and School Board (2 seats). Note that the County Board election will be [ranked choice](#).
- 1 Constitutional amendment and 5 County bond questions

Everything that you need to know to vote successfully in Arlington is linked through the [County Voting website](#).

Commemorating Veterans Day in Arlington

With Arlington National Cemetery at its heart, the county is the scene of a number of Veterans Day commemorations. The county itself marks the holiday in advance at the Bozman Government Center Courtyard on Nov. 7 at 11:30 a.m.; watch the livestream [online](#).

[Here are the events on Nov. 11:](#)

Arlington National Cemetery hosts its 71st annual Veterans Day observance expected to draw 5,000 visitors. Events include the US Marine Band and the US Navy Band Sea Chanters performing a prelude in the Memorial Amphitheater at 10:30 a.m.; a wreath-laying ceremony at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier; and the national observance inside the amphitheater with a parade of colors by veterans' organizations and remarks from dignitaries. Amphitheater seating is available on a first-come, first-serve basis. The program will be livestreamed online [here](#).

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Military Women's Memorial hosts a ceremony from 3 to 5 p.m. featuring formal military honors, a keynote address, veterans' remarks, and a wreath-laying ceremony. Open to the public, the free event honors the three million women who have served in the armed forces since the American Revolution. The memorial is located at Memorial Avenue and Schley Drive. Details [here](#).

Air Force Memorial, with its signature soaring stainless-steel spires, holds its ceremony at 11 a.m. at One Air Force Memorial Drive. The event includes a wreath-laying ceremony and a two-minute moment of silence.

County schools rank second in the Commonwealth

Arlington Public Schools rank No. 2, right behind Falls Church, the education research firm Niche found in its 2025 ratings. As to high schools, Arlington's Washington-Liberty High School ranked No. 3 in the Commonwealth and Yorktown High School ranked No. 9. Wakefield received an overall A- grade from Niche and ranked No. 62 in the state. ([Arlnow.com](#))

Arlington Community High School coming to MetPark

Amazon announced last month that it plans to welcome more than 250 county high school students, faculty, and staff to HQ2's Metropolitan Park in time for the 2026-27 school year. Since Amazon selected Arlington as the home of its second headquarters in 2018, the company says it has worked closely with the county and school board to address one of the community's most pressing issues – finding a location for Arlington Community High School, which has never had a permanent home (it's now located in an office building near Clarendon). Original plans called for ACHS to be at PenPlace. So the question now is: What does this mean for the previously approved location in PenPlace? Will it move? Will that space eventually be reallocated for our community space as we always advocated? Stay tuned for more.

Crews overhauling Metroway bus stops

All that hustle and bustle about Metroway bus stops is expected to last at least another month. Crews are power washing each station, installing new digital signs, and replacing benches, among other improvements. Work will take three to four days for each stop, but they will remain open during the renovation. The stops in the project are:

- South Glebe Road & Richmond Highway/Route 1
- Crystal Drive & 33rd Street South
- Crystal Drive & 27th Street South
- Crystal Drive & 23rd Street South
- Crystal Drive & 18th Street South

County Board seeks feedback on ranked-choice voting

The Arlington County Board is collecting community feedback on the use of ranked-choice voting (RCV) in this year's general election for the board. Voters can share their experiences using RCV and their overall sentiments regarding the voting system through this [online feedback form](#), which closes on Nov. 19. The form takes just a few minutes to complete. Voters can also email countyboard@arlingtonva.us or call 703-228-3130 to submit comments. The County Board will consider the responses as it determines whether to use RCV in future elections. Note that the contents of the feedback form are subject to release under FOIA. For more information about RCV, visit [here](#).

From green building to veteran services: other ways to make yourself heard

Here are opportunities to provide feedback to Arlington County:

2024 Green Building Incentive Policy Share your thoughts through Nov. 17 on the draft policy and on green infrastructure and climate change. Learn more [here](#).

Strategic Planning for Human Services The Department of Human services is developing its plan for the next five years to address health, housing, child and family services, economic stability, mental health and substance use, disability services, and other safety net services. Take a 10-15 minute survey [here](#) by Dec. 2.

Needs of Veterans and Service Members in Arlington: The Military and Veterans Advisory Committee wants to hear from members of the military, veterans, and their families who live and/or work in Arlington about types of programs, services, and resources that could be helpful. Click [here](#) to comment.

Safe Homes, Safe Relationships Share your feedback with Project PEACE on experiences using, seeking, or referring people to resources for those impacted by domestic/intimate partner violence and sexual assault in Arlington County. Your feedback is confidential. Comment [here](#) in English or Spanish.

DEVELOPMENT

Urgent Care Center, senior housing now part of RiverHouse plan

JBG Smith announced that its plans for revamping [RiverHouse](#) now include senior housing and a free-standing emergency department-urgent care center. The health center would be run by Virginia Hospital Center and serve only outpatients. The 36-acre RiverHouse site is located in Pentagon City, bounded by Army Navy Drive to the north, South Joyce Street to the east, 16th Street S to the south, and South Lynn Street to the west. The county is pressing JBG Smith to maximize the number of rental and condo units in the complex to nearly 3,200. The project is in the early stages of the site review process. The developer hopes to begin construction late next year or early 2027.

Crystal Boutique moves upstairs, remaining Underground shops due to close

Long-time Underground retailer [Crystal Boutique](#) has closed but will reopen on the third floor of 2231 Crystal Drive on Nov. 6. The boutique, which caters to “mature and older women, will have twice the retail space as before. Dunkin’ Donuts closed on Halloween. Subway and Sushi Garden will likely soon follow. Total Party has announced plans to close Dec. 31 and move to a larger store at L’Enfant Plaza after finding no sufficient space elsewhere in Crystal City. It is not planning a major closing sale.

Most, if not all, of the remaining shops will leave the Underground by the end of the year. We are waiting to hear county plans for the Commuter Store. Tables and chairs in the Landing open space were removed for security and maintenance reasons, according to JBG Smith. Despite our pleas that this area of the Underground is the most vibrant, JBGS is adamant about closing everything down. The Underground will remain open for pedestrian traffic, with JBGS vowing to provide security. However, we are receiving increasing reports of homeless people in the Underground and at least one case of pan handling, not being stopped by JBGS security.

Opened in 1976, before the arrival of the Metro, the Underground became for generations of residents and office dwellers the essence of life in Crystal City. Over the decades, larger establishments were replaced by smaller and sometimes quirky businesses and clever reuse of vacant space. The Arlington Historical Society and the Arlington Public Library (the Charlie Clark Center for Local History) are working together to tell the story of Crystal City Underground. Their goal is to have a dedicated website, exhibition, or permanent display in the underground space. If you have a story, pictures, or artifacts of Crystal City Underground, contact Sean Denniston at scdenniston@yahoo.com.

Virginia Tech expected to propel Potomac Yard development



Potomac Yard landed on the *Washington Business Journal's* list of “10 Development Projects to Watch in Northern Virginia.” Potomac Yard is poised to become a hub of innovation with the debut of Virginia Tech’s \$1 billion Innovation Campus this January. The Alexandria Economic Development Partnership and JBG Smith are seeking anchor tenants to transform Potomac Yard into a leading center for business, retail, and community spaces.

The Virginia Tech campus will open on Jan. 21. The school is still lining up speakers for the ribbon cutting in late February. The three-building, \$1 billion campus broke ground in 2021. Its 11 floors contain a 300,000-square-foot space, highlighted by a two-story lobby.

Elsewhere ...

Crystal House Hearings will be held by the Planning Commission on Nov. 7 and the County Board on Nov. 16 on the revised proposal for Crystal Houses 7 and 8. The amended plan, which was detailed last month in the newsletter, calls for three 3-story buildings containing 42 units. Each will have three bedrooms and 2.5 baths and sell for around \$1.2 million. The 17-acre site is located at 1900 S. Eads Street. For more information, visit [here](#).

Bowlero The county is reviewing a permit for live entertainment at Bowlero, 320 23rd St. S. The venue is part of a bowling alley chain that includes an arcade, bowling alley, and restaurant. Its last accessory use permit was renewed in January 2022 as discussed [here](#). The site is located within the Crystal City Civic Association and the Nation Landing Business Improvement District. Comments will be taken through Nov. 21; email them [here](#).

Affordable housing at Melwood site The county is reviewing a proposal to build a five-story mixed-use development on the Melwood site, 750 23rd Street S. The development would consist of affordable housing and ground floor space for programs serving persons with disabilities. Comments are being accepted through Nov. 4. The Site Plan Review Committee will discuss the project Nov. 18 at 7 p.m., with a walking tour earlier in the day at noon. For more information and to comment, visit [here](#).

Huge congrats to our President & CEO Tracy Sayegh Gabriel on making the Washington Business Journal Power 100 of 2024! Read more [here](#).

TRANSPORTATION

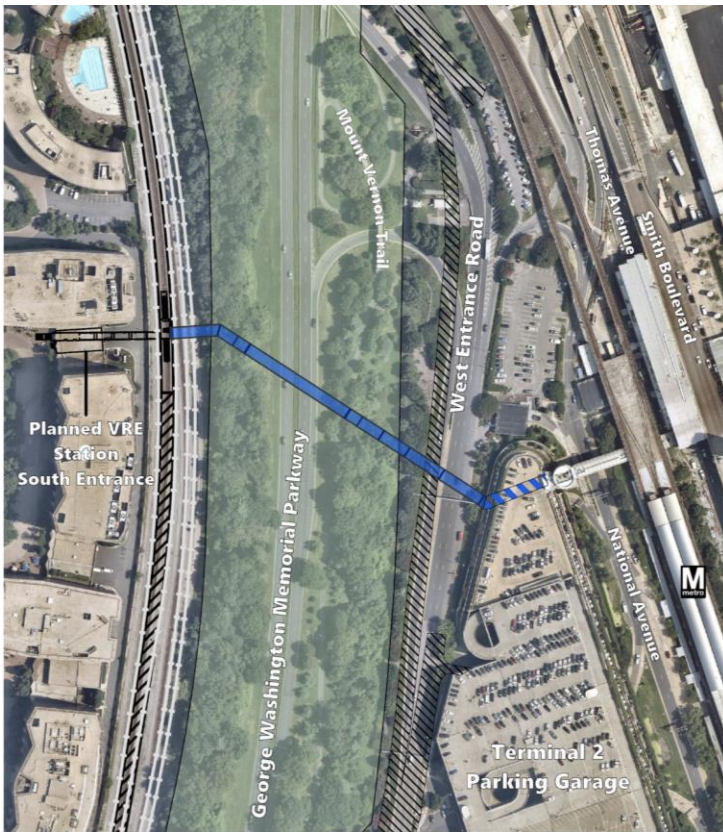
Walking to the airport: A CC2DCA Update

Attention pedestrians and cyclists: The bridge between Crystal City and the airport is moving forward, but not as swiftly as hoped. That is not surprising considering that the CC2DCA project requires the cooperation of numerous organizations.

Arlington County is the lead on the project, but it also falls under the jurisdiction, among others, of the airport authority, the National Park Service (which oversees the GW Parkway), JBG Smith, and, critically, the Virginia Railway Express. At the Crystal City end, the bridge is to start at a new VRE transit hub at 2011 Crystal Drive. While the county maintains its confidence in the VRE's part of the project, we have concerns. VRE is currently at 40 percent of pre-Covid riders. The Crystal City Station, which was proposed more than five years ago and is still in design. Will the VRE be able to open the station by 2030-2031, when the bridge is expected to be completed?

As planned, the 1,300-foot-long bridge has one end at the southern entrance of the new VRE station and the other end at the airport Metro station. The bridge is expected to connect to the station near the fare gates where the windows are on the right in the picture below:





At left, planned route of pedestrian bridge is shown in blue. Below is an artist rendering of the bridge as it approaches Crystal City side.



As can be seen in the rendering above, the bridge would be covered over the rail tracks but not as it crosses the GW Parkway. Unfortunately, the lack of cover would eliminate the possibility of a moving sidewalk, which the association advocates. As of now, the county is moving forward with the engineering for the existing design.

One outstanding issue is how the bridge will connect with the Mount Vernon Trail. In a summer update, Arlington County said it was working on the 15 percent design stage for the bridge and anticipates a public meeting late this year for further comment. After receiving feedback, planners will move on to the 30 percent design stage. It appears, though, that the county is behind in its efforts, and the meeting will likely be put off until early next year.



Artist rendering of Reagan National Airport's Terminal 1 showing changes in white.

Airport's oldest terminal due for rehab; FAA approves new long-distance routes

The oldest terminal at Reagan National Airport will be overhauled over the remainder of the decade. The historic façade and much of the interior at the front of Terminal 1 will be retained, while the existing “banjo”-shaped, runway-facing section will be replaced with newer passenger gates, concessions, holding rooms, and jet bridges. The number of gates will remain the same.

Meanwhile, the airport will be expanding roadways to improve access to terminals and reduce traffic tie-ups. Airport authority representative Michael J. Cooper, who addressed the civic association in

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September, said the authority had presented plans to improve the offramp onto the northbound GW parkway, but the National Park Service has the final say.

Cooper told the association that Crystal City residents were not affected by changes in flight routes into the airport made last summer at the request of Washington, D.C., residents. He noted that any changes in flight routes are up to the Federal Aviation Authority.

In other airport news, the US Transportation Department has tentatively approved five new long-haul routes out of Reagan. The destinations are Las Vegas, San Antonio, San Diego, San Francisco, and Seattle. By federal law, flights longer than 1,250 miles require special approval. The government is considering public comments on the proposed new flights before making its final decision.

Meanwhile, The Arlington County Civic Federation is considering a resolution that calls for shifting some flights from Reagan to Dulles for safety, noise, and environmental reasons. If approved, it is not likely to have much impact: Congress treats the airports as its “fiefdom.”

Crews start underground work on new subway entrance

Excavation of the “hill” is almost complete and underground work has started on the Crystal Drive entrance to the Metro station. Depending on how work progresses, construction may force the station to close for short periods late next year or early 2026. If so, connecting bus service will be provided. Good news for motorists: the Jersey barriers by Crystal Drive and 18th Street S have been moved enough to allow right turns again.

Federal, state officials break ground for new rail bridge

The Virginia Passenger Rail Authority along with Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg, Senators Tim Kaine and Mark Warner, and US Representatives Gerry Connelly and Abigail Spanberger participated in a groundbreaking ceremony Oct. 15 for the Long Bridge Project. The two-track bridge will double the rail capacity between Arlington and Washington. Site preparation will begin over the next few weeks, with large-scale construction starting next year and slated to finish in 2030.



Artist rendering shows existing rail bridge (at left) and the new rail span flanking the planned pedestrian/bike bridge.

The new span will be constructed parallel to the existing rail bridge and relieve one of the largest rail bottlenecks on the East Coast. Built nearly 120 years ago, the old bridge operates at 98 percent capacity during peak periods. The new bridge will separate passenger and freight trains, improving on-time performance for both. At \$2.3 billion, the project is the largest of the commonwealth’s Transforming Rail in Virginia (TRV) ventures. A separate bridge for cyclists and pedestrians is also planned for the site.

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PARKS

County reveals preliminary plans for Metro Market Square



Vendor pushcarts, outdoor entertainment, benches, café seating, chess tables, interactive sculptures, trees, and other plantings – these are among ideas for Metro Market Square, a new park by the Crystal Park Metro station. The site will be framed by Crystal Square to the north, 18th Street South to the south, Crystal Drive to the east, and South Bell Street to the west.

The county presented preliminary plans to the public last month; see that [here](#). Feedback is being accepted online through Nov. 22 [here](#). The county has retained the design firm Hord Coplan Macht for the project. The county could vote on funding this year; construction is slated to start the winter of 2026/2027. For more details, visit [here](#).

Is renaming on menu for tiny park near Restaurant Row?



Crystal City's iconic Restaurant Row soon might lend its name to a nearby park. The county next year plans to upgrade the two-acre site, which is now imaginatively called [23rd Street South and South Eads Street Park](#). Officials would like to spruce up the name as well. Some have suggested that the park, which is the county's smallest, be called Restaurant Row Park.

The new name will be vetted by various advisory panels and comments solicited from the public before the Park and Recreation Commission submits its recommendation to the County Board early next year.

FUN STUFF IN CRYSTAL CITY (AND NEARBY)

Outdoor ice skating returns to Pentagon City

[Westport Outdoor Skating](#), 1201 S. Joyce St. is returning for the 2024-2025 season, offering lessons and public skating hours every day. The venue claims to be the largest outdoor ice rink in Northern Virginia. Reservations to skate for up to two hours are recommended.

Coffee house/restaurant opens in Potomac Yard

[Kaldi's Social House](#) has soft launched its second Arlington location in the Potomac Yard, with plans to be fully operational this month. In addition to Kaldi's typical coffee and brunch items — including espressos, smoothies, and waffles — the new location will include a full dinner menu and cocktails. The restaurant is located at 3639 S. Glebe Road. ([ArlNow.com](#))

Celebrated nail D.C.-area salon opens at Grace and Reva

Nailsaloon, voted “Best Mani-Pedi” in *Washingtonian's* 2023 Reader Picks, opened last month at 1900 Crystal Drive on the business's 10th anniversary. Founded by former journalist and speech writer Andréa Vieira in 2014 in D.C.'s Logan Circle, the salon now has five locations. It has catered to some of Washington's top political players, including Vice President Kamala Harris during her Senate days, [Allure](#) reported. The new Crystal City location — next door to Colada Shop, on the ground floor of The Grace and Reva apartments — has a total of 24 total service stations. ([Arlnow.com](#))

Put your rope climbing skills to the test at Veterans Day competition

Movement Crystal City is hosting its second annual Veterans Day Ropes Competition Nov. 11, 6 a.m. to 7 p.m. The event feature climbing challenges all day in various skill levels, followed by a party celebrating participants and highlighting local military-related nonprofits. For more information, visit [here](#).

For more activities, visit ...

Events at National Landing - National Landing Community Cleanup Nov 16

Arlington Parks and Recreation

Arlington arts events

Arlington Convention and Visitors Services

ABOUT CCCA

The Crystal City Civic Association (CCCA) was formed on January 28, 2014. We are a non-partisan, not-for-profit organization with the express purpose of advancing the common interests of the residents of the Crystal City neighborhood in Arlington County, Virginia. CCCA gives a voice to our residents. CCCA officers represent community members at county meetings, function as liaisons to state and local lawmakers, coordinate with the Crystal City BID on important issues and projects, and ensures the needs of residents are met.

CRYSTAL CITY CIVIC ASSOCIATION BOARD

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Join on our website:

<http://www.crystalcitycivic.org/>

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