

A Livability Framework for 22202

Overview

The residents of 22202 from Arlington Ridge, Aurora Highlands, and Crystal City have committed to tackling the challenges facing our area with holistic strategies based on shared livability themes to create a better, more livable city.

Our shared area encompasses diverse populations and neighborhoods, yet we have many common needs. Designing a livable city requires a comprehensive approach to shaping the built environment to enhance the physical and social health and well-being of all inhabitants and to strengthen community.

This framework is designed to work within existing county plans and policies, but aims to establish consensus-driven themes while allowing for creativity by residents, businesses, and developers. A livable city is **responsive** to the needs and aspirations of its inhabitants, so a framework requires assessment mechanisms and continual updating.

Vision

Urban planning that **balances** working, living, and socializing in close proximity – creating a “City of Short Distances” – reduces unnecessary travel and forges community **connections**. Likewise, a city with **diverse** housing options, **continuous** pedestrian routes, and **access** to goods and services becomes more livable for children, the elderly, and the less affluent. Public health and the environment both benefit from an emphasis on public transit and active modes of transportation, such as walking and biking.

A livable city also requires an approach to design that protects ecological systems and promotes a connection to the natural environment. This emphasis on “biophilia” in turn improves **resiliency** of the built environment and promotes human health and well-being.

Livability Themes

Livability is framed below as a set of integrated themes. Priorities for specific elements will likely vary over time and within the shared area.

Diverse and Affordable Housing

- Opportunities to buy as well as rent, to encourage community development
- Diverse housing types for range of incomes
- Housing options and services that promote aging in place

Environmental Sustainability

- Infrastructure, design, and plantings, including a robust tree canopy, to reduce stormwater runoff, heat islands, energy consumption, pollution, and noise
- Incorporation of green “urban habitat” spaces (e.g., native trees, pollinator gardens, water features) to provide ecological connectivity between the Potomac, Four Mile Run, and Arlington Ridge and to connect residents to nature

Community and Social Engagement

- Outdoor spaces for social interaction, casual use, and events
- Indoor community centers for meetings and classes
- Dog parks and other dog-friendly spaces
- Opportunities for sports and recreation

Transportation Focus on Health, Convenience, Safety, and the Environment

- Connected pedestrian and bicycle network, not restricted to the street grid, through the National Landing area—from Arlington Ridge to the Potomac River, and the Pentagon south to Potomac Yards—with safe, convenient connections across roads
- Circulator transit around National Landing to discourage private vehicle traffic
- Creation of pedestrian streets to promote safe travel, social interaction, and tranquil space
- Multimodal transportation options within, in/out, and through the area, without undue congestion

Essential Services: Educational, Medical, Retail

- Elementary school space, permanent library space, community opportunities for technical education and innovation, diverse childcare offerings
- Access to an affiliated medical/hospital facility with broader services than non-affiliated Urgent Care walk-in centers
- Independent and diverse retail and farmer's markets

Art and Cultural Amenities

- Public art that is interactive and/or utilitarian: e.g., climbing structures, water features, seating, bicycle racks
- Diverse cultural opportunities, including performing arts venues, libraries, film and museums

Monitoring and Assessment

- Need for relevant and publicly available baseline data sets
- Adoption of “smart city” approach: use Information & Communication Technology to connect to residents and to improve efficiency of infrastructure and services, while respecting individual data privacy and security
- Monitoring of tree canopy, impervious surface, energy use, water use, recycling
- Assessment and periodic updates of 22202 livability in accordance with recognized livability standards and community-defined criteria
- Identification and special monitoring of specific areas of concern such as dangerous pedestrian crossings, traffic congestion hot spots, and other issues