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# THE EVOLUTION OF NATIONAL LANDING

Cresa, Washington, DC

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Long known primarily as a convenient office location, National Landing has evolved into one of the Washington, DC metropolitan area's most dynamic employment centers. Today National Landing combines strong regional connectivity, a growing mix of neighborhood amenities, and a diverse concentration of industries including defense organizations, technology companies, and professional associations. Together, these factors create a place where access, walkability, and economic momentum converge.



## The Evolution of National Landing

For decades, National Landing has been a major employment center in the Washington, DC metropolitan area. Its proximity to the Pentagon, strong transit access, and concentration of federal and defense-related tenants made the region a practical and highly accessible location for organizations operating in and around the capital.

That strength, however, also shaped how the area was perceived. Many came to view National Landing primarily as a convenient office location: efficient, well located, and easy to access. **It was a place people worked, but not necessarily a place they stayed.**

Today, workplace expectations have shifted. Employers increasingly seek locations that support collaboration, culture, and employee experience. National Landing's growing mix of restaurants, parks, housing, and walkable streets is helping reshape how the area is experienced by both companies and residents.

**Once defined by convenience, National Landing is now defined by access, walkability, and innovation.**

# A Neighborhood People Want to Be In

For many years, National Landing functioned primarily as an employment hub. Workers commuted in for the day, and the surrounding environment reflected that reality. Office towers dominated the landscape, and the region was designed more for efficiency than for everyday neighborhood life.

Today, National Landing offers a far more active neighborhood environment. Restaurants, retail, parks, and public gathering spaces now create a walkable setting where people spend time throughout the day and into the evening.

Carefully designed public spaces, expanded retail, and pedestrian-oriented streets have helped create a neighborhood that supports both work and everyday life. These changes have broadened how National Landing is experienced, **attracting not only employees but also residents and visitors who spend time in the area beyond the workday.**

## SPOTLIGHT: CRYSTAL CITY WATER PARK

Crystal City Water Park has become one of National Landing's most active gathering spaces. Recently reimagined, the park features a curated mix of restaurants and vendors, including many minority- and women-owned businesses.

Outdoor seating, regular programming, and a lively public setting draw employees, residents, and visitors throughout the day.



60+ restaurants have opened in National Landing since 2023, including 29 in 2025 alone.



## Access Across the Region

Access has long been one of National Landing's defining strengths. The region sits at the intersection of several of the Washington, DC metropolitan area's most important transportation systems.

**National Landing is served by four Metro stations**—Crystal City, Pentagon City, Pentagon, and Potomac Yard—providing direct connections to downtown Washington, DC, Northern Virginia, and the broader regional transit network. Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport is located immediately adjacent to National Landing, placing national and international travel just minutes away.

Regional rail connections further expand mobility options. The **Crystal City VRE station** provides service along the **Fredericksburg and Manassas lines**, connecting National Landing to communities across Northern Virginia and the broader commuter rail network. Nearby, the **Mount Vernon Trail** connects National Landing to Alexandria, Arlington, and Washington, DC, while a growing network of bike lanes and pedestrian improvements continues to strengthen local mobility.

Together, these transportation networks make National Landing one of the most accessible employment centers in the Washington, DC metropolitan area.



### SPOTLIGHT: CC2DCA – CRYSTAL CITY TO REAGAN NATIONAL AIRPORT

A new pedestrian and bicycle connection known as CC2DCA will link National Landing directly to Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport.

The project includes a 1,200-foot bridge spanning the rail corridor and the George Washington Memorial Parkway, connecting Crystal City to the Mount Vernon Trail and the airport area. The connection will create a safe route for walking, biking, and micromobility between National Landing and the airport.

Once complete, **CC2DCA will make it possible to travel between National Landing and Reagan National Airport in just minutes without a car**, strengthening one of the area's most distinctive transportation advantages.



# Innovation and Economic Momentum

National Landing's evolution is not defined only by physical development. It is also driven by the concentration of industries and institutions shaping the area's economic future.

National Landing has long been home to defense organizations, government contractors, and professional associations. In recent years, technology companies and innovation-focused organizations have joined that mix, creating a diverse ecosystem of industries that continues to grow.

That momentum gained national visibility when Amazon selected National Landing as the site of its second corporate headquarters. The decision reinforced the area's appeal for technology companies and talent while adding another major anchor to an already growing innovation cluster.

To build on this foundation, the **National Innovation Quarter** was established to connect companies, researchers, public institutions, and entrepreneurs working across technology, defense, and emerging industries.

Together, these forces position National Landing as more than a convenient office district. **It has become a place where companies across industries intersect, collaborate, and contribute to the evolving innovation economy of the greater Washington, DC metro area.**



## SPOTLIGHT: NATIONAL INNOVATION QUARTER

The National Innovation Quarter (National IQ) is an innovation district initiative in National Landing designed to connect industry, government, academia, and entrepreneurship.

The effort brings together companies, researchers, public institutions, and startups working across technology, defense, cybersecurity, and related fields. Through partnerships, programming, and shared initiatives, **National IQ encourages collaboration and helps accelerate new ideas from research to real-world application.**

Located near major employers, research institutions, and federal agencies, National IQ strengthens National Landing's role within the Washington region's growing innovation ecosystem.

# Why Companies Are Choosing National Landing

Organizations evaluating office space today are looking for more than a convenient location. Access to transit and regional infrastructure remains critical, but so does the surrounding environment. Walkable neighborhoods, nearby housing, and active public spaces help **support talent attraction and retention while contributing to a stronger sense of workplace community.**

Proximity to other companies, research institutions, and industry networks creates opportunities for collaboration and growth. National Landing's mix of defense organizations, technology companies, professional associations, and emerging innovation initiatives positions the region within a broader ecosystem that continues to attract investment and talent.

Together, these elements help explain why National Landing is attracting attention from organizations across industries. **What was once viewed primarily as a convenient office location has evolved into an area where access, neighborhood life, and economic momentum converge.**

Cresa's team works closely with organizations across the Washington, DC metropolitan area to evaluate how location decisions align with business goals, workforce needs, and long-term growth.

With a deep understanding of neighborhoods like National Landing and the broader regional market, we help clients navigate opportunities and make informed real estate decisions.

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