



Open Space: Revisiting Metrics and Goals

April 25, 2022

Agenda

1. Call to Order: Kurt Moser, Chair
2. Public Comment
3. Committee Task Updates:
 1. Open Space Acquisition Criteria: Ana Vicinanza, Urban Planner
 2. Open Space Metrics and Goals: Ana Vicinanza, Urban Planner
1. Next Meeting: Discussion
2. Adjourn



Public Comment

- Comments will be limited to three (3) minutes per speaker.



Publicly Accessible Open Space Definition Goals

1. Be a meaningful place for community gathering and social interaction
2. Be multi-functional and adaptable
3. Be continuous and connected, and provide connectivity for recreational users and habitat
4. Enhance diversity, inclusivity, equity, and accessibility
5. Enrich understanding of our history and cultural traditions
6. Promote health and well being
7. Foster environmental sustainability
8. Preserve, protect, and/or enhance existing natural areas
9. Preserve and protect outdoor historical and cultural resources
10. Promote habitat benefits for wildlife



2003 Open Space Plan Acquisition Criteria

New criteria: Ability to support the goals of publicly accessible open space

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 **and wildlife corridors and refuges.**
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 a question about the property supporting the goals of publicly accessible open space
- 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.



Metrics and Goals

Task 2:

Evaluate the Open Space Ratio

- 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

- 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

- **Current goal:** 7.3 acres of open space per 1000 residents (NRPA metric)
 - Good baseline metric to have
 - Does not measure density, quality, population growth, or look at specific sections of the City

Task 2:

Evaluate the Open Space Ratio

- **Updated goal:**
 - Look at open space at smaller geographic levels throughout the City
 - Focus on quality over quantity
 - Look at ways to incorporate equity in open space distribution throughout the City

Ways of measuring open space

- **Accessibility** – Walkability maps
 - 97% of Alexandrians live within a 10-minute walk to open space
- **Sustainability** – EAP and Urban Forestry Master Plan
- **Equity** –
 - Density, quality of open space, Alexandria resident makeup of open space types



Where do we need to keep working

- Equity measures
 - Proposed equity measures/recommendations:
 - Density maps (helps us identify where we may need to focus more open space – recommendation within SAP)
 - ACPS data on socioeconomic demographic data from the City – help us identify areas that need more attention
 - Condition assessment of open space (to ensure the open space we are providing as a city meets certain parameters)
 - Include assessment of what we have

Task 1 Goals

The City of Alexandria seeks to preserve, increase, and enhance publicly accessible open space to provide citizens and visitors with assured access to open spaces which support a healthy, livable and sustainable city; to enrich and enhance our cultural and historic heritage; to promote opportunities for community gathering and common use and preservation of natural resources in our diverse city.

1. Preserve, increase, and enhance publicly accessible open space
2. Assured access to open space
3. Support healthy, livable, and sustainable city
4. Enrich and enhance cultural and historic heritage
5. Opportunities for community gathering and common use
6. Preservation of natural resources

Questions?

- Do these proposed metrics and recommendations capture the goals we as a Committee identified in Task 1?
- Are there other metrics we should consider?

Next Meeting

Discussion: Next meeting's format.

Information & Questions

- Information
 - [Open Space Planning](#)
- Questions
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