

Crystal City: Policy Framework and Illustrative Concept Plan

*Proposed Housing Mix and Affordability Directives with Draft Revisions
Draft: Dec. 4, 2008*

Housing Mix and Affordability (H)

- H 1) Increase the committed affordable housing stock in Crystal City by developing implementation tools that encourage the provision of on-site or nearby off-site affordable units.
- H 2) Apply the Affordable Housing Ordinance and create special provisions for bonus density that achieve up to 20 percent of Gross Floor Area (GFA) above the GLUP to increase Crystal City's affordable housing stock, and allow affordable dwelling units to be provided in new or existing buildings.
- H 3) Leverage existing and potential future tools to add a total of between 550 and 1,200 committed affordable housing units in the Crystal City Planning Area by 2050.

ATTACHMENT 1

Crystal City Plan – Vision Statement and Goals and Objectives

Vision Statement

With its close proximity to the Potomac River overlooking the nation’s monuments, Crystal City today offers an established office, hotel, residential, and retail mixed-use environment accessible via its extraordinary transportation network comprised of: rail and bus transit; streets and sidewalks; interior public walkways connecting to transit and, in targeted areas, lined with restaurants, local retailers, and neighborhood services; bicycle trails; regional connectors; and National Airport. In the future, as Crystal City grows along with the region it will be enhanced with improved surface transit service and a more functional and pedestrian-friendly urban street network lined with active retail and civic spaces. Crystal City’s future physical character will include enhanced upper-story uses that provide a Class A office environment and expand the array of residential offerings in the neighborhood. Crystal City’s “sense of place” will be strengthened by providing additional attractive and safe civic, cultural, retail, recreational, and community enhancements and defining distinct neighborhoods through high-quality architecture, open spaces, streetscape designs, and public art. Residents, visitors, and workers, alike will all benefit from Crystal City’s smart growth policies, improved land use and transportation connections, and enhanced quality of life.

Goals and Objectives

This vision for Crystal City is expressed through the following seven goals and supporting objectives which are reflected in the concept plan and policy framework:

1. Create a High Quality Public Realm that Strengthens the Sense of Place

- Coordinate the public realm so that the street system, transit system, sidewalks and interior walkway system, and a variety of public open spaces work together to establish the framework around which redevelopment shall occur.
- Improve the urban form and pedestrian experience while enhancing street-level activity and connectivity for all users by designing smaller, tree-lined neighborhood blocks.
- Target existing underutilized paved spaces for consolidation into development sites before impacting existing green spaces.
- Increase the amount of high-quality, accessible and “usable” public open space in Crystal City.
- Create a variety of accessible public spaces that are strategically phased and located throughout Crystal City. These public spaces should be appropriately sized, designed, and programmed to attract, serve and support the anticipated population of residents, workers, and visitors including their recreation, leisure, social and cultural needs.
- Acknowledge residual open spaces between buildings for their ability to provide visual relief and a calming influence.

- Establish at least one primary, centrally located public space that can serve as the “heart” of Crystal City and a venue for significant, programmed community events.
- Integrate cultural venues with public spaces, streets, and interior walkways in an effort to increase visibility and accessibility, create synergy between uses, and increase pedestrian activity levels overall.
- Provide attractions and/or amenities in the interior walkway system and along streets to stir interest and to encourage an active round-the-clock street life, such as public art, streetscape furniture, wayfinding, retail and cultural venues.

2. Provide a Mix of Uses by balancing office, residential, retail, cultural, and civic uses **among several defined neighborhood centers.**

- Define Crystal City by its neighborhoods, including the northern neighborhood, the central Metro station district, the entertainment district along Crystal Drive, and the hotel district to the south.
- Create a more even balance between residential and office uses and daytime and evening populations, and maintain an economically sustainable hotel base.
- Improve the availability of primary elements of daily living within Crystal City.
- Create a thriving “Class A” office environment.
- Provide a mix of housing options to accommodate households with differing income levels, family composition, and accessibility requirements.
- Provide varied cultural and civic facilities and uses (such as theaters, emergency service facilities, health care, day care, urgent medical care, meeting spaces, etc.) for all age groups, and strategically locate them near transit centers, public spaces, and restaurants to promote those venues and help define neighborhood centers.
- Encourage a diverse mix of retail spaces, including grocery stores, to maintain and attract local retail and neighborhood services in addition to major and national retailers.
- Create a safe environment for all by mixing uses, programming activities in public spaces and through design techniques that foster social activity, interaction, and visibility.

3. Relate Architectural and Urban Design to the Human Scale

- Create new buildings where the base of at least one or two stories relates to the street level and the top creates a meaningful connection to the sky.
- Use wide expanses of glass for the base of building retail spaces to promote street activity.
- Use building massing and elevations to create and frame the public realm and to preserve and enhance views from within the public realm.
- Create distinct and defined block edges.
- Provide a meaningful and careful transition from the core of Crystal City to the adjacent single family neighborhood.
- Establish identifiable landscape, public art, or architectural features at gateway locations between Crystal City and adjoining lower-density residential neighborhoods.

4. Enhance Multimodal Access and Connectivity

- Improve transportation and land-use connections within and beyond Crystal City through transit-oriented development.
- Enhance Crystal City’s transit orientation with new and better transit services and facilities designed to meet the future needs of Crystal City, and to further encourage residents, workers, and visitors to select transit over personal vehicles.
- Enhance Crystal City’s multimodal transportation infrastructure by designing transit facilities as integral architectural elements and improving overall transit, pedestrian, and bicycle access and connectivity.
- Provide high quality surface transit service that has travel times competitive with private automobiles, attracts riders, reduces automobile dependency, and limits roadway congestion.
- Enhance the urban quality of Crystal City by strengthening the urban street grid.
- Create a hierarchy of streets to facilitate automobile, transit, bike, and pedestrian use.
- Create vibrant, pedestrian oriented streets through the better use of sidewalks, streetscapes, and open space areas to improve space for pedestrians, bicyclists, parking, and transit.
- Transform Jefferson Davis Highway (Route 1) into an asset of the overall multimodal transportation network.
- Supply appropriate parking to support a vibrant mix of uses while discouraging unnecessary single occupancy vehicle use.
- Maximize the use of all parking resources through measures such as Transportation Demand Management (“TDM”).
- Maintain and improve connections to the interior walkway system both vertically and horizontally as development occurs while maintaining its connectivity to Metrorail and creating linkages to transitway stations.
- Enhance the utility and safety of the bicycle network as part of the Crystal City transportation network.
- Provide better connections to National Airport and the surrounding regional transportation network.
- Provide comprehensive wayfinding for all users.

5. Incorporate Sustainable and Green Building Principles into all Urban and Architectural Design.

- Consider environmental sustainability and overall energy efficiency as integral parts of all aspects of building design and development.
- Design buildings and neighborhoods using the best available technologies and processes feasible to protect the local environment (stormwater quality, waste reduction, heat island reduction) and the regional environment (climate change, Chesapeake Bay protection, air quality).
- Design and build new buildings to meet county policies on sustainable development.

6. Preserve the Integrity of the Single-Family Neighborhood to the West.

- Taper buildings up in scale and height, west to east, from Fern Street to Eads Street between 18th and 23rd Streets, so that buildings along the east side of Fern Street are compatible in

scale and form and have stepbacks that respond appropriately to the single-family homes on the west side of Fern Street.

- Taper buildings up in scale and height, west to east, across Eads Street between 23rd Street and Fort Scott Drive, so that buildings along the east side of Eads Street are compatible in scale and form and have stepbacks that respond appropriately to the single-family homes on the west side of Eads Street.
- Provide improved pedestrian, bike and other connections between Crystal City and adjacent single-family neighborhoods, to help reduce the barrier effect of Jefferson Davis Highway.
- Direct traffic to major arterials and multi-modal network elements, and avoid street designs that increase cut thru traffic into adjacent single-family neighborhoods.

7. Ensure Crystal City's Long-Term Economic Sustainability.

- To the extent possible, plan at the block level or in increments of multiple blocks in order to realize a balanced mix of uses accompanied by sufficient open spaces and service and cultural uses.
- Create a vision plan which ensures that new development can be economically viable.
- Provide flexibility to phase development to meet market conditions, support timely redevelopment of properties most impacted by BRAC, encourage redevelopment, and address future public improvements.
- Promote public/private partnerships for achieving community enhancements.
- Provide assistance to property owners, tenants, and small businesses during the BRAC transition and Crystal City redevelopment.
- Maintain and encourage a robust hotel environment at Crystal City.
- Recognize the importance of National Airport and the key elements of its economic viability in the long-term sustainability of the county.
- Strengthen Crystal City's competitive edge with other close-in jurisdictions and localities in the Washington, D.C. region in attracting and retaining private sector users of Class A office space.
- Acknowledge and respect Crystal City's existing populations during redevelopment activities and minimize any associated potential negative impacts

ATTACHMENT 3

2008 Crystal City Plan Policy Directives

Land Use (LU)

- LU 1) Attain an ultimate build out in the Crystal City Planning Area with more residential than office Gross Floor Area (GFA) to reach an evening population at least half the daytime population and to steadily improve the resident to employment balance.
- LU 2) Establish recommended land uses for each block in the Crystal City Planning Area as shown on the Land Use Map to guide actual use mixes proposed within block-level Phased Development Site Plans. Recommend some blocks to have specific minimum percentages for certain land uses, as outlined on the Land Use Map.
- LU 3) Designate specific areas in Crystal City for ground floor retail uses that are accessible from sidewalks, the interior pedestrian concourse, or both, as shown on the Retail Frontage and Interior Pedestrian Concourse Map, and strategically locate interior retail to not detract from street level retail areas.
- LU 4) Engage critical County service providers, such as police, fire, and emergency response services, in planning for and implementing the infrastructure necessary to accommodate future demand for service provision as Crystal City grows.
- LU 5) Create tools and incentives to establish a strong presence of desired cultural and community-oriented facilities (such as theaters, large format grocery stores, and medical facilities) in the core of Crystal City.

Building Form and Heights (B)

- B 1) Establish build-to lines for the Crystal City Planning Area along the perimeter of development blocks as demarcated on the Build to Lines Map.
- B 2) Establish absolute maximum building heights (in feet) for all blocks in the Crystal City Planning Area, as shown on the Building Heights Map.
- B 3) Require proposed development projects in Crystal City to submit their projects for review by Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) when they file a site plan application with the County, and secure notice from FAA that the project is not a hazard to air navigation before a County Board public hearing is scheduled for formal action on the site plan application.
- B 4) Undertake future study (as needed) to develop alternative physical planning parameters for achieving planned densities should the FAA determine that currently planned heights are not feasible for airport operations.

- B 5) Establish maximum building tower coverages, measured above the fifth floor, for all blocks within the Crystal City Planning Area, as shown on the *Tower Coverage Map*.
- B 6) Require minimum horizontal separation of 60 feet between building towers above the fifth floor to ensure light, air, relief, and respite to outdoor and indoor spaces.
- B 7) Apply bulk/plane height controls, as shown in the *Bulk Plane Angle Map*, near identified parks and plazas to limit shadows on and ensure natural daylight to such spaces.

Density (D)

- D 1) Establish base densities for each block in the Crystal City Planning Area, as shown on the *Base Density Map*.
- D 2) Allow for optional increases over the base density within the maximum building height limits on sites in Crystal City, in return for extraordinary community benefits outlined in this plan, at the County Board’s discretion.
- D 3) Utilize a tear-down credit (or similar mechanism) to encourage redevelopment that furthers Crystal City Planning goals and achieves public improvements, while retaining overall economic feasibility by recognizing the significant cost of demolishing existing major assets.

Public Open Spaces (P)

- P 1) Provide, at a minimum, all public open spaces as indicated on the *Public Open Space Map* in accordance with the general size outlined in the Open Space Inventory Table on the map.
- P 2) Address the displacement of existing public open spaces by concurrently providing comparable or enhanced spaces, either through development of new park sites or through improvements to existing open spaces along with public easement dedications.
- P 3) Allow low-scale infill development on the existing open space in front of 2121 Crystal Drive only after the Center Park on Block J-K is realized.
- P 4) Establish County control over all public open spaces shown on the *Public Open Space Map* through either public dedication/acquisition or public-use and access easements set in perpetuity.
- P 5) Increase tree canopy coverage in Crystal City by meeting or exceeding the most current applicable goals in the County's Urban Forest Master Plan.
- P 6) Achieve dedicated publicly accessible pedestrian routes through large urban blocks that provide for safe and attractive passage and connectivity between buildings.

Sustainable Design and Development (S)

- S 1) Maximize the energy efficiency and minimize the carbon footprint of Crystal City, through actions such as maximizing vegetated areas, efficient use and conservation of all resources, and provision of exceptional access to transit, in order to align with County goals and to enhance its overall economic and environmental position in the region.
- S 2) Uphold the County's then current highest and best environmental sustainability standards for renovation and redevelopment projects throughout Crystal City.
- S 3) Design, construct, and manage all public and private spaces, streets, infrastructure, and buildings to help the Crystal City Plan meet minimum certification standards under the United States Green Building Council's (USGBC) LEED Neighborhood Development program.

Transportation (T)

- T 1) Address and manage the Crystal City multimodal transportation system to accommodate future planned growth in the area.
- T 2) Establish a revised street network for Crystal City as shown in the *Street Network and Typology Map*, in accordance with and to be reflected in the County's Master Transportation Plan.
- T 3) Expand County control over all streets and rights of way through public ownership, dedication, or public-use easements set in perpetuity.
- T 4) Improve the safety and quality of pedestrian travel by providing elements such as sufficient sidewalk clear zones, adequate space for street trees and landscape elements, and reduced pedestrian crossing distances.
- T 5) Maintain continuity and safety and minimize temporary disruptions for pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and transit users during all phases of construction throughout Crystal City, including in the interior pedestrian concourse.
- T 6) Maintain an interior pedestrian concourse from 12th Street to 23rd Street, as shown conceptually on the *Retail Frontage and Interior Pedestrian Concourse Map* that extends the reach of transit, provides frequent connections to sidewalks, and is adequately flexible to permit creative design solutions for new development.
- T 7) Locate and consolidate building loading and service access points to secondary and tertiary streets and alleys where feasible, as recommended in the *Services and Loading Map*.

- T 8) Implement the proposed alignment and enhanced surface transit technology (streetcar), as shown on the Surface Transitway Map, and design stations as integral elements of the built environment.
- T 9) Establish additional access points to the Crystal City Metro Station in the vicinity of the Crystal Drive and 18th Street intersection.
- T 10) Create a multi-modal transfer area in the short-term on 18th Street under Jefferson Davis Highway, while working to integrate long-term future development adjacent to the existing Metro Station entrance with an enhanced multi-modal transfer facility situated at the ground floor.
- T 11) Establish near-term parking ratios for new projects that range from a maximum of 1 space per 750sf and/or a minimum of 1 space per 1,000sf for office uses and between 1 and 1.125 spaces per residential dwelling unit (or apply the County's most current parking management policies), while maximizing the sharing of parking space by various users and addressing short-term visitor and retail parking needs in Crystal City.
- T 12) Apply Transportation Demand Management (TDM) measures that reinforce the use of a smaller parking supply.

Housing Mix and Affordability (H)

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- H 2) Apply the Affordable Housing Ordinance and create special provisions for bonus density that achieve up to 20 percent of Gross Floor Area (GFA) above the GLUP to increase Crystal City's affordable housing stock, and allow affordable dwelling units to be provided in new or existing buildings.

Improvement Implementation (I)

- I 1) Develop financing tools beyond traditional community benefit to pay for infrastructure and public improvements essential to the spirit of the illustrative plan in recognition of (1): the transformational nature of the Crystal City redevelopment and (2): the limitations of developer contributions due to the high cost of demolition-replacement projects.
- I 2) Review future redevelopment activities in Crystal City at a Phased Development Site Plan (PDSP) level, in accordance with the block boundaries outlined in the Phased Development Site Plan Block Map, either prior to or concurrent with final site plans to ensure overall feasibility of achieving major plan improvements.