

# **Open Space: Revisiting Metrics and Goals**

March 3, 2022

# Zoom Ground Rules





# Agenda

1. Call to Order: Kurt Moser/Denise Tennant, Chair
2. Zoom Ground Rules
3. Administrative: Ana Vicinanza, Urban Planner
  1. Review and Adoption of December Open Space Meeting Minutes
4. Committee Task Updates:
  - A. Open Space Acquisition: Ana Vicinanza, Urban Planner
  - B. Revisiting Metrics and Goals: Aaron Bethencourt, Planning Associate
5. Public Comment
6. Next Meeting: April 25, 2022 via Zoom
7. Adjourn

# Open Space Acquisition

*Task 2.1: Develop criteria for considering opportunities for open space acquisition through the Open Space Fund (such as connectivity, walkability to neighborhood needs, access to water, etc.).*



# 2003 Open Space Plan Acquisition Criteria

1. Privately owned land near or adjacent to existing parks and trails
2. Near or adjacent to existing schools
3. Near or adjacent to natural resource areas
4. At street endings to provide neighborhood linkages
5. Next to institutional properties with extensive open space, valuable natural resources, and/or potential public access
6. Adjacent to or linking existing or proposed trails or greenways
7. Small lots in dense urban neighborhoods for pocket parks, gardens, green spaces, and playgrounds
8. Lands with significant trees, sloping-terrain, and other natural resource features
9. Properties with known or potential historic or cultural significance
10. Lands in areas identified in the Needs Assessment as those with a high need for open space
11. Excess rights-of-way
12. Open space and trail connections adjacent to or linking open spaces, natural areas, greenways and trails in Arlington, or Fairfax Counties

# Proposed changes

- Add/amend criteria for natural resources (#3 and #8) to include potential wildlife corridors, refuges, and reduction of heat island
- Add a category that evaluates the liabilities and constraints of the site to determine what remediation and maintenance may be required
- Add a question/criteria that identifies the redevelopment potential of the site to accommodate passive and active uses
- Add question/criteria evaluating open space, **socio-economic?** and recreational gaps the site would be helping to fulfill.

# Discussion

- Are there criteria that should be removed?
- Are there criteria that should be modified?
- Are there new criteria that should be included?

# Revisiting Metrics and Goals



# Open Space: Revisiting Metrics and Goals

- Open Space Master Plan (2003)
  - Goal 1: Protect and Enrich Existing Parks
  - Goal 2: Develop Innovative Opportunities for Creating Additional Public Open Space

# Open Space Steering Committee:

## Task 2

- Evaluate and recommend methods of pursuing new publicly accessible open space.
  1. Develop criteria for considering opportunities for open space acquisition through the Open Space Fund (such as connectivity, walkability to neighborhood needs, access to water, etc.).
  2. Develop minimum publicly accessible open space criteria for small area plans based on current and future demographic needs and neighborhood characteristics.
  3. Evaluate the Open Space Ratio and/or other targets based on national standards and benchmarks for localities with similar densities.

# Task 2:

## Evaluate the Open Space Ratio

- Open Space Metrics
  - Evaluate the Open Space Ratio and/or other targets based on national standards and benchmarks for localities with similar densities.

**Current Open Space Ratio:**  
7.3 acres per 1,000 residents

# Task 2:

## Evaluate the Open Space Ratio

- 7.3 acres per 1,000 residents
  - What is the origin of this goal?
    - National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) estimated:
      - ❑ 7.3 acres on average per 1,000 residents for all reporting municipalities
      - ❑ 8.9 acres on average per 1,000 residents for municipalities between 100,000 and 250,000 residents



# Task 2:

## Evaluate the Open Space Ratio

- 7.3 acres per 1,000 residents
  - Is this goal achievable in the long run?
    - Population growth is trending upwards within our fixed geographic boundary
    - Costs of open space acquisitions and maintenance
    - Open space shared with other agencies may involve creative approaches to meet the demands of these other agencies

# Task 2:

## Evaluate the Open Space Ratio

- 7.3 acres per 1,000 residents
  - Is this goal achievable in the long run?
    - Population growth is trending upwards within our fixed geographic boundary
      - Population of 195,240 by 2040 according to data published by the University of Virginia.
      - Would require nearly 261 acres of additional open space by 2040

# Task 2:

## Evaluate the Open Space Ratio

- 7.3 acres per 1,000 residents
  - Issues with relying on NRPA average for goals and metrics:
    - Only looks at population and not density
      - Census data indicate that we are 11<sup>th</sup> in density out of 218 reported with 100,000 and 250,000 residents.
        - ❖ Garden Grove, CA is 12<sup>th</sup> most dense and has 5.66 acres per 1,000 residents and a goal of 5 acres per 1,000 residents.
        - ❖ Berkeley, CA is 6<sup>th</sup> most dense and has 10 acres per 1,000 residents (mostly due to recent large acquisitions) and a goal of 2 acres per 1,000 residents

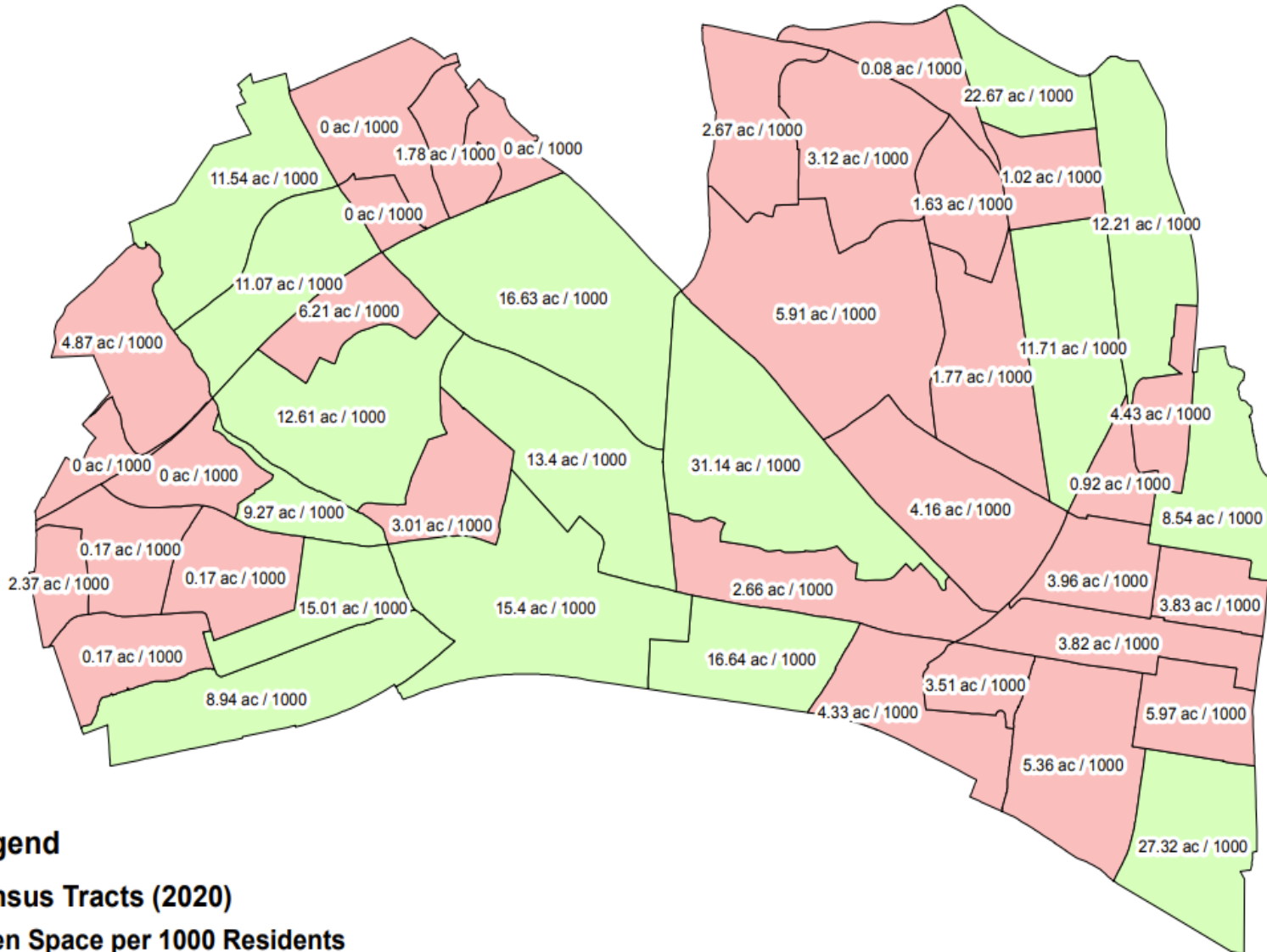
# Task 2:

## Evaluate the Open Space Ratio

- 7.3 acres per 1,000 residents
  - Issues with relying on NRPA average for metrics:
    - Does not indicate equity.
      - For example:
        - a third of a city with 4 acres per 1,000 residents
        - +
        - a third of a city with 2 acres per 1,000 residents
        - +
        - a third of a city with 18 acres per 1,000 residents
        - =
        - citywide average of 8 acres per 1,000 residents



# Open Space Density by Tract (2020)

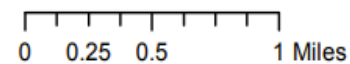


## Legend

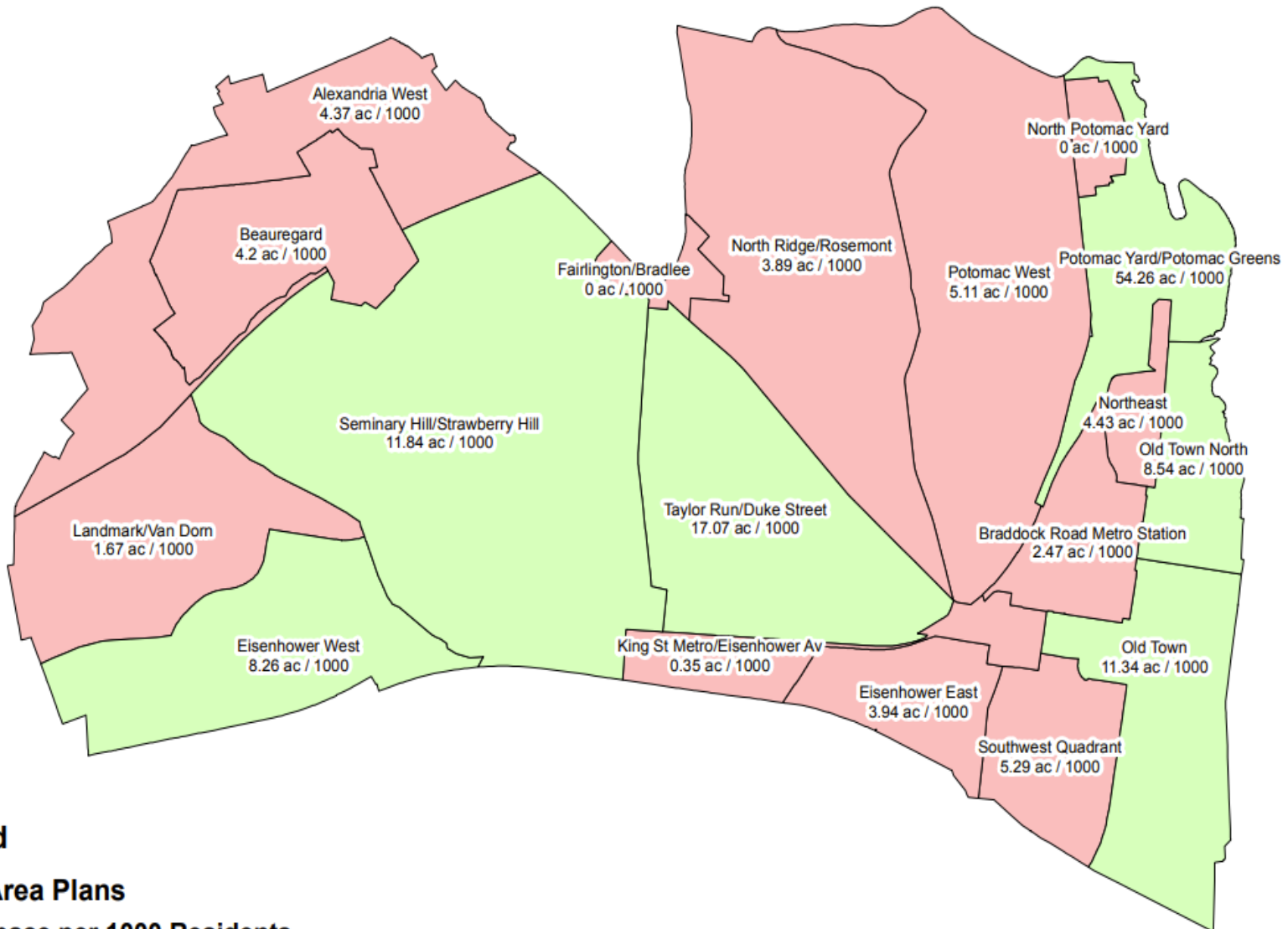
### Census Tracts (2020)

#### Open Space per 1000 Residents

- Below 7.3 acres per 1000
- Above 7.3 acres per 1000





# Open Space Density by Small Area Plan



## Legend

### Small Area Plans

### Open Space per 1000 Residents

-  Below 7.3 acres per 1000
-  Above 7.3 acres per 1000

0 0.25 0.5 1 Miles



# Task 2:





## Evaluate the Open Space Ratio

- How are other municipalities evaluating their open space?
  - Access:
    - Fort Lauderdale, FL
      - Goal of 4.5 acres of opens space per 1,000 residents
      - Less than one-half mile radius to parks, playgrounds, and walking and biking trails for all residents
        - Further broken down by park type, facility type, and amenity type


# Recreational Open Space Walkshed



## Legend

-  Recreational\_Open\_Space
-  5 Minute Walk
-  10 Minute walk
-  Sidewalk

1 0.5 0 1 Miles

A scale bar showing distances of 1, 0.5, 0, and 1 mile.

# Task 2:

## Evaluate the Open Space Ratio

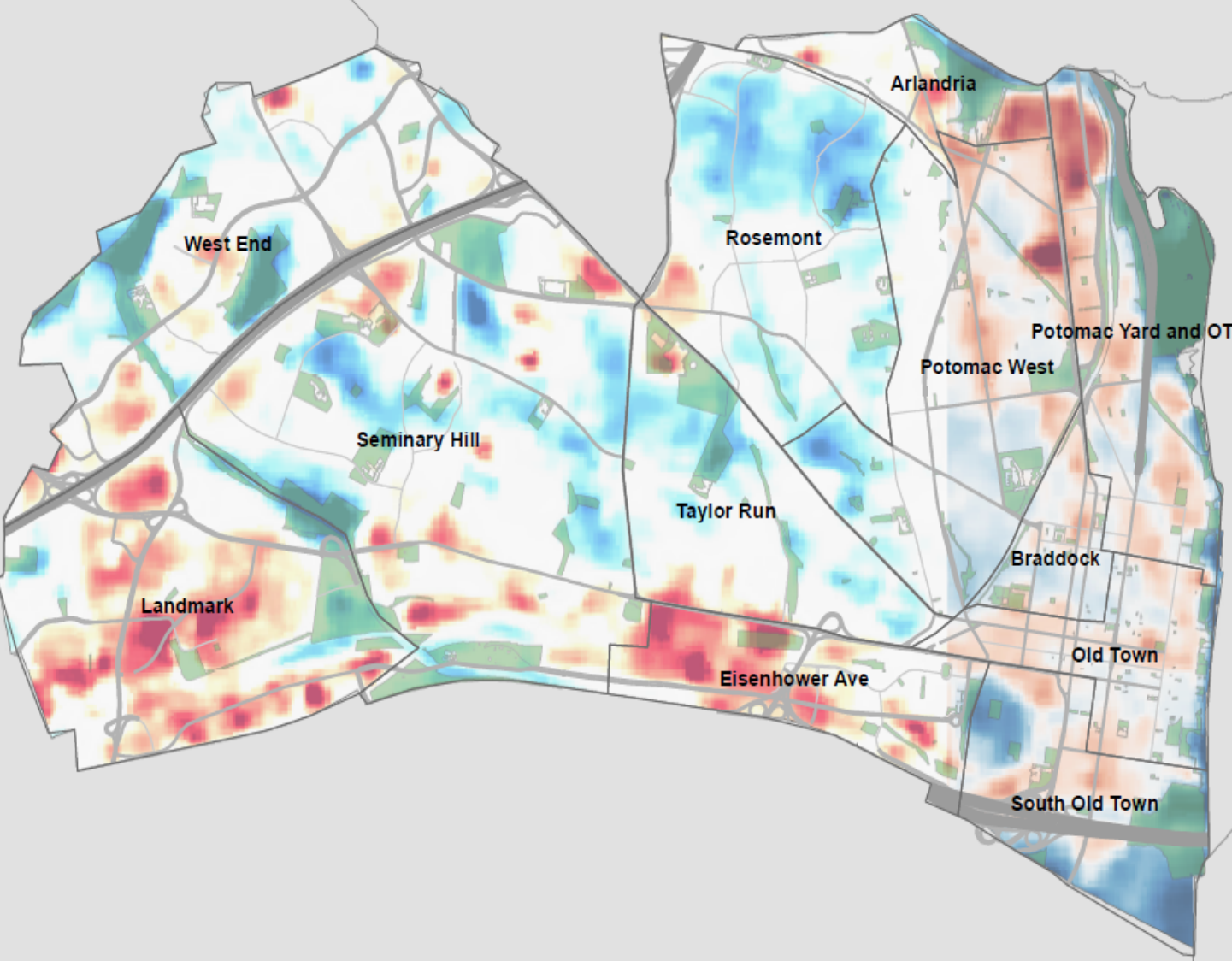
- How are other municipalities evaluating their open space?
- Quality:
  - San Diego, CA
    - Focused beyond their open space ratio with new park standards to create more equitable outcomes
    - Point system allocates points based on access to open space, amenities, or park features per 1,000 residents.

# Task 2:

## Evaluate the Open Space Ratio

- How are other municipalities evaluating their open space?
  - Environmental:
    - Boston, MA
      - Heat Islands increase energy costs, air pollution, and heat-related illness and mortality.
      - Increased green space and tree canopy in these areas could mitigate these effects

# Urban Heat - Surface Temperature in and around Alexandria



Pursuant to Section 54.1-402 of the Code of Virginia, any delineation of topography or contours, or any depiction of physical improvements, property lines or boundaries is for general information only and shall not be used for the design, modification or construction of improvements to real property or for flood plain delineation.

The maps provided hereunder are provided "as is" and the City expressly disclaims all warranties, UCC and otherwise, express or implied, including warranties as to accuracy of the maps and merchantability and fitness for a particular purpose, and further expressly disclaims responsibility for all incidental, consequential or special damages arising out of or in connection with the use or performance of the maps.

Data calculated and provided by the Northern Virginia Regional Commission. Description as follows:

This file layer shows surface temperature on July 13, 2020 derived from MultiSpectral Landsat 8 imagery. The Landsat 8 imagery includes eight multispectral bands from the Operational Land Imager (OLI) and two bands from the Thermal Infrared Sensor (TIRS). The two TIRS bands were used to calculate the degrees Fahrenheit above or below the average temperature in the surrounding 5 km.

Mapping Standards:  
 Coordinate System - NAD83 State Plane Virginia North  
 Projection - Lambert Conformal Conic  
 Map Units - Feet

Map Produced:  
 ITS Department  
 2/8/2022



Data source: Esri, USGS, AWS, NASA. Analyzed and published by Northern Virginia Regional Commission

# Task 2:

## Evaluate the Open Space Ratio

- How are other municipalities evaluating their open space?
- Social Equity:
  - Minneapolis, MN
    - Close neighborhood parks funding gap
    - Maintain and revitalize parks and address racial and economic equity throughout the park system.
    - Point system for prioritizing capital investment in open space based on racial and economic demographics



# Questions?

- Are there other metrics we should be tracking or considering?
- Do these metrics accurately capture our priorities?
- Should we maintain the open space ratio in alignment with the overall national average?

# Public Comment

- Please use the "Raise Your Hand" feature of "\*9" to inform staff you would like to comment.
- Comments will be limited to three (3) minutes per speaker.



# Next Meeting

- April, 25 2022 via Zoom

# Information & Questions

- Information
  - [Open Space Planning](#)
- Questions
  - Ana Vicinanza, Urban Planner II  
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