

**Crystal City Planning Process  
County Board / Task Force Work Session Meeting Summary  
September 17, 2007**

*This is a summary of the meeting.*

*At this meeting, the Task Force presented their progress to date on the Vision Statement, Goals, and Objectives to the County Board. County Board members commented on the content of these goals and objectives, and provided guidance as needed in areas where task force consensus had not been reached.*

**Comments:**

**A. Meeting Opens**

- County Board Chairman Ferguson and Member Fisette make opening remarks on the overall purpose and objectives of this work session, within the broader context of where we are at and where we are going in the Crystal City Planning Process, and what have been some challenges along the way.
- Marty Almquist, CCTF chair, prefaces discussion by acknowledging the totality of Task Force work completed to date, and identifying the key premise of identifying what is good about Crystal City and how it can be enhanced, as a complete place.
- Staff presents an introduction on the general background and context of the planning process to date, and how the Vision, Goals, and Objectives today fits within the overall context of other plan materials being prepared and refined on an ongoing basis.

**B. Review of Vision Statement, Goals, and Objectives**

CCTF vice chair Terry Savela walks through the Vision, Goals, and Objectives. The highlighted elements of each goal and the primary comments from the County Board are listed below according to each goal.

**Vision Statement**

- The statement identifies the assets Crystal City has today and acknowledges what is missing today that we would like to see in the future growth and enhancement of Crystal City. Retaining the interior walkway system, expanding upon the forms of transit, and establishing a truly Class A office environment are some key points noted in the vision statement.
- Board Member Fisette commented that he would like to see the statement refined to clarify that the interior walkway system may be lined with restaurants and retailers, in targeted areas, rather than everywhere.

**Goal # 1 – Create a High Quality Public Realm that Strengthens the Sense of Place**

- The Underground: several Board members commented on the evolving stance on the treatment of the interior walkway system. Initially, their thinking was to move everything up to street level; but recent thinking has reframed the issue to see the interior walkway system as an extension of Metro, but still poses the question, how much retail do we want underground?

- The question was also posed as to what can the market support? What is feasible and what is desirable are two questions that need to be thought about with regard to the interior walkway system. If we can enhance the underground and street level, great. If not, we may need to decide between the two.
- It was mentioned that shared space, or space that was accessible from both the streetscape and the interior walkway system would be a critical element in defining how both the streetscapes and interior walkways can be enhanced and activated.
- Task Force members noted that the interior walkway system provides a level of pedestrian convenience, and freedom from traffic, with “eyes on the street”. Marketability and rental costs were also noted as attractions of the underground space.
- The challenges of incorporating the design of new buildings and integrating them with existing buildings and the existing interior walkway system was also noted.
- Ultimately, several Board members conveyed that this likely doesn’t need to be an “either or” issue, but rather connectivity between the two systems and strategically planning for each system can provide enhanced conditions at both levels.

#### Discussion on Public Open Space

- Board members commented on the need for additional analysis and information from staff that clearly identifies the existing amount of open space versus what is proposed. Additionally, we need to acknowledge the different types of space and classify them as such in our calculations of existing and planned open space.
- The open space questions goes beyond quantity, but needs to somehow capture quality as well, in addition to other factors like programming, etc.
- There needs to be a distinction between open space and landscaping; we can inventory both, but they need to be distinguished from each other.
- County Board Member Zimmerman supports the language in the italics, as a basis of what we are considering publicly accessible open space (universally accessible outdoor spaces), but comments that analysis needs to incorporate everything and classify the different types. What is existing vs, what is proposed.
- Edge spaces and interior courtyard may provide some value, but they are not the same as having a public park (either publicly or privately owned).
- Board Member Favola comments that there is a lot of open space in Crystal City with varying amounts of value. The analysis needs to consider more than just square feet.
- Task Force members concurred that this analysis is information that has been requested for some time. Additionally, requests have been made for an analysis between open space in Crystal City (existing and planned) and what exists elsewhere the R-B Corridor.
- Conclusion: Staff will get back to the County Board and Task Force with additional analysis on open space as requested. There will be no changes made at this point, pending further review and guidance by the Board as well as the Task Force.

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

- Board Members commented that the second bullet could be expanded to create a more even balance between residential and office and daytime and evening populations.
- Additionally, more specifics such as grocery stores and urgent care facilities should be added under this goal in order to re-establish uses that had, up until recently, served Crystal City in the past.

**Goal # 3 – Relate Architectural and Urban Design to the Human Scale**

- Task Force highlighted some of the specific details in the objectives under this goal.
- There were generally no objections to this language from the County Board.

**Goal # 4 – Enhance Multimodal Access and Connectivity**

- As highlighted by the Task Force, some primary goals include to maintain the capacity of Jefferson Davis Highway (Route 1), while accommodating the growth of Crystal City.
- Connections to transit, both enhanced and new, were identified as key objectives, in addition to the safety and attractiveness of these facilities.
- Pedestrian connections to National Airport are seen as a priority.
- Adequate parking and planning for different types of transit are key elements as well.
- There were generally no objections to this language from the County Board.

**Goal # 5 – Incorporate Sustainable and Green Building Principles into all Urban and Architectural Design.**

- The most important part of this goal is the expectation that any project meet county policies on green building principles, as they may change and evolve over time.
- There were generally no objections to this language from the County Board.

**Goal # 6 – Preserve the Integrity of the Single-Family Neighborhood to the West.**

- The question in this goal is whether or not the objectives should be so specific as to say “no new roads” into the adjacent single family neighborhoods.
- The discussion began with questioning where should the burden be placed – on the applicant or on the community when there is a future proposal for a new road of the type being avoided by the proposed language. The threshold question is how much flexibility should the plan allow for, and is it better to prescribe the means or to identify the desired ends achieved by the plan.
- County Board Member Favola provide suggested language that identifies the positive aspects of what is trying to be done – which is directing traffic to major arterials and multi-modal network elements.
- County Board Member Fisette suggested language that identifies what you can avoid to stay away from the undesired negative impacts. On the other hand, Board members commented that you don’t necessarily want a wall

between Crystal City and adjacent neighborhoods, because neighbors may want to get to and from Crystal City as well.

- Board Member Fisette also commented on the need to reduce the barrier effect of Route 1.
- Proposed language for this item includes: “Direct traffic to major arterials and multi-modal network elements, and avoid street designs that increase cut thru traffic into adjacent single family neighborhoods”.

**Goal # 7 – Ensure Crystal City’s Long-Term Economic Sustainability.**

- The general objectives were highlighted by the Task Force, in addition to a new bullet to be added that speaks about maintaining the quality of life of the existing community during the growth and redevelopment of Crystal City.
- There were generally no objections to this language from the County Board.