ALEXANDRIA OPEN SPACE PLAN

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Successful long-range plans are usually created as the result of a comprehensive, collaborative effort reflecting a wide range of views. The Open Space Plan for the City of Alexandria, Virginia is no exception. As described in detail in this report, the plan had the benefit of input from the community at large, from many of its relevant organizations, and from appropriate City agencies and commissions.

However, the Open Space Steering Committee, appointed to guide the development of the plan, was involved most intensively in this effort. This group included:

- Judy Noritake and Bruce Dwyer: Alexandria Park and Recreation Commission
- Eric Wagner, Larry Robinson, and Rick Leibach: Alexandria Planning Commission
- Tom Tyler and Cindy DeGrood, Alexandria Environmental Policy Commission
- Mark Fields: Alexandria Archeology Commission
- Nancy Hicks: Alexandria Chamber of Commerce
- Jay Johnson: Alexandria Public Schools
- Staff from the Departments of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities; Planning and Zoning; Transportation and Environmental Services; Office of Historic Alexandria; and the Office of the City Manager

This stalwart group met early in the morning, on a monthly basis, for over a year to help define the City's open space needs and guide the development of the plan. They deserve much thanks and credit for an outstanding effort. They have helped define Alexandria's open space legacy for many years to come.

Market Square facing Alexandria's City Hall

Existing park at the Potomac River waterfront

Four Mile Run

Streetscape at King Street

As one of the most densely populated cities in the nation, Alexandria faces a continuous struggle to provide enough open space for all its residents. With a growing and increasingly diverse population clamoring for open space options in the context of a dwindling supply of potential open spaces areas, the city must develop a strategy to respond to these conflicting pressures. The Open Space Plan presented in this document establishes a framework for addressing Alexandria's short and longer term open space needs. It defines an approach that maximizes the City's limited open space opportunities by creating a system that builds upon the City's dense, urban condition. It begins by acknowledging and protecting the City's existing open spaces, and goes on to identify additional open space opportunities for the future.

There is a clear desire for additional open space for both active and passive purposes. Yet, enormous efforts will be required simply to maintain the existing ratio of open space per capita as Alexandria's population continues to grow. Between 1990 and 2000, the ratio of open space compared to population stayed constant because the City added 125 acres of open space. Population projections for the year 2012 require that the City add another 100 acres of open space to maintain that ratio. And that number assumes that existing public open space will not be diminished.

Against this backdrop, the City's need for an Open Space Plan becomes critical. The plan was developed through a collaborative community process that included monthly meetings with an Open Space Steering Committee, three Planning District meetings, and a citywide Open Space Summit.

As the result of this process, a series of 15 open space goals were identified. These form the overall framework for the Open Space Plan:

Goal 1. Protect and enrich existing parks

Goal 2. Develop innovative opportunities for creating additional open space

Goal 3. Review and complete implementation of the Potomac River Waterfront Plan and include additional parkland where appropriate

Goal 4. Protect, expand, and connect stream valleys and other environmentally sensitive areas

Goal 5. Create an open space network in new development areas

Goal 6. Protect and preserve institutional open space

King Street metro and surrounding urban fabric

Potomac River waterfront

Holmes Run Stream Valley

Existing trails

Potomac River waterfront

Goal 7.   Maximize use of public school open space areas

Goal 8.   Preserve and protect cemeteries

Goal 9.   Create public open space from vacant land

Goal 10. Link and expand pedestrian, bicycle and trail system

Goal 11. Enhance streetscapes and gateways

Goal 12. Expand citywide street tree program and protect existing trees and woodland areas

Goal 13. Encourage the creation of Civic Parks at and adjacent to Metro stations

Goal 14. Beautify interchanges and highway corridors

Goal 15. Protect privately owned open space

The plan presents recommended actions and implementation strategies for each defined goal. It also defines those actions that the City needs to make its first priority in implementing the Open Space Plan. These priority actions include:

- Creating an Alexandria Open Space Conservancy
- Hiring a full-time, professional grants writer to pursue public and private sector funding.
- Beginning completion of the Alexandria Waterfront Plan.
- Preparing a Greenway Management Plan for Holmes Run Stream Valley.
- Focusing on the protection and enhancement of the City's Resource Protection Areas.
- Beginning to preserve specific properties as open space areas (as defined in the Plan) through easements, acquisition, and other means of protection.
- Revising zoning requirements to achieve better open space in new developments.
- Considering the creation of additional active recreation opportunities on open spaces located east of Simpson Field.
- Developing a workable open space conservation strategy for the City's major institutional lands.
- Rehabilitating Commonwealth Avenue as a significant parkway.
- Implementing a system of new path/trail linkages at Holmes Run, at the eastern end of Eisenhower Valley, and from Booth Park to Fairfax County along Backlick Run.
- Establishing a streetscape and gateway enhancement program for Route 1.

Potomac River shoreline

Mount Vernon recreational center

Historical Old Town, Alexandria

- Implementing a CITYgreen analysis to assess the status of tree cover in the City.

Because all of the above priorities cannot be tackled simultaneously, it is suggested that the City consider the following timeframe sequence as a guideline for implementing the above actions:

Year 1:
- Create the Alexandria Open Space Conservancy.
- Hire the grants writer.
- Begin to define a strategy that will allow the City to respond quickly to preserve "at risk" sites as open space as these become available.
- Revise zoning requirements for new developments.

Years 2-3:
- Work to achieve settlement on 1 and 2 King Street, and 0 Prince Street in order to begin completion of the Alexandria Waterfront Plan, including additional parkland where appropriate.
- Begin preparation of a greenway management plan for Holmes Run.
- Initiate a system of monitoring the City's progress on its protection and enhancement of RPA's.
- Begin a dialogue between the Open Space Conservancy and the City's major institutional landholders to develop a strategy for conserving such land.

Years 3-5:
- Establish new trail crossing of Holmes Run at Chambliss Street.
- Connect the off-street Eisenhower Valley path to Old Town at Payne Street.
- Develop a strategy for creating additional active open space near Simpson Field.

Years 5-7:
- Rehabilitate Commonwealth Avenue.
- Create a trail along Backlick Run, from Booth Park the Fairfax County line.
- Begin a CITYgreen analysis of Alexandria tree cover.
- Establish a streetscape and gateway enhancement plan for Route 1 (to be implemented in years 7-10).

Finally, the Open Space Plan identifies and describes potential funding sources and strategies. Operational funding strategies, as well as sources of public and institutional grants, are discussed. Funding/strategies include:
- Dedicated trusts (including land trusts and conservation/preserva-tion funds, open space funds, and local service districts)

- Bonds (e.g., general obligation bonds, revenue bonds)
- Taxes and general fund money
- Easements
- Public and institutional grants
- Operational support mechanisms (e.g., corporate support, volunteer programs)
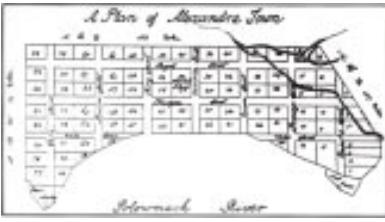
Plan of Alexandria shows original street grid pattern (from "A Guide to Historic Alexandria" by William Seale, originally from the Alexandria Library, Special Collections)

Goods were brought to Alexandria by ships and wagons (from "A Guide to Historic Alexandria" by William Seale, originally from William Francis Smith Collection).

Market square, 1880 (from "A Guide to Historic Alexandria" by William Seale, originally from Harper's New Monthly Magazine)

Since surveyors first laid it out in 1749, Alexandria has been a city that has struggled to provide enough open space for its residents. Because Alexandria originated as a mercantile center, where goods brought in by ship and wagon were bought and sold, it was a place that revolved around commerce. The streets of "Old Town" were laid out in a grid pattern, with every inch of land planned in a manner that would maximize economic interests, with lots intended for residences, stores, warehouses, and taverns. Because open spaces did not contribute to the burgeoning economy of the town, no parks were planned. Indeed, there was only one public place laid out in the entire community – Market Square, then facing Cameron Street – and that was for the conduct of business (*Seale, 2000*).

In the 253 years since its founding, Alexandria has expanded into a city that covers almost 16 square miles, and has grown to a population of more than 128,000 people. The city has one of the densest concentrations of population in the United States, with a mix of residential and commercial uses in both urban and suburban neighborhoods. While Alexandria is now an integral part of the regional economy of the Washington D.C. Metropolitan Area, the City has maintained its own distinctive heritage. Fortunately, as Alexandria has grown, so have its open spaces. The Alexandria Department of Recreation, Parks, and Cultural Activities now owns and maintains 127 parks, ranging in size from large citywide parks such as Fort Ward Park in western Alexandria (41 acres) to small neighborhood parks like Monticello Park in the central part of the City (4.7 acres). Several of these parks, such as Founders' Park in Old Town, provide the public with access to one of Alexandria's greatest natural resources: the Potomac River. Others allow residents access to the City's sensitive stream corridors that run throughout. Still others provide opportunities for both active and passive recreational pursuits in settings that range from completely urban to more suburban neighborhood in context.

The growth of the City's open space areas, however, has not been enough to overcome the bounds of history. Because Alexandria existed and continued to expand for over 200 years before the establishment of a park system, the City has always, in essence, been playing catch up. Added to that are the pressures of a present day population that has become more diverse and has increased by over 15% between 1990 and 2000, in a city with finite boundaries and an ever-dwindling supply of potential open space areas. Moreover, Alexandrians value open space and use it both heavily and extensively. This has placed enormous pressure on the City's existing open space areas, and underlines the need both to protect the open spaces that exist as well as to create additional open space opportunities that are equitably distributed throughout Alexandria to serve all of the City's population.

The Plan presented in this report establishes a framework for addressing Alexandria's short and longer term open space needs. It looks at ways to maximize the City's limited open space opportunities by creating an open space system that builds upon and responds to the City's dense, urban context. It is clear that Alexandria has entered the new millennium facing one of

its greatest challenges, that of providing open spaces, recreation areas, and a quality way of life for a citizenry that proudly reflects the diversity of the nation itself. This Open Space Plan offers a blueprint for accomplishing that task.

THE PLANNING PROCESS

The process that was established for developing the Open Space Plan combined the reality of assessing current conditions with the dreams and visions of what could be, and the definition of practical steps for getting there.

The process began with the establishment of an Open Space Steering Committee, comprised of representatives from those City commissions and departments with interests in open space issues, including the Parks and Recreation Commission; the Environmental Policy Commission; the Planning Commission; Office of Historic Alexandria; the Department of Recreation, Park and Cultural Activities; the Department of Planning and Zoning; the Department of Transportation and Environmental Services; the Alexandria Schools; and the Office of the City Manager. This group worked closely with the consultant team throughout the process to establish a comprehensive definition of open space, review the existing conditions inventory, help plan community outreach activities, establish the open space framework and plan, and review implementation strategies.

The assessment of existing open space areas, as well as the definition of potential open space opportunities, were carried out in several ways. The process began with the analysis of the City's existing open space data regarding parks, other open space areas, environmentally sensitive areas, streets and roads, and public and private vacant land parcels. This data was obtained through aerial photos, the City's GIS mapping system and real estate data, and additional documentation from earlier studies and discussions. In addition, the consultant team carried out a systematic inventory of all of Alexandria's existing open space areas.

All of this baseline data was further enriched through a series of outreach efforts that included: interviews with various organizations and individuals with interest in open space issues in Alexandria; three Open Space Planning District meetings, and a citywide Open Space Summit. All of these outreach efforts are described in greater detail in Chapter 4 of this report. This multi-level process of community input provided both the vision and direction for the Open Space Plan.

The Open Space Plan report is organized as follows:

- It provides an overall picture of the current open space framework, including the history of open space in Alexandria, a definition of open space, and an analysis of current open space conditions.

- It defines Alexandria's current open space needs and issues.

- It describes the results of the community outreach process.

- It presents the Open Space Plan in terms of opportunities, overall framework, goals and recommendations.

- And, finally, it addresses a strategy for plan implementation.

A. HISTORY OF OPEN SPACE IN ALEXANDRIA

Market Square (from "A Guide to Historic Alexandria" by William Seale, originally from the Alexandria Library, Special Collections)

Aerial view of old town Alexandria looking up King Street c.1920 (from "A Guide to Historic Alexandria" by William Seale, originally from the Alexandria Library, Special Collections)
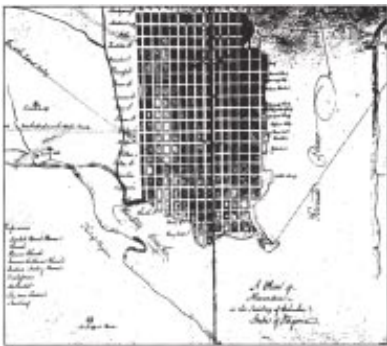
Plan of Alexandria (from "A Guide to Historic Alexandria" by William Seale, originally from the Library of Congress)

The only open space originally planned for community use in Alexandria was Market Square. However, a number of informal open spaces were in existence throughout Alexandria in the 18th and 19th centuries. Some of these "commons" were used for grazing cows, horses, and other livestock. Other open spaces were strictly for human use, and were known as "pleasure gardens." The most famous of these was Spring Garden, located on the northwest corner of Wilkes and Payne Streets. Alexandrians gathered here for entertainment and summer theater; George Washington himself attended a reception at Spring Garden in 1799 commemorating the 23rd anniversary of American independence.

Much of the open space in the original grid plan for Alexandria was intended for private use. With many of the houses and other structures sited directly on the street, without any setback, open space "dependencies" were located at the rear of these properties. This pattern of development has established the character of Old Town through the present day.

Other popular open spaces and pleasure gardens in the early days of Alexandria included Yeates' Garden (on Franklin between Royal and Pitt Streets), Broomilaw Point (on South Washington Street near the present-day Hunting Towers Apartments), Old Ice House Hill (on the east side of the 700 block of Lee Street), and Battery Rodgers (located on Lee Street between Jefferson and Green Streets). Battery Rodgers was, in fact, a Civil War fort that overlooked the Potomac River. It was used as a gathering place for citizens to watch parades of Union soldiers that occupied Alexandria during the war.

One of the most picturesque, and well-known, open spaces in the city was Windmill Hill, which [like the present-day park of the same name] overlooked the Potomac River between Gibbon and Wilkes Streets. Windmill Hill became the scene of many political debates and rallies after the war. In the later days of the 19th century, it became a fashionable place for Alexandrians to promenade during the warm summer months (*Alexandria Gazette, 7/21/1890*). It remained a popular place for festivities into the 20th century. After Charles Lindbergh flew his famous solo flight to Paris in 1927, he returned to the U.S. and made an excursion to Washington aboard the U.S.S. Memphis. On Saturday, June 11th, when the Memphis passed by Alexandria, a presidential 21-gun salute boomed out from Windmill Hill to welcome the American hero. (*Alexandria Gazette, 6/11/1927*). (Windmill Hill was eventually deeded to the city as a park).

An effort was also made to establish a city-owned park at Shuter's Hill in honor of George Washington. This site, at the western end of King Street overlooking Old Town (at the site of the present-day George Washington Masonic Memorial), was used often by the people of Alexandria as a gathering spot and vantagepoint. However, efforts to establish Alexandria's first public park were unsuccessful, and the site was eventually purchased in 1921

Alexandria, Virginia, 1853 (from "A Guide to Historic Alexandria" by William Seale, originally from the Alexandria Library, Special Collections)

Occupying Yankees outside the Athenaeum (from "A Guide to Historic Alexandria" by William Seale, originally from the Library of Congress)

Daily life c.1890 (from "A Guide to Historic Alexandria" by William Seale, originally from William Francis Smith Collection)

by the George Washington Masonic Memorial Committee. The structure itself was completed in 1932.

While there were a number of open spaces available to the people of the city, many of these were located outside the immediate boundaries of Alexandria and, therefore, did not provide relief in the daily lives of the city's citizens. In an 1851 editorial that appeared in the *Alexandria Gazette*, a citizen wrote, "… We hope in the improvements that we trust are to take place in town the project of securing some square, as a park or promenade ground for the public, will not be overlooked. Our gardens and river banks are delightful, but they are not enough." (*Alexandria Gazette, 6/14/1851*).

A similar sentiment was expressed in an 1882 *Alexandria Gazette* article that had originally appeared in the pages of the *Washington Star*: "… it is on days that draw the whole population out to enjoy the fresh air that the want of open squares, parks, or anything of that kind is felt. The trees and herbage then draw hundreds to the graveyard, not to be buried, but to enjoy the open air and the green grass, and catch a glimpse of the shining creek that flows by. There are no breathing places for children in the town. Fortunately now the edges are easily reached but if the town should grow much this deficiency would become unbearable. Even the court house lot planted with trees would be better than nothing…" (*Alexandria Gazette, 11/18/1882*)

It was not until 1948, almost 200 years after the founding of Alexandria that the city recreation department planned to build its first official park. Although by this time there were 15 operating playgrounds in the city, there still were no parks. This new park, which was planned for seven acres running from St. Asaph Street to Fairfax Street and bounded by Montgomery and First Streets, was never constructed, the reasons for which remain elusive.

It was, therefore, not until the later half of the 20th century that Alexandria began to establish its system of public parks. While the city now boasts an impressive collection of 127 parks ranging in size from several acres to almost fifty acres, it is still, in many ways, struggling against the history of a city where land was too valuable a commodity to be used as open space. While the City has come a long way in creating a livable, green community for its residents, it must still buck the trends of history to provide enough open space for future generations of Alexandrians.

B.   ADMINISTRATION OF ALEXANDRIA'S PUBLIC OPEN SPACE

The vast majority of publicly owned open spaces and parks in the City of Alexandria are planned, maintained, and operated by the Department of Recreation, Parks, and Cultural Activities. The department is responsible for providing these facilities, along with programmed activities, for a broad range of city residents from infants to senior citizens, including those with special needs. The full range of departmental duties includes: maintenance of all

parks, ballfields, and publicly-owned flower beds in the City; tree care on public land; right-of-way maintenance; park planning and design; and the provision of organized activities such as games, sports, arts, crafts, hobbies, music, drama, and dancing.

The Department of Recreation, Parks, and Cultural Activities currently maintains 127 parks totaling approximately 840 acres, with a staff of approximately 500 full-time, part-time, and seasonal employees. The department itself is broken down into three functional groups that represent its major program areas: 1) Administration; 2) Program Operations; and 3) Parks, Natural Resources, and Capital Projects.

Activities of the Administration division include strategic planning; development and execution of the department's budget; financial management of the department's revenue; general contract oversight and cooperation with outside contractors; coordination of personnel actions including hiring, recruitment, and payroll processing; and information technology planning and system maintenance.

The Program Operations division is responsible for the operation of all recreation centers, including Chinquapin Park Recreation Center and Dr. Oswald Durant Memorial Center, playgrounds, camps, athletic programs, therapeutic recreation programs, senior programs, special events, park rentals, cultural arts programs, and the Alexandria Commission for the Arts.

The Parks, Natural Resources, and Capital Projects division is in charge of many departmental functions. Perhaps the most visible of these functions are the repair and maintenance of all City parks, equipment, and facilities. The division is also responsible for designing park improvements; coordinating playground renovations; implementing the Bike Trails Master Plan (with the Department of Transportation and Environmental Services); and designing, planting, and maintaining horticultural sites in street medians and public areas. There is also an arborist staff that oversees the planting and care of street trees. Lastly, a Capital Projects staff plans and coordinates the Department's capital improvements and oversees the City's marina.

All of the work that is done by the Department of Recreation, Parks, and Cultural Affairs is overseen by an eleven-member Alexandria Park and Recreation Commission. The Commission is an advisory committee that was created by the Alexandria City Council in March 1970 to study issues relating to park, recreation, and open space needs. Nine citizens are appointed to the Commission by City Council; they represent the three planning districts in the City. Two members are of high school age and are appointed to the Commission to represent the youth of Alexandria.

The Commission provides policy advice to City Council and offers City of Alexandria residents an opportunity to participate in planning activities. In addition to monitoring and making recommendations to improve the function

and diversity of existing and future recreation and park programs, the Commission works on issues pertaining to open space and advises City Council on all of these issues.

C. EARLIER PARK AND OPEN SPACE PLANNING EFFORTS

The first parks and recreation master plan for Alexandria was adopted in 1978 as one element of the City's master plan. The master plan was updated in 1992, and contained broad goals and objectives for parks and open space; it did not, however, address a specific open space plan. Thus, the current effort represents the City's first opportunity in 24 years to adopt a comprehensive park and open space plan.

The park and open space goals adopted in the 1992 master plan included:
• Providing a park and recreation system to serve all population sectors.
• Preserving and enhancing the natural and "developed amenities" of existing public open spaces, and adding "publicly accessible open space by creative and innovative ways."
• Integrating open space into the fabric of the City.
• Protecting remaining City open space and increasing the ratio of open space per capita.
• Encouraging the provision in new developments of both active and passive open space and recreational facilities.

In addition, the 1992 master plan called for the development of a "park system plan" that would define the types of open spaces to be provided throughout Alexandria, including "a park stream valley system to provide continuous linkage and access to recreational facilities."

The current plan acknowledges the framework established by these earlier efforts while, at the same time, recognizing the changing context resulting from the past decade. The overall goal, however, remains the same: to provide Alexandrians with exceptional open spaces and recreation opportunities, while protecting and restoring the natural environment, historic fabric, and sense of community that make Alexandria a special place to live, work and visit.

D. DEFINING AND CLASSIFYING OPEN SPACE

Citizens and policy makers mistakenly assume that the term "open space" clearly communicates an image that is shared by everyone. However, this is likely not the case. Many people, and many jurisdictions, impart a wide range of meanings to this phrase. For some, the term implies any area that does not contain a building or other structure; for others it means a "park" and nothing else; and so on. At the outset of the process of developing an open space plan for the City of Alexandria, the first task was to establish a working definition of "open space" that could help establish a direction for plan development.

In the process of defining those "open spaces," to be included in the plan, the Steering Committee and consultant team concluded that the City has a complex system of significant "open space" areas that include parks, plazas, stream valleys, trails, easements, riverfront areas, streetscapes and so on. The group further decided that all of these areas made significant contributions to the overall character and livability of the City, and that a logical categorization of open spaces would be helpful in developing a plan. The resulting Open Space Classification System is based on factors of purpose or use, overall characteristics, area served, ownership status, and maintenance responsibility.

The subcategories that help to differentiate the variety of open spaces in the City are as follows:

1. **Primary Use**

   - **Active:** Typically encompasses more heavily programmed and organized activities, such as athletic activities, dog parks and other intensive programs.
   - **Passive:** Primarily consists of less structured and less formal activities. Examples include: tot lots, picnic areas, historic/cultural sites, amphitheaters and natural resource areas.
   - **Trails:** Open space corridors for conservation, recreation and alternative transportation; linear systems that may occur by streams and rivers, storm water corridors, utility corridors, abandoned rail lines, sidewalks and street medians. Trails are used for hiking, biking, walking, running, transportation, recreation, wildlife corridors, and heritage resource connections.
   - **Streetscapes / Scenic Roadways:** Can include boulevards, medians, plazas, sidewalks, interchanges, street trees and plantings that contribute significantly to the City of Alexandria's green space.

2. **Secondary Characteristics**

   - **Cultural / Historical:** Sites of historic, archaeological and/or cultural interest.
   - **Dog Exercise Area & Dog Park:** Spaces that are primarily dedicated to dog related activities. These include:
     - **'Dog Exercise Areas':** Areas of open space set aside for the specific use of dog owners/handlers to allow dogs to be off-lead. The city may provide posted rules, defined boundaries, covered trash receptacles/pick up bags, and shade where possible.
     - **'Fenced Dog Parks':** Fenced areas set-aside for dog owners/handlers to allow their dogs to be off-lead. The city may provide covered trash receptacles/pick up bags, posted rules, fencing and gates, water if feasible, and shade where possible.
   - **Educational:** School sites, other educational facilities, and/or

Trails at Oronoco Bay Park

Streetscape on King Street and Saint Asaph

interpretive areas.

- **Environmentally Sensitive:** Areas with natural resource value that are protected by regulation. Examples include: wetlands, riparian areas, streams, rivers and riverbeds, 100-year floodplains, Resource Protection Areas (RPS's), slopes of greater than twenty-five percent, critical habitat and areas of endangered species.
- **Natural Resource Areas:** Including woodlands, habitat areas, streams, rivers, riparian areas, wetlands, RPA's and greenways. Activities may encompass passive recreational pursuits such as picnicking, fishing, boating and trail related activities.
- **Recreational:** Comprises areas with playing fields, courts, playgrounds, water sports or other active recreational activities.
- **Rivers and Streams:** Includes the Potomac River and its shoreline, major streams and streambanks, RPA's, and floodplains.
- **Urban Plaza /Streetscape:** Typically hardscaped/paved spaces that contribute to the open space character in the City. They typically provide for public access, circulation and gathering activities.

3. **Service Area**

- **Regional:** Natural, cultural or recreational attractions that draw users from beyond the City. Typically these areas are part of a larger open space network which goes beyond the City boundaries. Examples of programs may include athletic fields and courts, natural areas, swimming pools, fishing access, walking and biking trails. Parks included in this category generally have self-contained parking.
- **Citywide:** Contain programs that appeal to local interests and draw people from the City as a whole. Uses may include athletic fields, athletic courts, natural areas, pools, recreation centers, walking and biking trails. Recreational facilities included in this category typically have on- and off-site parking.
- **Neighborhood:** Multi-use facilities oriented to the surrounding neighborhood. These parks are most likely to include: garden plots, multi-purpose fields, picnic grounds and shelters, playgrounds, dog areas, small natural areas, and school fields and paths which reinforce the connections between the schools and the neighborhoods. These areas typically include a limited amount of on-site parking.
- **Block:** Intended to meet the needs of residents within a one or two block area. May include seating areas, landscaping and small-scale play equipment. Typically, these areas do not have on-site parking.

4. **Ownership:**

- **Public:** Owned by a governmental entity such as the City of Alexandria, Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority, the Commonwealth

Potomac river shoreline

Mount Vernon Recreation Center

of Virginia or the Federal Government (e.g., National Park Service). Public use and access are assured through public ownership.
- **Private with Public Access:** Private ownership with limited or unlimited public access.
- **Private with no Public Access:** Significant open spaces, the primary public value of which is to contribute to the visual benefit of the City; with no public access.
- **Private with Traditional Public Access:** Including areas of common usage and/or access, though with no guarantee of such.

5. **Maintenance:**

Includes the entity or individual with the primary responsibility for the upkeep, maintenance and protection of open space areas:
- **City of Alexandria:** Maintained by the City.
- **NVRPA:** Owned and/or maintained by the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority.
- **Commonwealth of Virginia:** Highway and interchange properties that are maintained by the Virginia Department of Transportation.
- **Federal Government:** Owned and/or maintained by a Federal Government entity, such as the National Park Service.
- **Private:** Owned, operated and maintained privately.

Open spaces in the City can be classified according to the above categories. For example, Cameron Run Regional Park would be classified in the following way: primarily active, recreational in character, serving a regional area, publicly owned, and maintained by the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority. On the other hand, Angel Park, located between Janney's Lane and Duke Street, adjacent to Taylor Run, would be classified as primarily passive, possessing both recreational and natural resource area characteristics, serving a neighborhood area, publicly owned and maintained by the City of Alexandria. By using this classification system to categorize the open space areas in the City, one can begin to comprehend the extent of those that are used for active versus passive use, the acreage that is used for primarily recreational purposes, the extent and location of the City's environmentally sensitive areas, and so on. This type of classification system provides the City with a useful analytical tool for understanding and working with existing open space areas, and defining the kinds of new open space areas that may need to be added to its inventory. It also provides a "snapshot" of the open space areas that may be at risk for future development. A matrix, listing the most significant open space areas in the City of Alexandria, classified according to this system, is provided in the Appendix.

A summary table of open space areas, broken down by the "active" and "passive" use classification categories, is included below for each of the City's three Park Planning Districts (see Figure 2 for Park Planning District boundaries). A discussion of the issues related to distribution of open space throughout Alexandria can be found in Chapter 3.*Open Space Needs and Issues.*

Figure 1. Summary Table of Alexandria's Open Spaces by Active and Passive Use Classification Categories

Category	District 1	District 2	District 3	Citywide
Primary Use	(acres)	(acres)	(acres)	(acres)
Active	121	155	214	490
Passive	183 *	76	183	442
Totals	304	231	397	932**

*Includes 107 acres for primarily passive use at Daingerfield Island Park (National Park Service)

**Note: This total acreage differs from that calculated by the city in 1998 (964 acres) since the City's data included a private parcel in its calculations. The 932 acres also includes several smaller public open spaces not included in the 1998 list.

E. OPEN SPACE INVENTORY

All of Alexandria's existing open spaces were inventoried, based on the classification system described above. The results of this process are summarized in Figures 3 to 9, and are described briefly below.

• **Primary Use Areas**

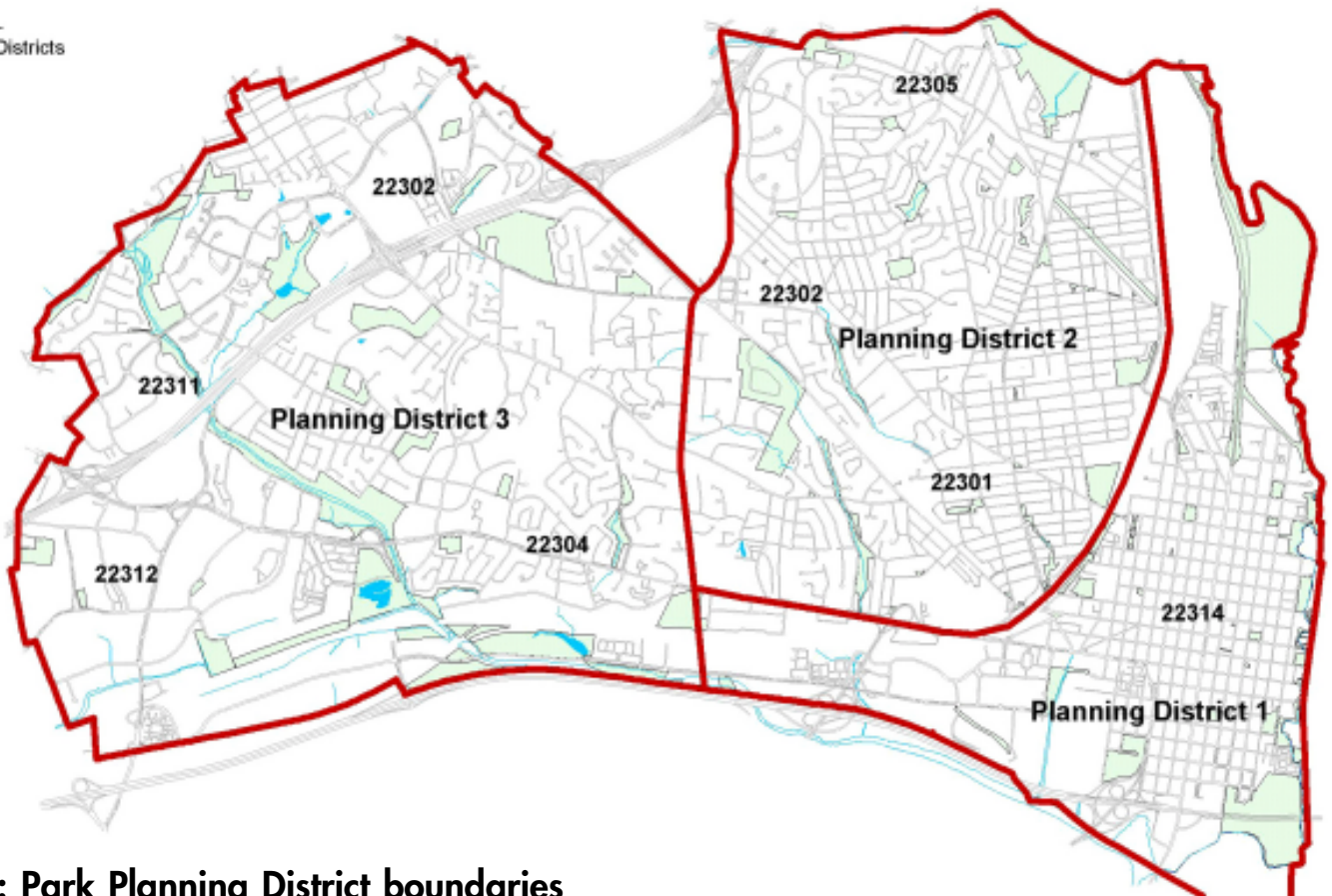It is evident from Figure 3.*Primary Uses*, that many of the city's open space

Figure 2: Park Planning District boundaries

areas are small. In fact, for public open spaces, the average size of active open space areas is less than seven acres with many sites less than one acre. Alexandria's largest active parks include Four Mile Run Park (55.9 acres, including all active fields, trails and natural resource areas), Ben Brenman Park (50.37 acres, including active facilities and natural resource areas, Jones Point Park (52.3 acres, including active fields, trails, and natural areas; leased from the National Park Service), and Chinquapin Park (23 acres of active fields and courts).   The City's larger passive open spaces are, in general, environmentally sensitive sites, natural resource areas, or cultural/historic sites. These larger areas include: Daingerfield Island Park (107 acres; owned and maintained by the National Park Service), Holmes Run and Dora Kelly Nature Park (46 acres), and Fort Ward Park (41.4 acres).

In addition, Figure 3 also illustrates that the pattern of open space in Alexandria is scattered throughout the City, with few linkages between open space areas. This disconnected quality of the open space in Alexandria, combined with the small overall size of many sites, provides an impression of a City that is not very "green," and does not have a significant amount of usable open space to offer its residents and visitors. While this is would be an incorrect conclusion, the City could do more to maximize the utility and appreciation of its open space areas.

Legend
- Active
- Passive
- Trails
- Streetscapes / Scenic Roadways

Figure 3: Primary Use

- **Secondary Characteristics**

  The classification system lists eight possible secondary characteristics for Alexandria's open space areas: sites of cultural and/or historic interest, dog parks and exercise areas, sites that provide educational opportunities, environmentally sensitive areas, natural resource areas, sites dedicated primarily to recreational pursuits, sites along rivers and streams, and urban plazas and/or streetscapes. An open space may represent one or more of these characteristics; in fact, some spaces can be classified as having five or more. An example of this would be Windmill Hill Park, which can be considered cultural/historic, riverfront, urban plaza, environmentally sensitive, and recreational.

King Street historical streetscape in Old Town, Alexandria

- ***Cultural/Historic Sites:*** It is not surprising in a City that prides itself on its cultural and historic heritage that Alexandria should contain many open space sites that reflect that legacy. Several of these sites are, in fact, among the City's largest open space areas: for example, Fort Ward Park, Chinquapin Park, Daingerfield Island Park, Jones Point Park, and Dora Kelly Park. For each of these cultural and historic sites, it is important for the City to provide interpretive opportunities so that residents can understand, value, and protect these areas.

- ***Dog Exercise Areas and Dog Parks:*** Alexandria provides two types of

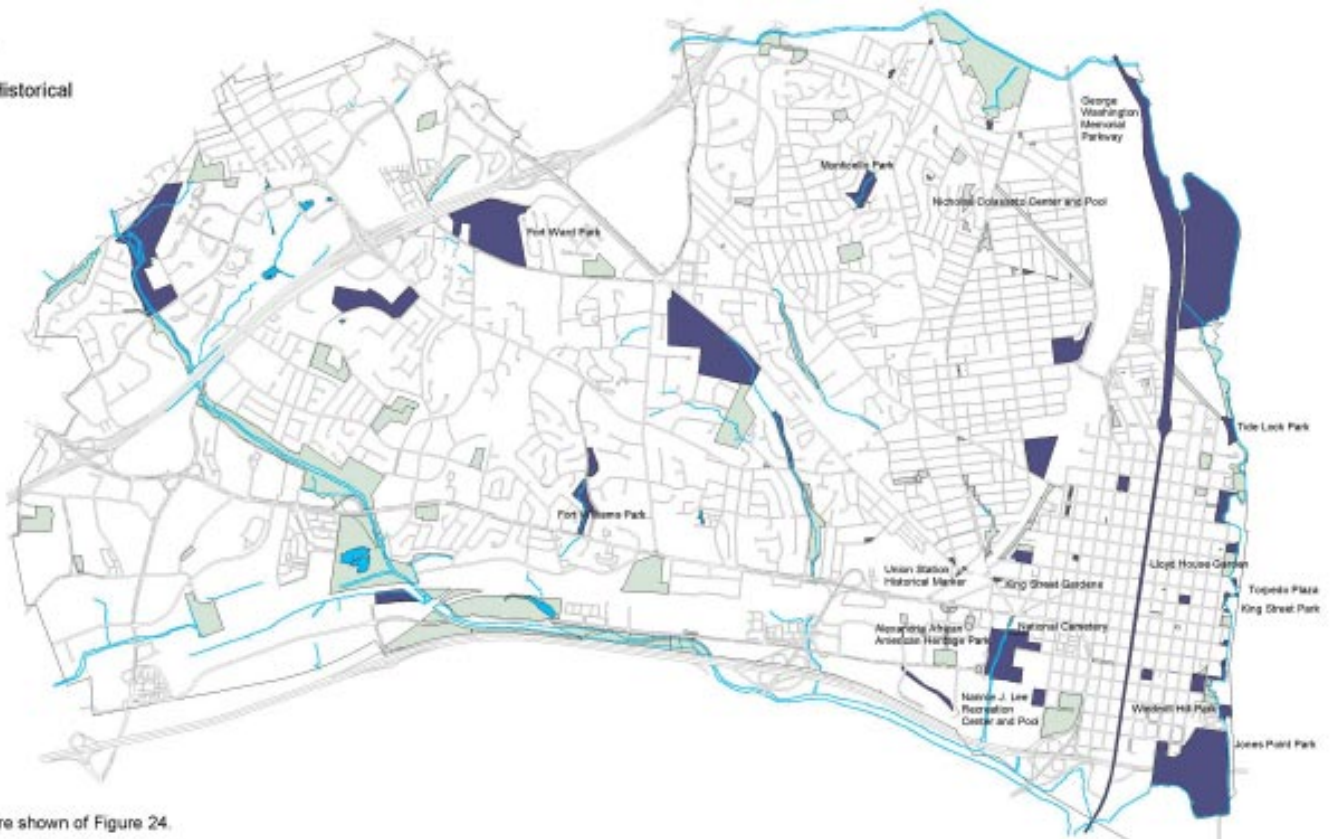Note: Cemeteries are shown of Figure 24.

Figure 4: Cultural/ Historic Sites

Fort Ward amphitheater

Fenced dog park

dog-related open space areas – dog exercise areas and fenced dog parks. While these are scattered throughout the City, the eastern half of Alexandria contains the greatest number of such facilities – particularly in Old Town.

- *Educational Sites:* This category includes school sites – reflecting on the importance of open space in the learning process – and open spaces with interpretive opportunities. The City's largest open space areas connected to schools include: T.C. Williams High School (16 acres), Polk School (12 acres with its adjacent park), and Ramsey School and Recreation Center (18 acres). However, the average school open space is 4.5 acres; if you eliminate T.C. Williams High School from the calculation, the average school open space is only 3.7 acres. Most of the non-school related open space sites that currently provide some level of interpretation/education are those within either historic or environmental contexts. Many of the City's open space areas within these categories, however, do not currently offer interpretive/learning opportunities.

- *Environmentally Sensitive Sites:* These are areas that are protected through environmental regulations and include wetlands, riparian areas, streams, rivers, 100-year floodplains, RPA's, significant vegetation, slopes greater than 25 percent, critical habitat and areas of
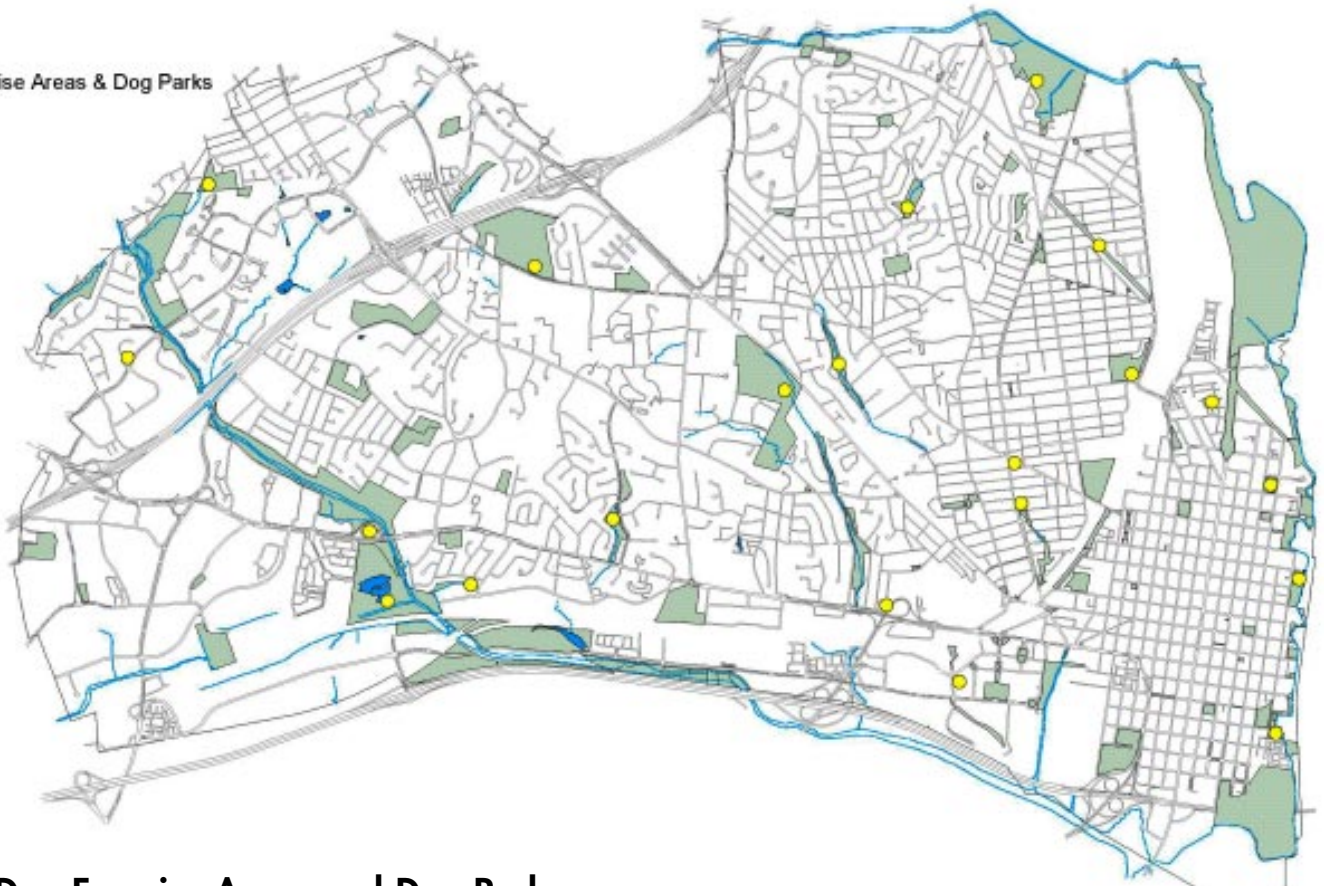
Figure 5: Dog Exercise Areas and Dog Parks

Holmes Run

Cameron Run

endangered species. Some of the larger sites included under this category include the Potomac River shoreline, Four Mile Run, Holmes Run, Cameron Run, and the Dora Kelly/Ramsey School sites. There are excellent interpretive opportunities at these sites to make people aware of their sensitive status and possible actions for continued stewardship.

- *Natural Resource Areas*: These include areas that, while not under regulatory controls, are still important environmental resources for the City. They include woodlands, streams, wetlands, and greenways. The City contains many important natural resource areas, with some of the largest including Chinquapin Park, Fort Ward Park, Daingerfield Island Park and Jones Point Park. It is a goal of this Plan to encourage the City to strive to continue adding sites to its natural resource areas inventory as they are identified.

- *Recreational Sites*: Recreational open space is often thought of simply as athletic fields; however, it includes a much broader range of opportunities. In addition to fields, recreational open space includes: courts, playgrounds, facilities for water sports, and so on. Figure 9 illustrates the wealth of recreational space contained in the City. However, it also indicates that many of these sites are small, and that some areas of Alexandria (e.g., the far west end and the northeastern sector) do not

Legend
Educational - Schools
Educational - Interpretive Facilities
Parks
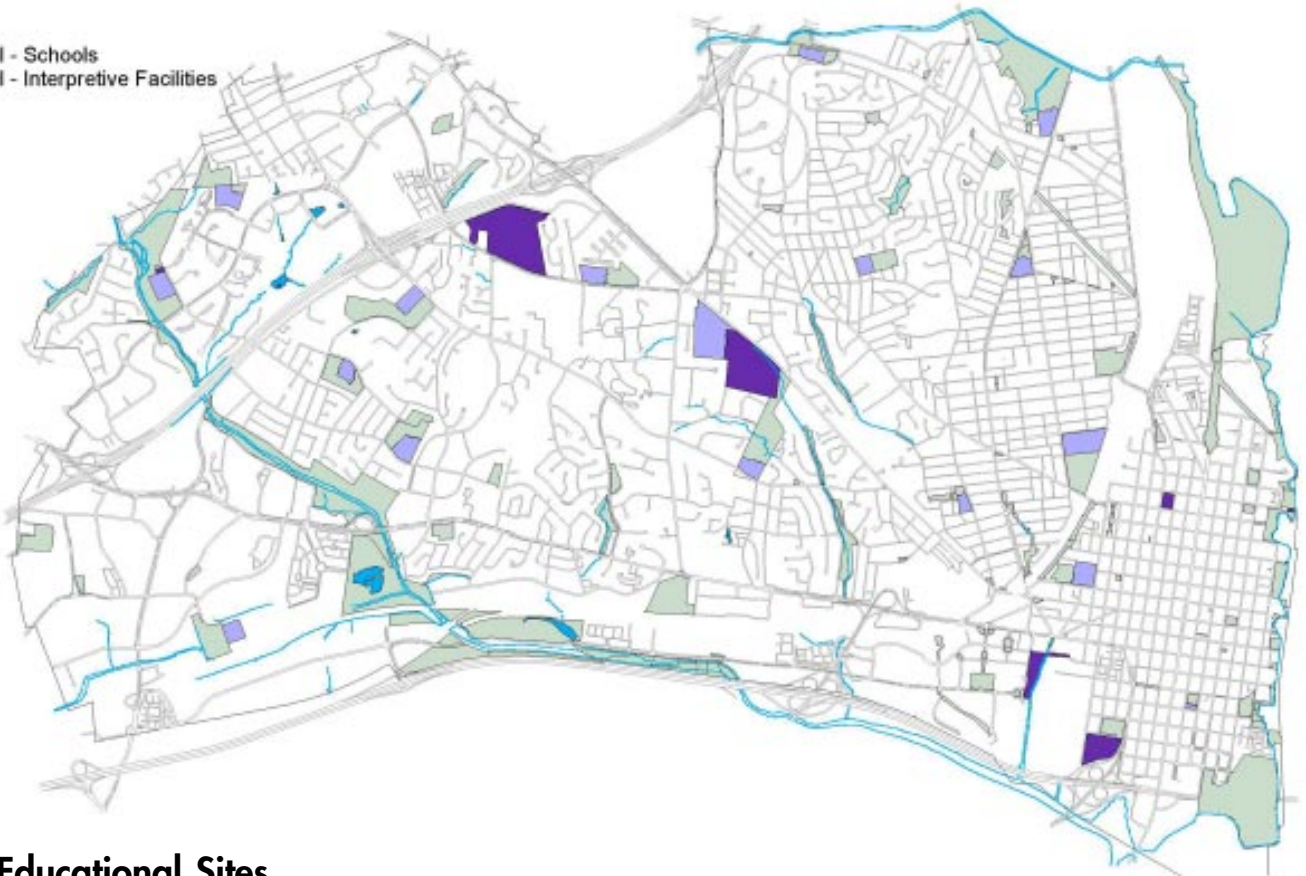
Figure 6: Educational Sites

Playground

Potomac River waterfront

contain as many recreational spaces as other parts of the City.

- *Rivers and Streams:* Areas included in this category comprise some of the City's most significant open spaces. One of Alexandria's major attractions, both for residents and visitors, is its beautiful Potomac River waterfront. Bounding this shoreline, both to the north and south, are several other significant waterbodies – Four Mile Run, Cameron Run and Holmes Run. Other stream valleys include: Taylor Run, Timber Branch, Backlick Run, Strawberry Run, Hooffs Run, Lucky Run, Great Hunting Creek, and Old Cameron Run.

- *Urban Plazas and Streetscapes:* In Alexandria, the eleventh densest city in the nation, urban plazas and park- like streets and boulevards represent important open space opportunities. These elements provide excellent venues for community activity, offer a sense of open space relief, provide attractive spaces and corridors, and encourage pedestrian use. Alexandria has not yet maximized its open space opportunities in this category (see Figure 11). The City contains only a few significant urban plazas, such as Market Square and King Street Station. In addition, it has a limited number of streets that could be described as "park-like boulevards." Examples of the best of these include Commonwealth Avenue, Fort Williams Parkway, Seminary Road, Beauregard Street, Quaker Lane, and Jordan Street.
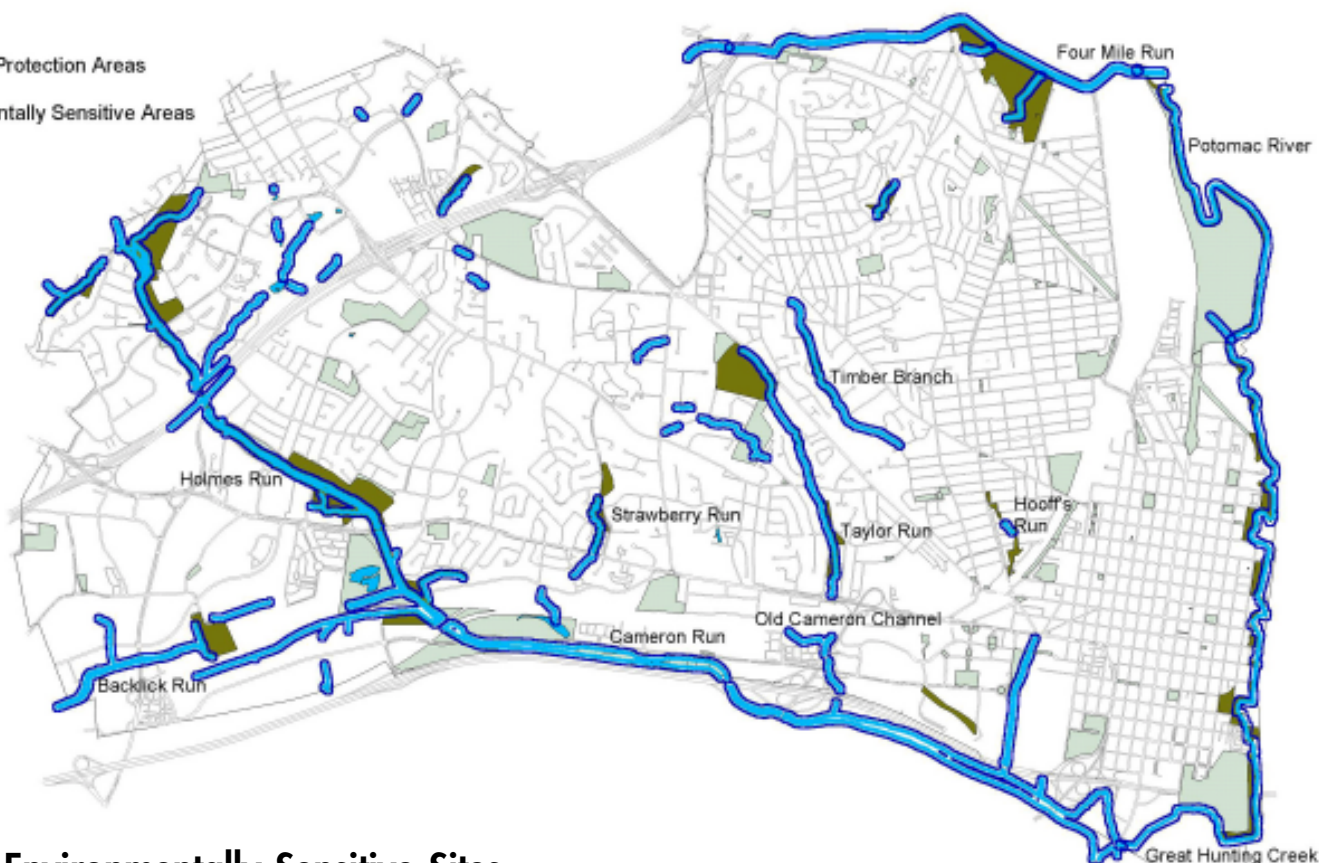
Figure 7: Environmentally Sensitive Sites

Market Square

Streetscape in King Street

• **Service Areas**

The service area category describes the general range of users for each open space area. Some open spaces attract users from throughout the region (and often beyond), some primarily attract users from the City as a whole, and some attract mostly neighborhood or smaller block area users. Based on the open space inventory, it is interesting to note that each planning district has its own character with regard to the populations served by its open space areas. For example, Planning District 1 contains perhaps the greatest number of regionally- served open spaces (63 percent of all of the open space in this district); for Planning Districts 2 and 3, only 24 percent and 19 percent of their open space areas respectively are considered regional in scope. For those open spaces serving a citywide population, almost one third of the areas in District 1 fall into this category, as well as 32 percent in Districts 2, and 34 percent in District 3. On the other hand, almost half of the open spaces in Districts 2 and 3 (44 percent and 47 percent respectively) can be categorized as serving primarily neighborhood or block service areas, while only 5 percent of the open spaces in District 1 can be described in this way. On a citywide basis, it appears that Alexandria offers a good mix of different types of open spaces areas intended to serve a variety of populations and purposes, although the focus of who is served varies significantly between areas.

Figure 8: Natural Resource Areas

- **Ownership and Maintenance**

Most of the open space areas included for consideration in this planning study are publicly owned and maintained. Of the 22 significant privately-owned open spaces identified, only eight have been classified as "private with no public access." The remaining 222 acres, although privately owned, are typically made accessible to the general public, if even for limited use. There is no guarantee in place, however, for this practice to continue.

Of the approximately 932 acres of public open space in Alexandria, more than three quarters of that land is owned and maintained by the City. The remaining quarter comprises land owned and/or maintained by the National Park Service, the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority, and the Commonwealth of Virginia.

F.   PARK SYSTEM INVENTORY

The 116 public open space areas included in the Open Space Classification matrix were inventoried as part of the planning process. The inventory provided a more in-depth "picture" of the status and characteristics of each open space area. The inventory included the following specific elements:
- **Site Overview:** a general description of the area including its location,
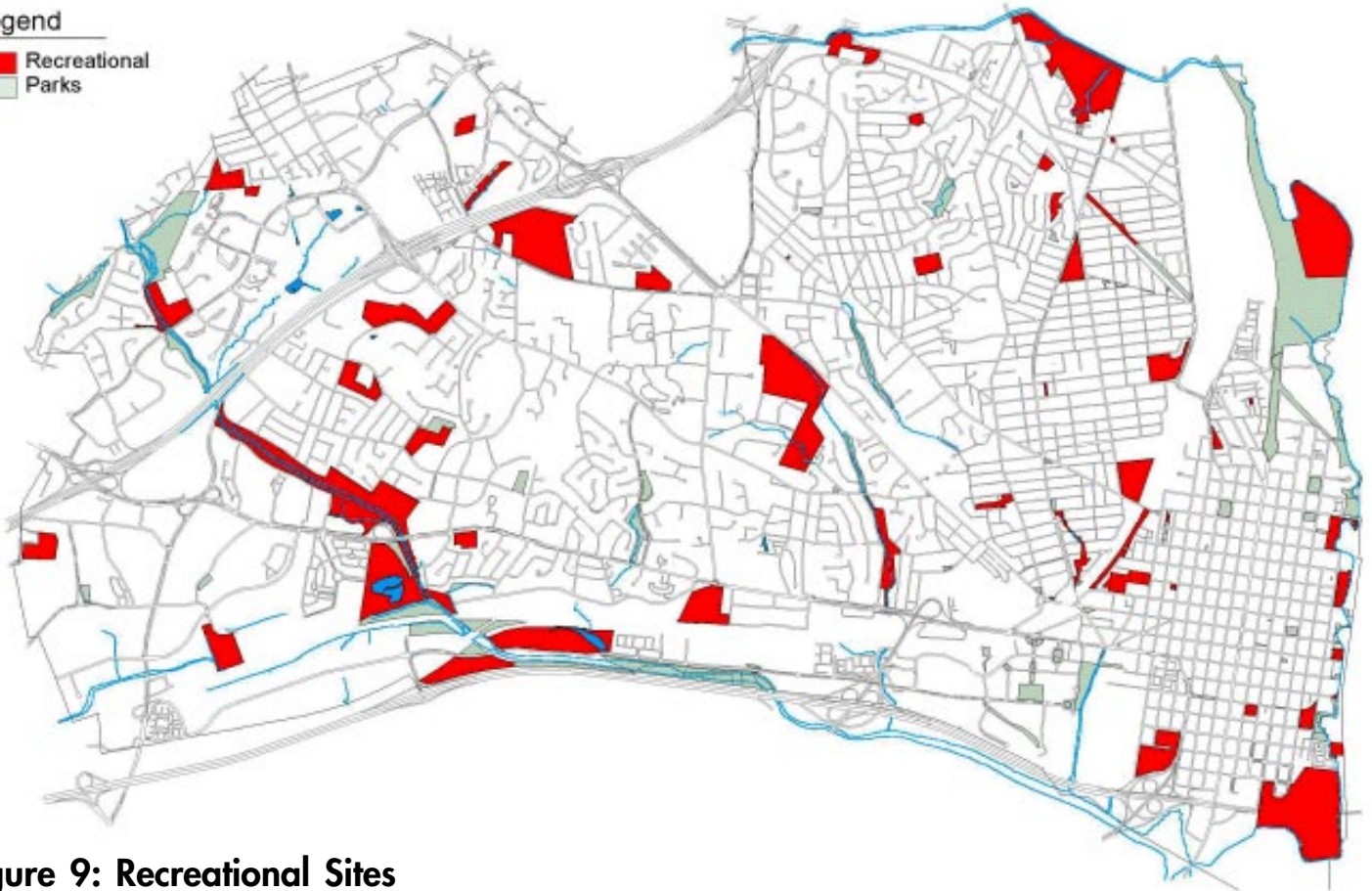
Figure 9: Recreational Sites

site characteristics, and uses

- **Cultural and Viewshed Features:** a description of views both into and from the area, view-related issues, cultural elements both within and visible from the area, and social/cultural functions of the site for its community
- **Areas of Concern:** observations related to issues such as accessibility, parking availability, the need for fencing/buffering, site conditions, and so on.
- **Additional Comments and Observations**: comments vary from the notation of positive features of the site, to suggestions regarding improvements that might strengthen the use, appearance, and connection of the site to its surrounding area.

An inventory form was completed for each site, as well as a locational map and site photographs. The completed inventory is contained in a separate volume, *City of Alexandria Open Space Inventory, 2001,* available through the Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities.

Among other factors, the inventory assessed current site conditions and suitability of the site to meet its programmatic intent. Nearly three quarters of the sites inventoried were evaluated as either "excellent" or "good" at meeting their intended programmed uses. The remaining quarter were assessed either as demonstrating a mismatch between site program and surrounding context

Figure 10: Rivers and Streams

(e.g., a play area for children that requires access from a heavily trafficked street, with no adequate crosswalk to the facility), or a disconnect between existing facilities and intended programmed uses (e.g., a passive park that provided a setting in which to sit and linger but did not provide an adequate number of benches).

In terms of overall condition, four general issues emerged as important to consider in improving the status of existing open space – particularly public parks — in the City. These include:

1. **Locational Issues:** many of Alexandria's smaller parks, particularly those in the City's more dense areas, are located close to busy streets. This presents both noise and potential safety issues. New parks, where possible, should be set back or buffered from busy streets. The challenge for existing parks is to buffer them from these adjacent streets while still allowing for visibility into the sites for security. In addition, locations adjacent to busy streets, without adequate crosswalks near the park, often present access problems, particularly for children. Broader locational issues related to the distribution of parks throughout the City are discussed in Chapter 3. Open Space Needs and Issues.

2. **Design Issues:** a number of the City's older parks present problems related to their current designs. For example, one of the traditional
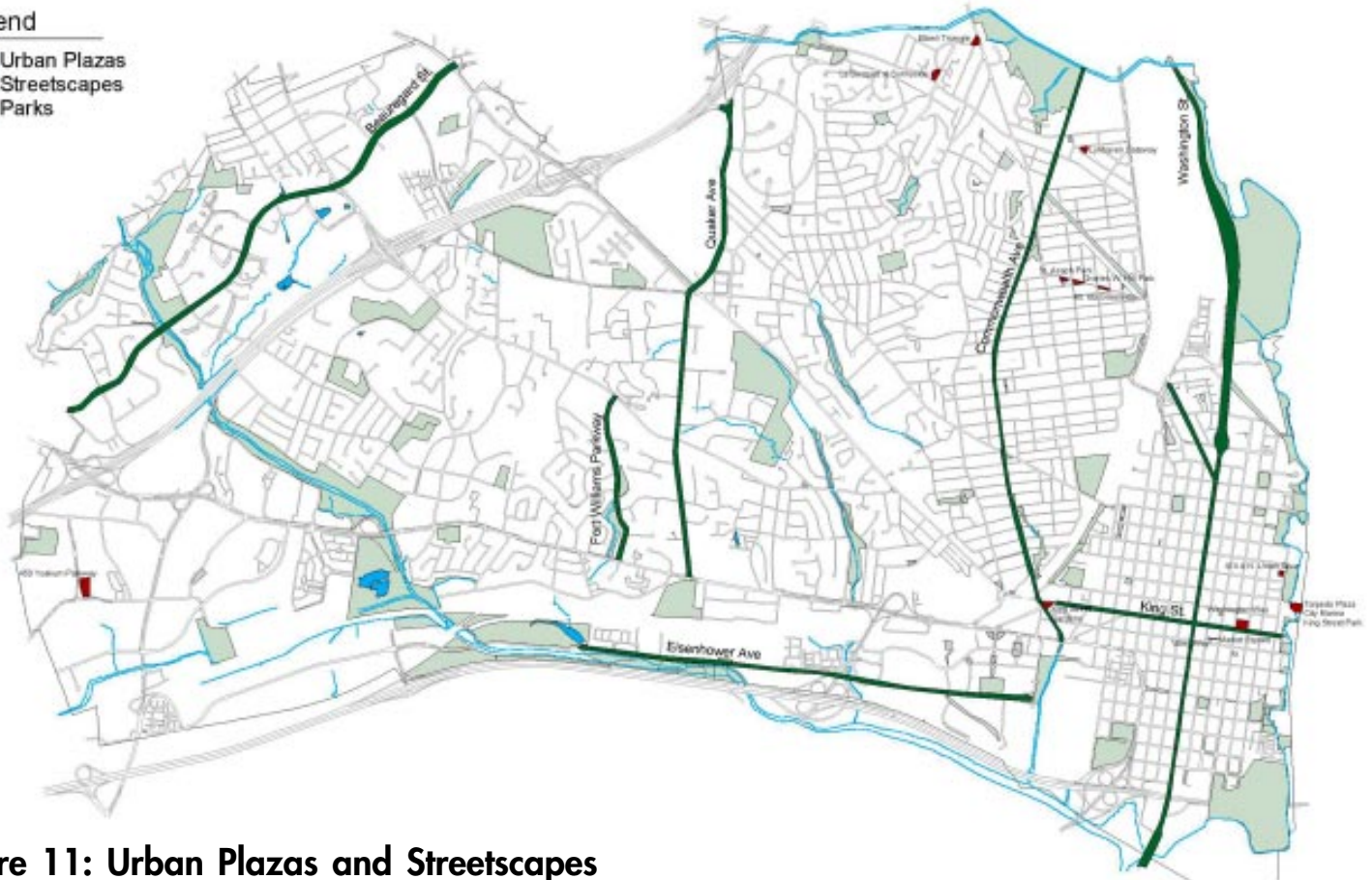
Figure 11: Urban Plazas and Streetscapes

concerns about urban parks is the degree of visibility they afford from surrounding areas in order to minimize crime, vandalism, and the occurrence of illegal activities. In a number of the parks inventoried, visibility problems were noted, related to several factors: location (e.g., in interior areas that do not permit adequate views into the park), elevation level (e.g., parks that are sunken or elevated), areas that are surrounded by dense vegetation without compensating security measures (such as increased lighting), and inadequate lighting in general.

The inventory also identified instances where additional amenities would strengthen a park's program, such as improved seating (particularly in shaded locations), fencing, interpretive signage, and facilities that allow for greater accessibility by handicapped persons. Site design issues that were also apparent included: maximizing linkage opportunities for connecting parks to nearby trails and to other community open space areas; clearly defining park entrance locations; and configuring the site so that its programmatic uses are apparent to all and so one use area does not conflict with another.

3. **Environmental Issues:** Several environmental issues were noted during the public open space inventory, including erosion problems along stream banks and on steep slopes, as well as potential water quality and drainage issues. In addition, many of the City's public open spaces contain wonderful natural resources. The general public should be made more aware of these elements through interpretive/educational and preservation programs.

4. **Maintenance Issues:** While many of the City's parks are in outstanding condition, maintenance issues were noted in a number of instances. These included: old and worn play equipment, overused turf areas (particularly on athletic fields), overgrown trails and streambanks, cracked pavement areas and, in more natural areas, the need to remove invasive plants.

Overall, the City's parks are in good condition, but an open space plan must begin by maximizing existing resources. Hence, the inventory of public open spaces provides Alexandria with input regarding those aspects of its current open space that could be improved.

A. DEMOGRAPHIC CONTEXT

• **Population Profile**

In October of 1998 in a presentation to Agenda Alexandria, Ken Billingsley, Director of Information and Development at the Northern Virginia Planning District Commission, traced the fascinating demographic profile of the City. In his remarks, he stated that:

> *Like the Potomac River at Great Falls, outwardly calm on the surface, there are powerful undercurrents flowing which are about to turn this city inside/out.*

Those "currents" included many factors that impact both the need for open space, and types of open space needed, in Alexandria. Mr. Billingsley predicted that the upcoming 2000 census would indicate the following:

• A large infusion of jobs, as well as retail and office development
• A significant shift in the age composition of the City
• A redistribution of the City's population
• A recomposition of population along ethnic lines
• The replacement of family households by non-family units

Ken Billingsley also predicted that the population in the nation's 11th densest city would have grown by approximately 1,000 people per year between 1990 and 2000. In reality, Alexandria's population in the year 2000 far exceeded Mr. Billingsley's prediction, with the census showing a total population of 128,283, a growth of 17,000 persons in ten years.

Mr. Billingsley's other predictions have, in large measure, proven to be right on target. While the City's population under the age of 18 years old grew by almost 26 percent, it represents approximately 17 percent of the City's total population. One third of the population, however, is between the ages of 20 and 34, while another third is between 35 and 54 years old. The latter group represents a 27 percent increase in the last decade. The median age in the City of Alexandria was 33.5 in 1990; in the year 2000, it is 34.4.

Household composition has also changed significantly. Non-family households comprise 55 percent of all households in the City (a 17 percent growth over 1990). Moreover, there has been a 20 percent increase in the number of householders living alone, so that this population now represents over 43 percent of all households in Alexandria. The City, in fact ranks third in the nation for number of single-person households. Finally, while family households comprise nearly 45 percent of the City's household population (a 15 percent growth rate), the percent of families with children under the age of 18 remained constant at 18.6 percent. Overall, however, households with children under the age of 18 increased

Major retail and office development along King and Washington Streets attract diverse population groups

by 25 percent in the ten year period. Average household size in Alexandria is 2.04 persons, and average family size is 2.87 persons.

While the balance between owners and renters has remained about the same, with City residents renting (60 percent) more often than owning (40 percent), there has been growth in both sectors. Therefore, over the past decade, there has been a 17 percent increase in the number of residents renting their housing units, and a 14.7 percent increase in the number owning their units.

The City has also continued to experience major changes in population composition with regard to racial and ethnic diversity. According to the 2000 Census:

- The White population, currently comprising 59.9 percent of the City's population, has decreased. In 1990, this population made up 69% of the City's residents (a 0.1 population decrease)
- The African American population grew by 18.8 percent, and currently comprises 22.5 percent of the City's total population
- The Hispanic population grew by a remarkable 75.2 percent. While, in 1990, this population represented 9.7 percent of the total City population, in 2000 it represents 14.7 percent.
- The Asian population, while still relatively small, grew in the decade from 1990 to 2000 by 60.8 percent. Asian residents currently comprise 5.7 percent of the City's population.

Many of the City's new residents, reflected in the statistics described above, are part of an influx of newly arrived immigrants who are making Alexandria their American home. This influx has, in fact, resulted in Alexandria being one of the most racially and ethnically diverse locality in Northern Virginia.

The area of the City that has experienced the greatest growth as a result of both the population influx and new development has been the west side, generally included within the City's Planning Area 3. Other areas that have undergone significant population growth in the last decade include the area north of Glebe Road comprising Census Tract 12.3 and within Planning Area 2, and the Eisenhower Valley area spanning Planning Areas 2 and 3.

Finally, the City overall has one of the highest per capita income rates in the region. With Alexandria's per capita income at $46,290 as of the 2000 Census, the only jurisdiction with a higher per capita rate is Arlington County ($46,677). For the City, this represents a 46 percent growth in the decade since 1990. In addition, Alexandria ranks among the top cities in the nation with regard to the percent of population with college degrees and advanced degrees.

What does all of this mean with regard to open space? The changing demographic profile of the City reflects changing expectations and demands for various types of open space opportunities. If one considers, for example, that Alexandria is largely a fairly young "adult city" – that is, a city in which two thirds of the population is between the ages of 20 and 54 – with a large proportion of single residents, it is likely that there will be significant demand for open spaces that can accommodate a full range of adult activities. These will range from active sports, including team sports as well as biking and jogging, to more passive endeavors such as hiking and strolling, picnicking, and sunning.

At the same time, the City's growing population of children under the age of 18 will demand a significant amount of active open space. This is compounded by the fact that many of the rental options in Alexandria, as elsewhere, do not contain usable open space areas. Hence, those families with children living in rental units must rely completely on the City for their open space opportunities. Similarly, the City's increasing population over the age of 55 will also be seeking a broad range of open space opportunities, both passive and active in nature.

Alexandria's ethnic diversity will also reflect a diversity in expectations and demands regarding the kinds of open spaces needed. This might range from a greater emphasis on specific types of active recreational pursuits — such as soccer — and an increasing need for fields that can accommodate these activities, to open spaces as settings for strolling and gathering, as is more common in some cultures than it may be in the United States.

Finally, as assessment of the distribution of open space in the City is critical in order to determine the extent to which this matches and responds to the needs of the current and projected population. The Needs Assessment Study that is currently underway will provide the City with information that will allow for a more precise response regarding the distribution and types of recreational facilities – including open space facilities – required. The current Open Space Plan looks at more general open space needs and opportunities, providing the framework for both active and passive uses.

View of King Street metro station and surrounding urban fabric

- **Density**

In 1990, Alexandria was ranked as the 11th densest city in the United States. Over the last decade, our density has increased from 11.0 persons per acre in 1990 to 12.7 persons per acre in 2000, a 15 percent increase. For comparative purposes, based on 1990 Census figures, Alexandria's per acre density ranked with other major U.S. cities as follows:

- New York: 37.3[1]
- Boston: 18.0
- Philadelphia: 17.1

- Baltimore: 13.1
- Detroit: 11.3
- Alexandria: 11.0
- Minneapolis: 10.2
- Cleveland: 10.1
- Seattle: 9.8
- Pittsburgh: 9.8
- St. Louis: 8.9

On a regional level, the City of Alexandria at 8,145 persons per square mile is more dense than either of its immediate neighbors: with Arlington County at 7,315 persons per square mile and Fairfax County at a mere 2,385 persons.[2]

It is not surprising, given this density, that open space is a valuable and limited asset in the City of Alexandria. Viewed in another way, the City offers 7.3 acres[3] of active and passive public open space for every 1,000 persons living within its boundaries. This is the same as in 1990. Yet, how does this compare with other cities? In his book, *Inside City Parks*, Peter Harnik provides a comparison between open space provisions in select high and medium density American cities. (Note that this comparison is based on 1990 Census figures and has not yet been updated). Some of these comparisons are noted below:

Figure 12. Open Space Comparison between Select American Cities[4]

	Persons per Acre	Parks & Open Space per 1,000 Residents	Park Acreage as Percentage of City Acreage	Total Population
Alexandria	11.0	7.3	10.7%	111,183
High Density Cities:				
Baltimore	13.1	7.5	9.8	675,000
Boston	18.0	8.7	15.7	558,000
Chicago	18.7	4.3	8.0	2,722,000
Los Angeles	11.8	8.5	10.0	3,554,000
Miami	16.0	3.6	5.8	365,000
New York	37.3.	7.2	26.8	7,381,000
Philadelphia	17.1	7.2	12.4	1,478,000
San Francisco	24.6	10.3	25.4	735,000
Average, High		7.2	14.2	
Medium:				
Cincinnati	7.0	21.4	15.0	346,000
Cleveland	10.1	5.8	5.9	498,000
Detroit	11.3	5.9	6.6	1,000,000
Minneapolis	10.2	16.0	16.2	359,000
Pittsburgh	9.8	7.8	7.7	350,000
Portland, OR.	6.0	26.2	15.8	481,000
Seattle	9.8	11.8	11.5	525,000
St. Louis	8.9	9.6	8.5	352,000
Average, Medium		13.0	10.9	

Once again, Alexandria is " betwixt and between" other American cities — in terms of total population, it is considerably smaller than any of the cities listed while, on the other hand, it is comparable in density to cities such as Los Angeles, Detroit, Minneapolis and Cleveland. In terms of the provision of open space per 1,000 residents, however, Alexandria is generally on par with the "high density cities," while being significantly below the average open space per 1,000 residents provided for "medium density cities." In terms of quality of life indicators, the cities that are generally lauded as "livable" and providing a high quality of life often include: San Francisco, Cincinnati, Minneapolis, Portland (OR), and Seattle. All of these cities provide substantially more open space per resident than does the City of Alexandria, and all have a significantly greater percent of overall city acreage devoted to parks than does Alexandria.

B.   OPEN SPACE ISSUES

In order for Alexandria to address its future open space needs, it must first assess and confront current issues regarding the City's existing open space resources. As discussed below, these include:

- The lack of open space continuity and connection
- The diminishing availability of open space
- The uneven distribution of open space
- The need for open space stewardship and protection, particularly with regard to natural areas

- **Open Space Continuity and Connection**

  Over the past decade, recreation specialists and urban policy decision-makers have begun to recognize the critical importance of providing connected open spaces within dense urban settings. Not only does the provision of continuous open space opportunities provide more usable and useful open space, but it also strengthens residents' perception of a "green city," a city that offers both a human scale and a desirable quality of life.

  The current pattern of open space areas within the City of Alexandria is scattered and disconnected (see Figure 3). While these open spaces provide residents with a variety of recreational and visual opportunities, the current dispersed pattern does not maximize the use of these spaces; nor does it enhance the image of Alexandria as a "green city." Given the high density of the City, it is particularly important that existing open space opportunities be maximized to the greatest extent possible by means of a connected, continuous open space system.

  Many communities across the country have been enhancing their open spaces through the creation of greenways, connected green linkages that wind through a city, tie it together, and allow residents access to, and

movement between, a variety of open space experiences. The Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), in its publication *Conserving Virginia's Natural and Recreation Resources*, recognizes that each city's greenway will be unique. In general, however, DCR defines "greenways" as:.

> *…open space corridors that [typically]… connect recreational, natural, cultural, and/or historic areas.*

Some of the benefits to be accrued from the creation of greenways, as documented by DCR, include:

- Connecting people and communities
- Providing important open space resources
- Enhancing public awareness of existing parks, as well as natural, cultural and historic resources
- Providing attractive alternative transportation routes for bikers and pedestrians
- Softening urban landscapes
- Enhancing economic development and tourism
- Increasing real property values
- Improving water quality in adjacent rivers and streams, and providing natural wildlife corridors
- Providing close-to-home access to a greater proportion of the population than can be accomplished through traditional, scattered parks
- Improving the overall quality of life in the community

All of these benefits would likely apply to the development of a strong, clearly defined and linked open space network within the City of Alexandria. The physical connections created as a result of this system would bring together people and open space areas throughout the City. The development of this open space system become, therefore, one of the more critically important strategies in the City's Open Space Plan.

- **Open Space Availability**

There is an apparent inverse relationship between development and open space since an increase in one results in a decrease in the other. For most urban areas within Northern Virginia, rapid development has dramatically decreased the availability of open space for recreational and other purposes. The paradox is that, as more people move into an area and demand high quality open space amenities, the greater the constraints are to find adequate space to accommodate their needs. This is certainly true in the City of Alexandria where an already dense municipality has accommodated a 15.4 percent increase in population over the decade between 1990 and 2000; and where approximately 4,176 new housing units and approximately 50 to 60 development plans were approved in the two year period from FY '98 to FY '00.

Moreover, the pressure for identifying new sites for public use is divided between those who are seeking opportunities for additional open space and those who must address the need for new and expanded school sites and other public facilities, as well as affordable housing opportunities. At present, these groups often compete with one another to identify and claim right to each new land parcel as it becomes available.

These trends indicate the need for several actions with regard to open space in Alexandria:
- Making optimal use of all currently existing open space opportunities through the development of the connected open space system, described above, as well as through the careful stewardship and, where needed, renovation and re-design of existing open space areas.
- Identifying prime candidate sites as additions to the City's open space system. These might include vacant land parcels, underutilized land, open spaces as part of new residential and commercial developments, and private parcels that become available over time. (The criteria for identifying critical parcels, and the tools that can be used to add these to the City's open space inventory are discussed in Section 6 of this report).
- Establishing strategies that will allow for collaboration, rather than competition, between public agencies in their pursuit and development of available opportunity sites.

In the on-going competition between development and open space, many jurisdictions have had to address the belief that the economic benefits to be accrued from development outweigh those attributable to open space. It is relatively easy to quickly dismiss open space as "nice to have" but not as important to a city's economic health as new development. Research and empirical evidence indicate, however, that this is not true. All things considered, development is not always the highest and best use for a piece of property.

There are important qualitative, as well as documented quantitative, benefits that flow from a community's open space resources. These benefits include:
- Retaining population in a city, and attracting new population and businesses to it, based on quality of life judgements, among which open space ranks significantly high.
- Increased assessed and actual real estate values for properties located near or adjacent to open space areas.
- A lower overall cost to local government for land that is developed as open space rather than for residential use.
- Growing public support for open space funding through general obligation bonds and/or increased taxes.

On the qualitative side, open space does provide important social and quality of life assets for communities. In studies conducted throughout the

United States, open space has been increasingly recognized as a critical element determining residents' assessments about the quality of life in their communities. For example, in a 1995 poll conducted by the Regional Plan Association and the Quinnipac College Polling Institute, the two major factors named as most important for determining a satisfactory quality of life were low crime and access to open space. Such findings have been repeatedly confirmed in additional studies by other groups.[5] Moreover, open space resources are typically touted in the economic development, business recruitment, and tourism promotion efforts of many communities. The lack of such resources can place a community at a competitive disadvantage vis a vis other communities, in this era of increasingly active population sectors and growing public support for open space preservation.

In studies focused on determining the critical factors considered in business relocations, open space and recreational opportunities have been found to rank significantly in defining a "good quality of life" for a locality. For example, in a survey conducted in 1997 by *Fortune* magazine regarding the best cities for business, they asked participants, "If you had virtually identical career opportunities in multiple cities, what would be the most important quality of life factors that would determine your choices." Education ranked first on the list, followed by recreation, culture, crime and safety.

On the quantitative side, reasons to promote open space typically fall under two general categories. The first is the value impact on adjacent properties. The second is the relative "costs" of open space versus development options that might prove to be a fiscal drain on public coffers.

Many studies have been undertaken to document the impact of open space on properties that are near, adjacent to, or fronting on such areas (i.e., "proximate properties").[6] Based on a significant body of research, it has been found that open space areas tend to enhance the value of such proximate properties. The general rule of thumb is that attractive open space can enhance the value (and hence property tax yield) of adjacent or fronting properties by approximately 20 percent. As distance from the open space resource increases, the value premium declines, but the area of impact is thought to be possibly as great as 500 feet for a smaller park, and up to 2,000 feet from a community park.

As with most rules of thumb, there are important limitations and conditions that should be noted: the open space resource must be well kept up and attractive; and, generally, larger open space areas and open spaces devoted to passive uses tend to carry greater value premiums. Proximity to active, rather than passive, recreation areas may actually have negative impact on values for properties that are immediately adjacent due to potential issues such as traffic, congestion, and noise. However, proximity to active open space and park resources can have a positive impact on

values of properties in close proximity to, but not immediately adjacent to, such resources.

The second benefit of open space preservation is based on the premise that retention of a piece of property as open space can preempt development that could require the sometimes-costly provision of public services. This situation is particularly relevant when the alternative use is residential development that would require the full spectrum of public services including schools, public safety, etc. These services typically exceed the value of property tax receipts associated with such development. Combined with the value impact on proximate properties, the net fiscal impact can often enhance the overall positive impact of open space retention for a community. Thus, John Crompton, one of the individuals who has researched the economic impacts of open space versus residential development has concluded that:

> *The evidence clearly indicated that creating parks and preserving open space can be a less expensive alternative to development. A strategy of conserving parks and open space is not contrary to a community's economic health, but rather is an integral part of it (p.75).*

Finally, the economic value of open space has recently been underscored through a series of public referenda supporting funding for parks and open space issues. In the year 2000, for example, the Trust for Public Land reported that 40 communities throughout the nation passed measures that generated $3.3 billion to protect parks and open spaces. Similarly, the Land Trust Alliance, also in 2000, stated that a total for 141 out of 165 referenda concerning open space and land conservation issues were passed, providing over $6.9 billion in new funds for these issues. As stated by Ernest Cook, director of the Public Finance Program for the Trust for Public Land:

Voters across the country have demonstrated real commitment to preserving open space in their communities. We are seeing strong support for measures that provide financing for parks and open space even in places where tax measures for other purposes have failed.[7]

- **Distribution and Access**

Hand in hand with Alexandria's changing demographic picture is its shift in overall population distribution. As discussed earlier in this chapter, the population of Alexandria has been changing both in terms of overall characteristics and where people choose to live. If the City wishes to make its open space resources available to all residents on an equitable basis, it will be important to analyze the current population patterns with regard to existing open space availability.

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, population growth has occurred in

all three of the City's planning districts. However, the growth has been greatest in District 3, the west side of the City (i.e., there was a 21 percent increase in population in District 3 between 1990 and 2000; over the same time period in Districts 1 and 2, growth was 17 percent and 4.6 percent respectively). Viewed in terms of open space acres per thousand residents, District 1 has approximately 12.24 acres per 1,000 persons; District 2 has approximately 6.7 acres; and District 3 offers approximately 6.9 acres. However, many of the open space acres, particularly in District 3, comprise environmentally sensitive sites (such as Holmes Run) that are not suited or intended for active recreational pursuits.

In terms of open space available for active recreation, District 1 contains approximately 4.8 acres per 1,000 residents; District 2 comprises 4.5 acres; and District 3 offers 3.0 acres. Given the fact that the greatest growth in children aged 17 and under occurred in District 3 (44 percent, as compared to 14 percent in District 1 and 8 percent in District 2), it is not surprising that the need for additional recreational open space in District 3 has been identified by the City as an issue requiring attention. In response to this issue, the City has undertaken a Recreation Needs Assessment study that will analyze recreational needs in terms of population characteristics and distribution.

- **Open Space Stewardship and Protection**

  As Alexandria continues to grow, and to attract new residents and businesses, the overall need to protect the City's few remaining open space areas becomes even more critical. One need only look at a map of existing vacant lands (see Figure 13) to underscore how little open land remains within Alexandria's boundaries. Therefore, building an open space system that will adequately provide for a growing population requires that we protect and enhance the open spaces we currently have, and maximize opportunities for creating new open spaces when these become available.

  Perhaps the largest potential for open space resources in Alexandria lies in its natural, environmentally sensitive, and cultural/historic areas. These include the City's riverfront, stream valleys, steep slopes, wooded sites, historic landscapes, and other natural resource areas. Care for, and protection of, such areas will be critical to any open space plan for the City since these areas comprise a major portion of Alexandria's green infrastructure. Moreover, they represent a key opportunity for making those open space connections that are essential to the establishment of a working open space network throughout the City. Those opportunities include:

  - Connecting Alexandria's residents to both the natural and historic landscapes in their City — areas easily overlooked since many are neither well known nor readily accessible.

- Helping to create a linked, usable open space network within the City that has, at its core, these natural and historic sites.
- Educating the public to appreciate and value these sensitive resources through enhanced access and interpretation.

C.   OPEN SPACE NEED

A separate *Recreation Needs Assessment Study* has recently been completed by the firm of Leon Younger and PROS. This study has analyzed the City's current and projected recreational needs, in terms of programs as well as indoor and outdoor facilities, and has recommended specific improvements to the City's recreational system. The reader is referred to this document for further details.

However, in general, the population projections for the next 10 years require the addition of at least 100 acres of additional open space just to maintain the existing ratio of open space per capita. In 1990, Alexandria had 7.3 acres of active and passive open space for each 1,000 residents, based on a population of 111,000. Between 1990 and 2000, the City added 125 acres of open space and 17,000 residents. In 2000, Alexandria remained at 7.3 acres per 1,000 residents, despite adding the 125 acres. In 2012, the projected population of 142,000 will require the City to add 100 acres of open space to maintain 7.3 acres for each 1,000 residents.[8]

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[1] Based on data from *Inside City Parks* by Peter Harnik.

[2] Based on data from the 2000 U.S. Census, includes both water and land area.

[3] Based on 932 acres of public open space, divided by 128,283 persons divided by 1,000.

[4] Also based on data from *Inside City Parks* by Peter Harnik, using 1990 Census figures.

[5] See, for example, *The Economic Benefits of Parks and Open Space* by Steve Lerner and William Poole, which discusses a series of studies related to open space and quality of life issues.

[6] See, for example, references by John L. Crompton, John Tibbetts, and Elizabeth Brabec.

[7] The Trust for Public Land: *Newsroom: 82 Percent of Referenda Passed.*

[8] The Strategic Plan's ratio of 7.5 acres per thousand people was based on 840 acres of public land that the City currently maintains. The above numbers go beyond City maintained acres and include other areas such as Daingerfield Island.

Open space is a community amenity, and many residents of Alexandria feel passionate about the City's open space areas. They fight to protect the open spaces currently in place and are eager to point out opportunities for improving them. In addition, many residents are often the first to know about new open space opportunities, or potential opportunities that may become available in the future. Moreover, the open space planning process presented the City with an excellent occasion to bring residents together to have a role in planning those areas that contribute significantly to the quality of life in Alexandria.

Park Planning District 1 meeting

A. A STRATEGY FOR COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

The community involvement process was designed to accomplish three general goals:

- To engage residents of Alexandria in defining an open space vision for the City
- To encourage residents to think about, and express their views regarding, the appropriate role for, and adequate provision of, open space in the City
- To educate the community with regard to defining open space, and to thinking about ways in which to maximize open space opportunities

A multi-tiered involvement process was used to engage a broad range of key stakeholders, community groups, and residents in the planning process. This process included:

- Interviews with key open space stakeholders to understand their views of current conditions and their ideas for the future. Those interviewed included representatives from:
- Office of the City Manager
- Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities
- Department of Planning and Zoning
- Transportation and Environmental Services Department
- Alexandria School Board
- Alexandria Beautification Commission
- Alexandria Federation of Civic Associations
- Environmental Policy Commission
- Alexandria Historical Restoration and Preservation Commission
- Historic Alexandria Restoration Commission
- Alexandria Soccer Association
- Parker Gray Community

Park Planning Distrct 1 meeting

- **Community sessions in each of the three Park Planning Districts** to explain the open space planning process, review the existing conditions inventory, and develop preliminary plan goals and visions. These sessions were held in April and May 2001, and were all well attended.

- **A citywide Open Space Summit**, a half-day session to refine the vision and develop a conceptual open space plan. Approximately 150 people participated in the Summit event, held in June 2001.

This community involvement strategy allowed the planning team to reach a large and diverse number of residents, and enabled those who participated to have more than one opportunity to express their views on the issues discussed. The ideas to emerge from all of this input have served as the basis for the Open Space Plan.

Park Planning District 2 meeting

B.   THE PRELIMINARY VISION

Each of the Planning District meetings began with a presentation of the open space categories defined as part of the planning process, and findings of the inventory of existing conditions for each category. The meeting was then turned over to the community participants present, in the form of small group discussions. The purpose of these discussions was to allow opportunities for residents to think about their open space needs, and to develop ideas that would contribute to an open space vision for their communities.

While those attending each Planning District session focused specifically on the open space needs within their own district, many also addressed broader citywide needs. What was most remarkable about the input received from these meetings was the similarity of goals expressed by participants from all three districts.

The major discussion points noted by participants, comprising the beginning of an open space vision for the City, indicated need for the following (not in any order of priority):

- Achieving a continuous public open space along the Potomac River in Alexandria
- Maximizing open space connections throughout the City through pedestrian-friendly streets, trails and enhanced streetscape corridors. Tied to this concept is the goal to establish Alexandria as a key link in a regional trail system.
- Placing a high priority on protecting, enhancing, and connecting the City's stream valleys and other natural resource areas. This includes the creation of clean stream channels, "less engineered" stream banks ("re-green all streams"), and using parks as buffers along river and stream banks to the greatest extent possible.
- Retaining as much usable open space as possible within the most rapidly developing areas of the city. Moreover, within these areas, ensure that established design guidelines and maintenance standards are rigorously enforced.
- Maximizing the use and visual quality of all open space parcels — make the most of what we have.
- Protecting our existing parkland.

- Acting quickly to "capture" open space opportunities, as they become available; having the mechanisms in place to allow the City to act rapidly.
- Securing open space easements on key, privately held and institutional open space areas as these represent some of the largest remaining open space parcels in the City.
- Recognizing the value of streets in an urban open space system and enhancing existing streetscapes so they become a secondary park system for the City.
- Maximizing vacant lands as open space opportunities, particularly where they provide changes to link to other open space areas.
- Preserving areas of significant tree cover.
- Seeking opportunities to create additional open space areas in sections of the City where this is most needed (e.g., the west end, and the northeast portion of Old Town)
- Identifying and enforcing all existing public easements; these could provide some important trail linkages and, perhaps, small open space areas.
- Developing easier and more attractive Metro access for pedestrians.
- Minimizing surface parking lots; locating parking underground where possible and using the surface areas as open space opportunities.
- Undergrounding utilities to the maximum extent possible.
- Defining and developing attractive gateways to the City, along streets,

Legend
- Beautify Interchanges
- Pedestrian & Bike Linkage
- Gateways
- Metro Civic Parks
- Vacant Land - Private
- Vacant Land - Public
- Open Space Preservation / New Parks
- Tree Cover Protection
- Slaters Lane Plan
- Trails
- Stream Valley Protection & Enhancement
- Streetscapes
- Highway Corridors
- New Development Areas
- Potomac River Waterfront Program
- Cemeteries
- Schools
- Public Open Space
- Institutional Land
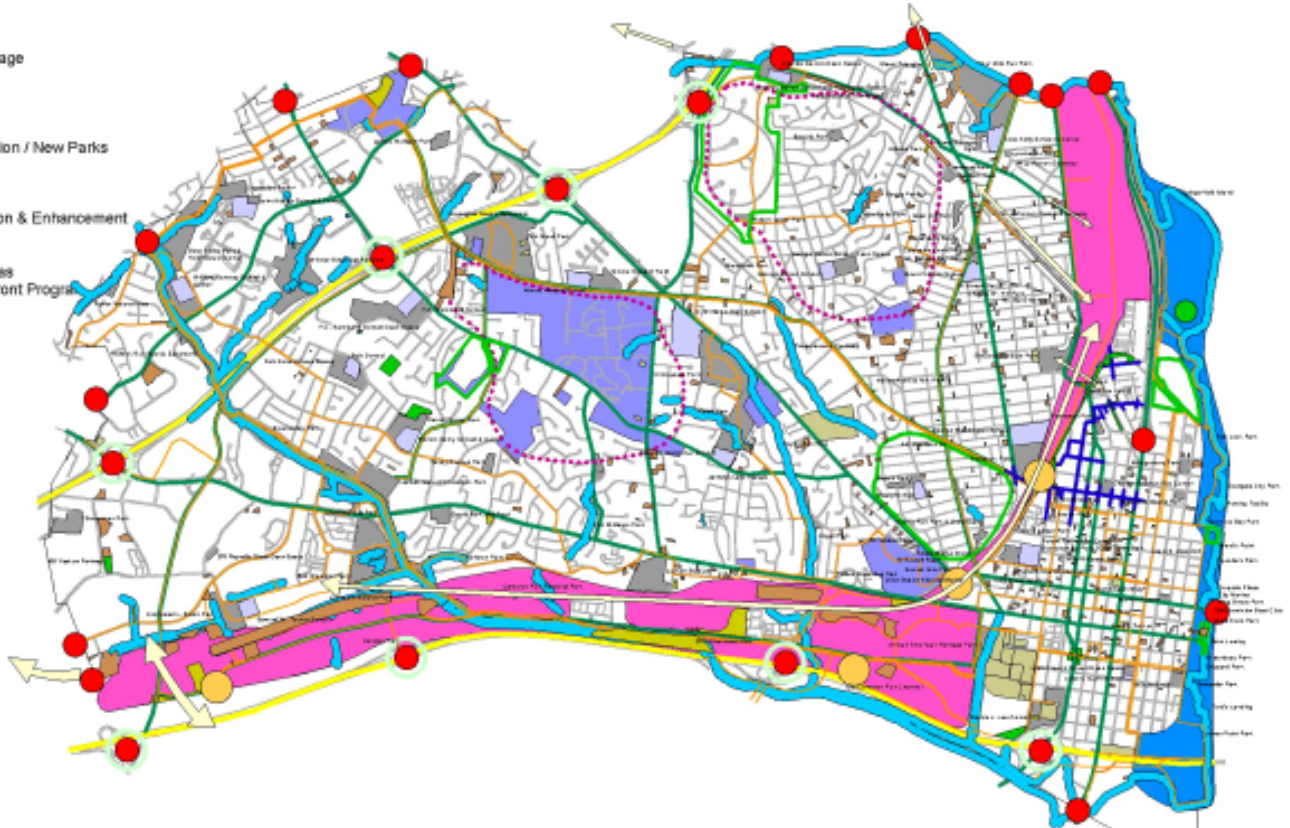
Figure 14: Open Space Vision

highways, and trails.
- Providing additional multipurpose fields.
- Improving the appearance of highway corridors through Alexandria.
- Making better use of open space areas around school properties for habitats, gardens, educational and community opportunities.
- Creating a new zoning classification: a horticultural zone.
- Encouraging scenic easements; identifying valuable properties not currently protected by easements and creating those easements before such sites become developed, or to prevent or limit further development.
- In addition, there were numerous comments regarding the kinds of spaces in residential and commercial developments that should and should not be counted as open space (e.g., parking lots, balconies, roof tops). This issue is, however, being addressed by a separate study of zoning requirements for residential and commercial areas, being prepared under the auspices of the Department of Planning and Zoning. This issue is, therefore, not discussed in the Open Space Plan.

Based on the input provided as a result of the three Planning District meetings, a conceptual Open Space Vision was compiled (see Figure 14). This vision served as the discussion starting point for the Open Space Summit.

C.   CITYWIDE OPEN SPACE SUMMIT

Approximately 150 people gathered together on a Saturday in June 2001 to discuss the future of open space in the City of Alexandria. The agenda for this event is provided in the Appendix. In brief, after greetings from Mayor Donley, and remarks from the chairs of the Park and Recreation Commission, the Planning Commission, and the Environmental Policy Commission that placed the open space planning effort in the context of other ongoing efforts in the City, the group listened to a presentation by Peter Harnik (author of *Inside City Parks)* regarding the importance of open space for dense urban cities, such as Alexandria. The consultant team presented the results of the planning process up to that point, and described the conceptual Open Space Vision that was developed following the Planning District meetings. Each of the 15 tables in the room was provided with a copy of the Open Space Vision diagram and participants were asked to work in small group sessions, led by facilitators, to address the following questions:

- The plan presents a wide variety of concepts regarding open space opportunities for Alexandria. Which are the concepts that you feel it will be important for the City to include in its open space plan?
- Are there any concepts that you feel should not be included?
- Can you think of any additional opportunities that we should consider including?
- We have talked about a broad range of open space opportunities. If you were to advise the City on which three to implement first, which would you choose? You have each been given three dots. Please place

Group presentation at the Summit

these on the plan on the three opportunities you believe the City should focus on first.

All groups were given an hour to complete the questions. At the end of that time, a representative from each of the groups was asked to come forward and present its responses. In general, respondents resoundingly supported the overall concepts shown in the Open Space Vision diagram. They did, however, feel that the Open Space Plan should emphasize the following actions:

- Stream valley protection, enhancement, and connection throughout the City, including the restoration of stream banks to their natural state and removal/control of invasive plants; continuous public access within stream valley greenways
- Creation of a continuous open space along the Potomac River waterfront
- The creation of significant public open space opportunities in the Eisenhower Avenue corridor and other development areas
- Acquisition of private vacant land for open space use and as scenic easements
- Creation of a linked system of pedestrian and bicycle trails throughout the City to connect parks and neighborhoods, and to link older neighborhoods to new development areas
- Creation of significant, usable public open space areas in the Potomac Yards development area
- Preservation of institutionally-owned open space areas, and improved public access to those areas where possible
- Tree protection and maintenance; possible creation of tree cover protection zones
- Creation of new open space opportunities in the west end and the northeast portion of Old Town
- Enhancement of streetscapes to encourage a positive pedestrian experience ("think of sidewalks as the connecting fabric between open spaces"); conversion of the City's major streets into "greenways;" enhancement of Commonwealth Avenue as a model for this
- Improvements to the areas around the Metro stations, ideally into civic parks
- Research into new major open space opportunities (e.g., the power plant)
- Beautification of the highway interchanges through the City; consideration of highway areas for future decking over, to create new open space areas
- Definition of the City's entrances and beautification of these
- Emphasis on vacant land around schools as potential open space opportunities; balancing the needs for both open space preservation and school growth

Group work was mediated by a landscape architect

Community participants at the Summit

The groups designated three recommendations as the top priorities for immediate action: protection of the City's stream valleys, creation of a continuous

public open space corridor along the Potomac River waterfront, and the creation of connected public open space opportunities in the Eisenhower Corridor.

The information gained from the Summit was used to develop the goals and strategies for the Open Space Plan. These are described in the next chapter of this report.

Unlike many important cities, in the late 19th and early 20th Century, Alexandria did not set aside large swaths of open space or adopt a comprehensive open space plan that would guide the creation of a park system with interconnected linear and stream valley parks, waterfront parks and other open spaces, large and small. Alexandria's current park system includes a broad range of open space facilities, ranging from neighborhood parks and playgrounds to national parks. Some parks are linear in character, such as those that follow water courses. Others are located along the Potomac River and provide dramatic vistas up river to the U.S. Capitol and down river toward broad views of the Potomac River shoreline. This section of the report describes the current opportunities available to the City to conserve open space; a conceptual planning framework for the plan; and a description of 15 goals and associated plan recommendations.

A. OPEN SPACE OPPORTUNITIES

Numerous open spaces throughout the City have potential to remain as open space through various methods of protection. These open spaces are currently not designated as parks or public open spaces. Some are privately owned, but designated as open space open to the public; for example, the Winkler Botanical Garden in the West End. Others are open spaces on properties owned by institutions such as the Virginia Theological Seminary property at Seminary Road and Quaker Lane.

Figure 15: Open Space Opportunity Sites

The open space opportunities have been organized into the following categories and are illustrated in the Open Space Opportunities Sites map.

Alexandria National Cemetery

- Parks and Public Open Spaces—provide the framework of the existing park system and upon which future open spaces will be added.
- School Sites—usually have important open space resources. Numerous school sites are adjacent to parks and public open spaces.
- Cemeteries and Botanical Gardens—are valuable open space resources that are generally privately owned.
- Institutional Properties—typically have valuable open space and natural resources on a portion of their land holdings.
- Large Lot Residential Properties—a number of residential properties have extensive open space, that usually include valuable vegetation or other natural resources.
- Undeveloped Areas with Natural Features—are typically located adjacent to stream valleys
- Vacant Land Under Development—certain vacant sites are under consideration for open space or recreation uses.
- Vacant Land, Public Ownership—these properties typically don't possess natural resources but can be developed into valuable open spaces.
- Vacant Land, Private Ownership—these properties also typically don't possess natural resources but can be developed into valuable open spaces.
- Open Space to be Delineated in Future Development Areas—these areas are usually large and are currently being studied by the City's Department of Planning and Zoning for future development potential including open space uses.
- Planned Open Space in Development Areas—these open spaces have either been built or are approved for construction.
- Required Common Private Open Space—are sites that have been approved by the City for open space uses.
- Streetscapes—these streets have potential to be further enhanced with streetscaping.
- Planted Medians—are green islands in the middle of streetscapes.
- Wooded Buffers—these areas provide attractive settings or buffers to roads or railroad rights of way.

Fort Ward

B. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Alexandria has numerous opportunities to create a significant network of interconnected and linked open spaces throughout the City in order to create a meaningful and workable green infrastructure. Since the City lacks large undeveloped tracts of vacant or underdeveloped land to target for open space protection or enhancement, this plan has identified a framework for making the most of the small amount of available land for open space use. This framework includes the following:

New development areas should support the open space linkages throughout the city

The Green Crescent connects primary rivers and streams in Alexandria.

Large institutional properties become the Central Open Space Conservation Area

Linear parks are a part of the Open Space Corridors

1. The overall objective of the Open Space Plan is that of **making connections**. Alexandria's current pattern of open space areas primarily consists of isolated parks and open spaces in all sectors of the City. Linking open spaces to each other, expanding open spaces to provide better linkages and creating continuous parks along roadways and waterways will enable the City to finally have a park system built on Olmstedian principles of park planning. Basic to such principles is the concept of a linked system connecting a city's major open spaces through parkways, greenways, trails, and smaller open areas. One famous example of this is Olmsted's "Emerald Necklace" open space system in Boston.

2. The creation of a **Green Crescent** of open spaces that follows the alignment of the City's primary rivers and streams: Potomac River, Four Mile Run, Cameron Run and Holmes Run. The Green Crescent would be created by building upon the existing parks, natural areas and other open spaces, and by adding unprotected key sites to provide greenway and trail linkages and interconnected parkland. Utilizing Holmes Run as a model, the existing open spaces in the Green Crescent would, over time, require environmental remediation and ecological revitalization to restore, rehabilitate or create natural landscapes as well as recreation areas that are compatible with these natural areas. Hiker and biker trails and natural landscapes would be the predominate characteristics of the Green Crescent.

3. **A second segment of the Green Crescent** creates a linear park generally parallel to the existing railroad rights-of-way of WMATA and CSX and extends from Four Mile Run at Route 1 to Ben Brenman Park in the West End. This Crescent builds upon the existing open spaces of Simpson Field, George Washington Middle School, and others with new open spaces and linkages in areas that are currently vacant or underutilized. Dramatic vistas of the U.S. Capitol and the George Washington Masonic Temple will become orientation elements for this Crescent.

4. A **Central Open Space Conservation Area** is established in the heart of the City through the preservation of land owned by Episcopal High School, the Episcopal Theological Seminary and the Second Presbyterian Church. These institutions have protected their woodlands, specimen trees, streams and rolling open fields over many decades. Through a variety of protection mechanisms, these open spaces can be protected in perpetuity and, possibly, certain areas made accessible to the general public for many years to come.

5. **Open Space Corridors** can be created in various neighborhoods of the City. The Open Space Corridors build upon existing stream valley corridors – Hooffs Run, Taylor Run, Timber Branch, etc. – streets and existing parkland (public- and privately – owned) to create linear

greenways that link to the Green Crescent and the Central Open Space Conservation Area. These corridors are aligned along the following streets or stream valleys:

- Van Dorn Street
- Jordan Street
- Howard Street
- Fort Williams Parkway
- Quaker Lane
- Taylor Run
- King Street
- Timber Branch
- Hooffs Run
- Braddock Road

6. **Major Thoroughfares** in the City can be upgraded to become more pedestrian-friendly and attractive urban open spaces. Many of Alexandria's streets can become the backbone for improved streetscapes, bikeways and greenways, and can stimulate urban revital-ization of adjacent communities and businesses. These thoroughfares include:

- East and West Glebe Roads

Legend
- Green Crescent
- Green Connector
- Open Space Conservation Areas
- Parks

Figure 16: Open Space Concept Plan

Beauregard Street

- Braddock Road
- King Street
- Duke Street
- Eisenhower Avenue
- Beauregard Street
- Van Dorn Street
- Commonwealth Avenue
- Russell Road
- U.S. Route 1
- Washington Street

C.   GOALS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION

During the planning process for the preparation of this Open Space Plan, 15 goals were formulated. Through discussions at the three Planning District meetings, the Citywide Open Space Summit and Steering Committee meetings, the 15 goals and associated plan recommendations were defined, analyzed and finalized. The 15 goals and associated recommendations provide the overall framework for the plan. These goals include:

1. Protecting and enriching existing parks
2. Developing innovative opportunities for creating additional open space
3. Reviewing implementation of the Potomac River Waterfront Plan, adding parkland where appropriate
4. Protecting, expanding, and connecting stream valleys and other environmentally sensitive areas
5. Creating an open space network, The Green Crescent, in new development areas
6. Protecting and preserving institutional open space.
7. Maximizing use of public school open space areas to satisfy local needs
8. Preserving and protecting cemeteries
9. Creating public open space from vacant land
10. Linking and expanding the pedestrian, bicycle and trail system
11. Enhancing streetscapes and gateways
12. Expanding citywide street tree program and protecting existing trees and woodland areas
13. Encouraging the creation of Civic Parks at Metro Stations
14. Beautifying interchanges and highway corridors
15. Protecting privately-owned open space

The next section of this chapter describes each goal, along with its associated plan recommendations and strategies for implementation.

GOAL 1. PROTECT AND ENRICH EXISTING PARKS

Alexandria's existing public parks are the armature of its open space system.

Existing park

They provide both passive and active recreational amenities for neighborhoods and districts as well as for the City and the region. The existing parks are the focal points of communities and the locations for important civic events. As parks become more intensively used, the need for increased maintenance, management and planning becomes greater. In addition to identifying opportunities, the City should provide a strategy to continually protect the existing park system and identify opportunities to enhance park resources. An important component of this work will be in defining opportunities for park renovation, expansion and linkages to create a comprehensive open space network. Participants in the planning process were unanimous in their concern to protect remaining natural resources in existing parks.

The Plan defines opportunities for park renovation, expansion and linkages to create a park/open space network.

In addition, the Plan encourages the protection and enhancement of remaining natural resources in existing parks.

Existing park by the Potomac River

Recommendations for Goal 1

- Integrate the findings of the Open Space Inventory with those of the Needs Assessment Study.

- Continue the recent emphasis on increased maintenance of the existing park system and other public open spaces.

- Carefully assess existing heavily used parklands and recreation facilities in the Needs Assessment and determine methods for minimizing overuse (e.g., reprogramming or planned expansion).

- Look to the Needs Assessment to identify program needs (e.g., active recreation, passive activities, educational activities, etc.) and define potential areas for accommodating these.

- Inventory cultural and natural resources in the parks to protect existing resources and expand public education and enjoyment. Identify natural resource needs and define potential opportunities for accommodating these.

Implementation Strategies for Goal 1

- Work with Alexandria's business and residential communities to create an open space conservancy and stewardship program that can: (1) accept financial and property donations, (2) support renovation and expansion of parks and other public open spaces, and (3) create new parks and preserve existing open spaces and natural areas.

- Establish an open space endowment for the purchase and development

of public open space.   (Possible funding sources for this action are discussed in Chapter 6.)

- Continue to seek increased City funding and other sources of funding for park maintenance, renovation and expansion, as well as for staff training and professional management to improve use of existing resources.

- Develop a master plan for each of the City's existing parks to guide short and long-term needs.

- Expand the City's volunteer programs, such as Adopt-a-Park, Adopt-a-Garden and Tree Stewards, to encourage organized groups to help with the maintenance of open space resources. (See Chapter 6 for additional discussion of this issue)

- Develop a management/stewardship plan for cultural and natural resources in Alexandria's parks.

GOAL 2. DEVELOP INNOVATIVE OPPORTUNITIES FOR CREATING ADDITIONAL PUBLIC OPEN SPACE

The overarching concept for the Alexandria Open Space Plan includes: pro-
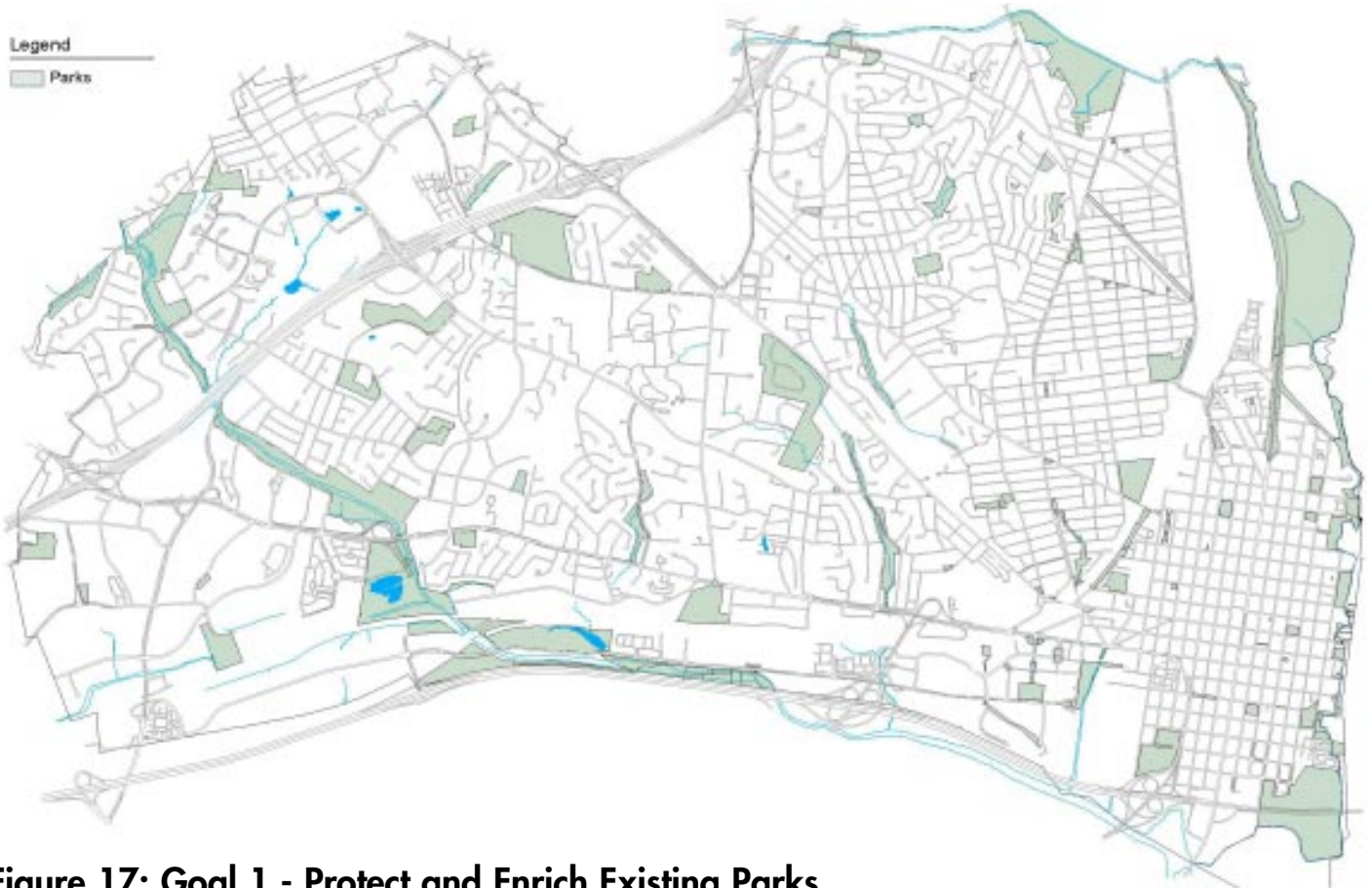
Figure 17: Goal 1 - Protect and Enrich Existing Parks

Innovative parking

tecting existing parks, other publicly-owned open spaces and natural areas; linking existing parks and open space areas; creating continuous open space systems along the Potomac River and the City's stream valleys; creating a continuous open space system in a former industrial area, "The Green Crescent;" and creating a series of new small parks in under-served, high density communities. While the creation of additional public open space areas presents a challenge to the City in terms of cost, development trade-offs, and so on, it will be critical for the City to pursue these options in order to accommodate the increasing need for open space for the City's growing population. The Plan recommendations highlighted below identify a number of innovative methods for creating public open spaces.

Recommendations for Goal 2

- Seize opportunities quickly when land suitable for open space usage becomes available, including developed commercial or industrial land that could be converted to open space uses.

- Plan strategically for future opportunities to create, expand, or improve parks and publicly-owned natural areas and open spaces.

- Convert channelized stream valleys and other modified natural resource areas into verdant open spaces.

- Create parkland as well as recreational facilities atop new below-ground parking structures.

- Create new open spaces, and link existing open spaces, by bridging over roads (e.g., open space deck linking Fort Ward Park, NOVA campus, and the Episcopal High School).

- Utilize air rights over roadways to create new open space, recreation, habitat, and educational facilities.

- Expand sections of existing roadways to create traffic-free bike trails, pedestrian paths, and landscaped medians and sidewalks (e.g., King Street, Duke Street, Commonwealth Avenue and Telegraph Road).

- Utilize the following selection criteria for identifying privately-owned land suitable for acquisition by the City for parkland/open space use:
  - Privately owned land near or adjacent to existing parks and trails
  - Near or adjacent to existing schools
  - Near or adjacent to natural resource areas
  - At street endings to provide neighborhood linkages
  - Next to institutional properties with extensive open space, valuable natural resources, and/or potential public access
  - Adjacent to or linking existing / proposed trails or greenways
  - Small lots in dense urban neighborhoods for pocket parks, gardens,

green spaces, and playgrounds (Old Town; Rosemont; western sector of the City; Del Ray; etc.)

- Privately owned lands with significant trees, sloping terrain, and other natural resource features
- Privately owned properties of known or potential historic or cultural significance
- Privately owned land in areas identified in the Needs Assessment as those with a high need for open space
- Excess rights-of-way
- Open space and trail connections adjacent to or linking open spaces, natural areas, greenways and trails in Arlington and Fairfax Counties

Implementation Strategies for Goal 2

- Create a City Hall "Action Team" comprised of representatives from the City Manager's office; the Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities; Department of Planning and Zoning; Department of Transportation and Environmental Services; Office of Historic Alexandria; and others as needed to create a coordinated strategy for rapid action on land disposition.

- Enhance existing requirements for open space in new development and

Figure 18: Goal 2 - Develop Innovative Opportunities for Creating Additional Public Open

make amendments as needed to ensure that new projects will provide sufficient usable open space.

- Develop specific plans for strategies for all stream valleys in the City, and target agencies such as the Army Corps of Engineers and EPA as funding sources for this effort. Build upon the City's on-going environmental efforts regarding these areas.

- Develop plans and strategies for natural areas in the City.

- Strategically seek and develop additional funding sources that will allow the City to realize the recommended strategies for creating new open space opportunities (see Chapter 6).

Potomac waterfront

GOAL 3. REVIEW AND COMPLETE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE POTOMAC RIVER WATERFRONT PLAN

As identified in public meetings, the Potomac River with its beautiful shoreline is the premier open space for the City of Alexandria. People from across the City, as well as the region, are attracted to the parks along the Potomac River because they are generally linked, are expansive, have great views and, at certain times during the year, offer exciting programs and festivals. Throughout the planning process, participants emphasized the need to establish a strategy for acquiring the "missing links" of the waterfront open space system and seize open space opportunities along the entire waterfront.

The Plan urges the City to review and continue to implement the City's earlier Waterfront Plan from Jones Point Park to Four Mile Run, to link with the open spaces of the Mt. Vernon Trail along the George Washington Memorial Parkway and the District of Columbia.

Recommendations for Goal 3

- High priority should be given to protecting and creating continuous public access to and along the Potomac River. The following parcels, if protected for open space use, will fill in the gaps along the Potomac River shoreline:
  - 501 North Union Street
  - 1 King Street
  - 0 Prince Street
  - 204 Strand Street
  - 210 Strand Street
  - 1 Wharf Street
  - 700-708 Kahn Street
  - 2 Alexander Street

- Provide natural and historical education/awareness of the Potomac River.

Boats at the Potomac River

- Link the Potomac River parks with other stream valley water resource areas (Four Mile Run, Cameron Run, etc.) through both land and water-based trails and open spaces.

- At a minimum, continue to require implementation of the existing 25-foot wide easement or zone for open space linkages along the Potomac River waterfront as represented in zoning and settlement agreements, and create new parkland on parcels with title questions.

- Strive to restore the 100-foot RPA buffer along the shoreline as opportunities to do so arise.

- Require significant open space areas for all new development along the riverfront.

Implementation Strategies for Goal 3

- The City should seek and encourage all available opportunities to add missing parcels to the Potomac River Waterfront Plan. These strategies include: acquisition, gifts of land, easements, purchase of development rights, etc.
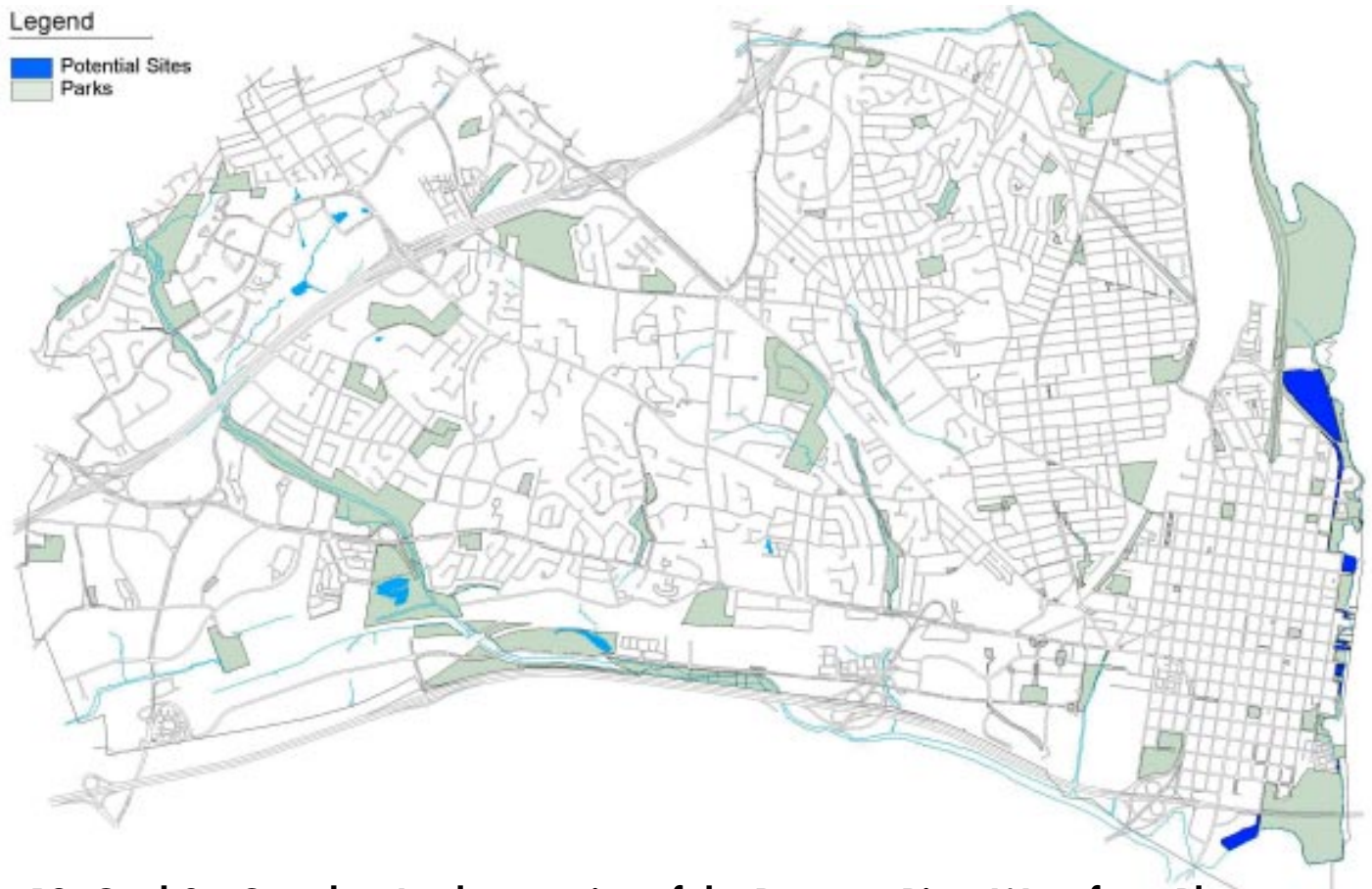
Figure 19: Goal 3 - Complete Implementation of the Potomac River Waterfront Plan

- The Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities, the Department of Planning and Zoning, and the Office of Historic Alexandria should collaborate to develop an Alexandria Waterfront Education Plan, including interpretive and directional signs, written and electronic materials, and interpretive events.

GOAL 4. PROTECT, EXPAND, AND CONNECT STREAM VALLEYS *AND* OTHER ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE AREAS

The City of Alexandria has begun to identify, protect, and connect its stream valleys as important natural resources and significant open space amenities. In the past, these natural resource areas were industrialized, degraded and avoided as places for public use and access. Today, we recognize the important open space benefits to be derived from protecting, conserving and restoring stream valleys in the City.

Holmes Run stream valley

To achieve this goal, the Plan urges the City to establish its existing stream valleys as significant open space resources. In addition, the City should ensure protection of its wetlands, stream buffers, and other natural resources, including those outside the limits of existing RPA's.

Recommendations for Goal 4

- Protect, conserve, and expand the following stream valleys:
  - Four Mile Run
  - Holmes Run
  - Cameron Run
  - Taylor Run
  - Old Cameron Run
  - Timber Branch
  - Backlick Run
  - Strawberry Run
  - Hooffs Run
  - Great Hunting Creek
  - Lucky Run
  - The stream through Monticello Park
  - The streams in Chinquapin Park
  - Potomac River

Four Mile Run stream valley

- Provide opportunities for environmental and historical education and interpretation. Consider each stream valley as an educational resource.

- Coordinate existing stream management programs including: flood control, stormwater management, urban habitat, recreation, etc.

- Look for opportunities for stream valley protection and educational programs near school sites.

- Upgrade the health of stream valleys by developing a citywide stream protection strategy as part of a Watershed Management Plan that includes maintaining streams, springs and seeps in a natural condition; encouraging cluster development and green infrastructure; prohibiting buildings, structures and impervious surfaces (except for necessary trails) in stream buffers; increasing vegetation and other beneficial watershed features; keeping inappropriate uses away from stream edges (i.e. dog parks, fertilized ball fields, etc.); and promoting effective and innovative methods for stormwater management and erosion control.

- Actively explore and implement, as appropriate, current urban stream restoration techniques in order to create more natural stream valleys that contribute to a positive open space character and improved water quality, while still protecting public health and safety.

- Develop significant reforestation and forestation programs along stream buffers, emphasizing the planting of appropriate native species and the removal of exotics. This effort will provide increased infiltration and/or uptake of pollutants, nutrients and sediments, thereby increasing wildlife habitat and minimizing temperature impacts on streams.

- Encourage wetland creation and protection projects throughout the
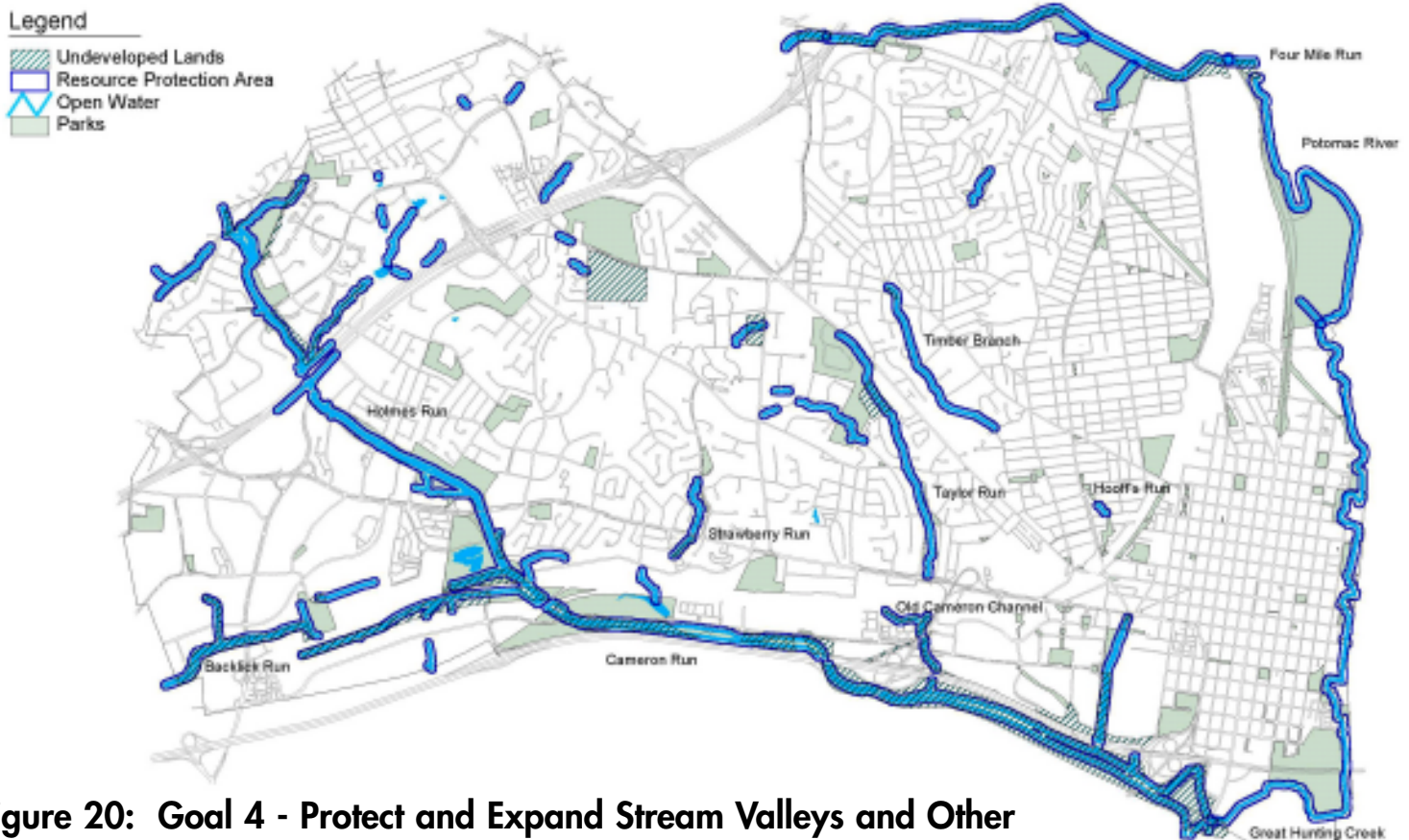
Figure 20: Goal 4 - Protect and Expand Stream Valleys and Other Environmentally Sensitive Areas

City to help clean our streams and increase wildlife habitat.

- Do not allow variances to RPA buffers.

- Strive to achieve more than the 100-foot wide buffers for the purpose of protecting natural resource areas.

- Improve habitat for birds and other wildlife.

Implementation Strategies for Goal 4

- Seek funding from State, Federal and other sources for site protection, demonstration projects, and environmental education programs (see Chapter 6).

- Curtail or eliminate the granting of encroachments in stream valley RPA's and adjacent areas. Enhance identified RPA's with natural area buffers.

- Require the restoration of RPA's when sites are redeveloped.

- Establish on-going regional coordination with Arlington and Fairfax Counties for stream valley and natural resource protection, building on the model established for Four Mile Run.

- Conduct a detailed survey of the City's streams and woodlands, threatened and endangered species, and steep slopes in coordination with the Environmental Policy Commission. The survey should include preparation of specific recommendations for the protection of these resources.

- Develop financial and other incentives for private property owners within watershed areas to protect the natural resources of those areas (e.g., by reducing impervious surfaces, reusing rainwater on site, etc.)

- Continue to set aside City monies for stream valley restoration projects. Where possible, leverage those funds with grants and other monies in order to restore our streams and stream valleys.

- Undertake carefully monitored Adopt-a-Stream and/or similar programs to increase implementation resources and educate citizens about the significance of our stream valleys.

GOAL 5. CREATE AN OPEN SPACE NETWORK IN NEW DEVELOPMENT AREAS

A broad swath of open, under-utilized land forms a "green crescent," a crescent-shaped area that generally follows the CSX railroad right-of-way from

Four Mile Run to the West End at the Fairfax County border. One of the "last remaining frontiers" for creating and preserving open space in the City, this area is rapidly being lost to development. Newly developing or redeveloping areas present one of the only opportunities for the City to achieve new, large, significant open spaces.

Although pressures will be great to maximize development on any remaining sites in the City, there are numerous opportunities to create a meaningful open space system that meets a variety of needs and connects open space areas both within the area represented within the "green crescent" and elsewhere in the City.

Recommendations for Goal 5

- Plan for potential development and redevelopment sites to include open space areas in overall plans.

- Consider both significant large, green areas, as well as smaller parks and visual linkages as part of any development area.

- Utilize design guidelines to make the City's objectives clear and ensure development sites achieve coordination of open space areas among separate developments in adjacent areas.

Figure 21: Goal 5 - Create an Open Space Network in New Development Areas

New development areas

Potomac Yards, new development areas

- Encourage use of conservation easements to the maximum extent appropriate.

- Incorporate historical and archeological resources in planning for open space and new development projects, where appropriate.

Implementation Strategies for Goal 5

- The City should consider using all available planning tools to create an open space network in new development areas. Such tools might include:
    - Developer fees for open space
    - Conditional zoning (proffers)
    - Targeted development areas
    - Master plans for development areas
    - Transit-oriented development neighborhoods
    - Conservation and scenic easements
    - Taxation-incentive programs
    - Design guidelines
    - Stream valley setbacks

- Require coordination in the planning and design of open space areas for new developments in order to maximize and link spaces in a definable, usable manner.

- Evaluate all new development proposals in the context of their impact on Alexandria's public and private open space.

- Review existing zoning and development standards and requirements in order to achieve adequate open space in all developments citywide; make revisions as necessary. Consider the following zoning concepts:
    - Require that open space serve a public function
    - Establish that all required open space be at ground level
    - Require open space for commercial as well as residential developments
    - Create a fee system as a requirement for small sites inappropriate for open space, and for modifications
    - Develop an open space component for each planning study area, and require consistency with that open space plan as part of the zoning requirement

- Require significant open space areas that are large, connected and green as part of any discretionary approval. In addition, require the creation and maintenance of visual linkages among open spaces and key vistas.

- Create requirements for the maintenance of proffered open spaces in

new development areas that may include the creation of endowments for such purposes.

- Investigate the transfer of density among adjoining or nearby parcels in exchange for open green areas.

- Where development has already occurred, consider conservation and scenic easements, taxation programs, and other techniques for the creation, preservation and maintenance of open spaces on these sites.

- Coordinate with Arlington and Fairfax Counties to implement the plan to protect and connect open space linkages in new development areas, where applicable.

GOAL 6. PROTECT AND PRESERVE INSTITUTIONALLY-OWNED OPEN SPACE

Some of the most significant open spaces in the City are institutionally owned. The greatest aggregate of these open spaces is located in the geographic center of the City, between Quaker Lane, Seminary Road, N. Howard Street and Braddock Road. These open spaces, as well as others, include significant natural and environmental, as well as historical and archeological,
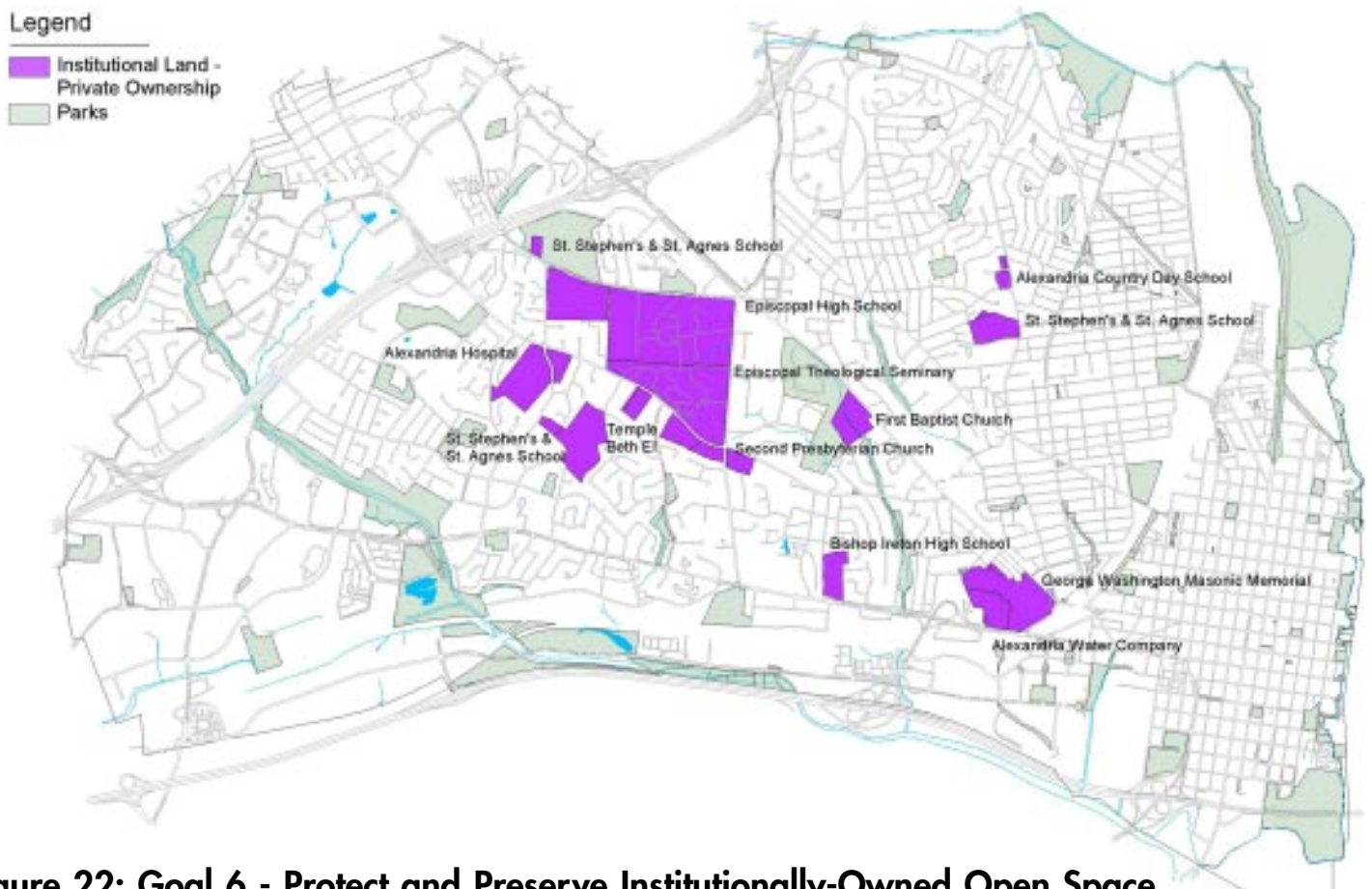
Figure 22: Goal 6 - Protect and Preserve Institutionally-Owned Open Space

Institutional open space with large woodland areas

Institutional open space

Institutional open space

Episcopal High School

resources. The City, together with these institutions, should collaborate on protecting, in perpetuity, these important open spaces. The Plan should develop strategies to preserve and protect these resources.

Recommendations for Goal 6

- Preserve and protect all, or significant parts, of the following sites:
  - Northern Virginia Community College/Alexandria Campus
  - Episcopal High School
  - Episcopal Theological Seminary
  - Second Presbyterian Church
  - Diocese Church School
  - First Baptist Church
  - Bishop Ireton High School
  - George Washington National Masonic Memorial
  - Virginia American Water Company
  - Sts. Agnes and Steven's Schools
  - Winkler Botanical Preserve
  - INOVA Alexandria Hospital

- Inventory historical and natural resources in these open spaces and assist in writing stewardship plans. Create a mechanism to identify additional properties that should be included in such plans.

Implementation Strategies for Goal 6

- Establish a strategy for working collaboratively with the institutions owning such land in order to establish an appropriate approach to open space preservation and public benefit.

- Encourage conservation easements or other similar actions, with benefits to institutional and nonprofit organizations.

- Encourage the City to explore additional actions, some of which might include:
  - Rights of first refusal (should be the City's first line of action when land becomes available)
  - Gifts of land
  - Conservation restrictions
  - Tree cover protection measures
  - Trail, scenic and/or historic easements
  - Fee simple acquisition
  - Purchase of development rights

- Consider zoning institutional open space sites with an Open Space Overlay Protection Zone to require significant preservation areas and

MacArthur School

MacArthur School playground area

discretionary review of future development proposals.

GOAL 7. MAXIMIZE USE OF PUBLIC SCHOOL OPEN SPACE AREAS TO SATISFY LOCAL NEEDS

The open spaces associated with the City's elementary, middle and high schools presently serve both students and neighborhood residents. Most of the spaces around schools are utilized for recreation; however, some of the school sites have significant natural resources that are worthy of preservation. The City should partner with the Alexandria School Board to achieve an open space strategy that recognizes the educational, recreational, and environmental purposes of open space areas around school facilities. This strategy needs to define ways to preserve, maintain and, where possible, expand open space and natural areas around schools for both the schools and the community at large, without adversely affecting the school's ability to provide sufficient space for instructional purposes.

In addition, school sites are important civic landmarks and should have well-landscaped grounds that contribute to the quality of the built environment.

Recommendations for Goal 7

- Continue to upgrade school open space properties to serve the local

Figure 23: Goal 7 - Maximize Use of Public School Open Space Areas to Satisfy Local Needs

needs of the surrounding communities.

- Where appropriate, link school open space areas to the City's other open space resources.

- Recognize the educational qualities provided by well-designed open space areas.

- Continue to coordinate the planning of parks and schools with the goal of making efficient use of these important public resources.

- Where appropriate, cluster active recreation uses near school properties to serve local needs.

Implementation Strategies for Goal 7

- Establish a team for each school project that is representative of the Alexandria School Board; private institutions; the Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities; the Department of Planning and Zoning; and the Department of Transportation and Environmental Services in order to identify innovative and effective solutions for use of school open space areas by neighborhood residents while satisfying outdoor school programs. This working relationship should extend to the planning and design of both new and renovated school properties.

GOAL 8. PRESERVE AND PROTECT CEMETERIES

Cemeteries provide important open space, visual and cultural resources. Some communities have collaborated with cemeteries to establish trails and protect natural resources. Arlington National Cemetery is a notable nearby example. The Cemetery staff worked with Arlington County to create a scenic bike trail linking Memorial Bridge with Route 50 and to protect natural and archeological resources. Alexandria's Plan should recognize that cemeteries are important open space and scenic resources for the neighborhoods in which they are located and for the City as a whole. The cemeteries in Alexandria are in critical locations and can provide outstanding linkages to other open spaces. Figure 24 indicates those cemeteries that contribute most significantly to the open space system in Alexandria.

Alexandria National Cemetery

Recommendations for Goal 8

- Consider cemeteries as educational resources. Develop interpretive signage and, possibly, tours describing the history and significance of each of the City's key cemeteries.

- Protect natural and cultural resources (e.g., trees and streams) in cemeteries, recognizing that some may be important also as features of the cultural landscape.

Alexandria National Cemetery

- Protect cultural resources that define the character of cemeteries (e.g., gravestones, fences, etc.).

- Increase public awareness that behavior in cemeteries should be different than that which is appropriate in other open spaces.

- Support the restoration and commemoration efforts at Freedmen's and other historic cemeteries.

Implementation Strategies for Goal 8

- Work with owners and administrators of the cemeteries within the City to protect the sanctity of these sites while still allowing for visual access, open space linkages, natural resource protection, and interpretation where appropriate.

- List, map, and create a guide to Alexandria's cemeteries in order to heighten public awareness of their extent and location.

- In cemeteries with unique natural resources, consider developing public/private partnerships for the maintenance of sensitive environmental and cultural resource areas, including use of tools such as historic and scenic easements, where appropriate.

Figure 24: Goal 8 - Preserve and Protect Cemeteries

GOAL 9. CREATE PUBLIC OPEN SPACE FROM VACANT LAND

Vacant properties tend to be small in size (less than three acres). However, some of these sites are situated adjacent to existing parks or other open space sites identified in this study and, therefore, have potential to link to or expand those existing open spaces. Others include modified natural resource areas, such as diverted streams or cleared woodlands. Precedents abound where vacant land has been rehabilitated into parkland through creative planning and design.

Recommendations for Goal 9

- Preserve, protect and enhance vacant lands as public open space amenities. Priority sites include those meeting the following criteria:
  - Vacant land near existing parks (e.g., vacant land near Monticello and Four Mile Run Parks)
  - Next to existing schools
  - Next to natural resource areas
  - At street endings to provide neighborhood linkages
  - Next to institutional properties
  - Adjacent to or linking existing/proposed trails
  - Small lots in dense urban neighborhoods for neighborhood parks, gardens, playgrounds (Old Town, Rosemont, the west end of the
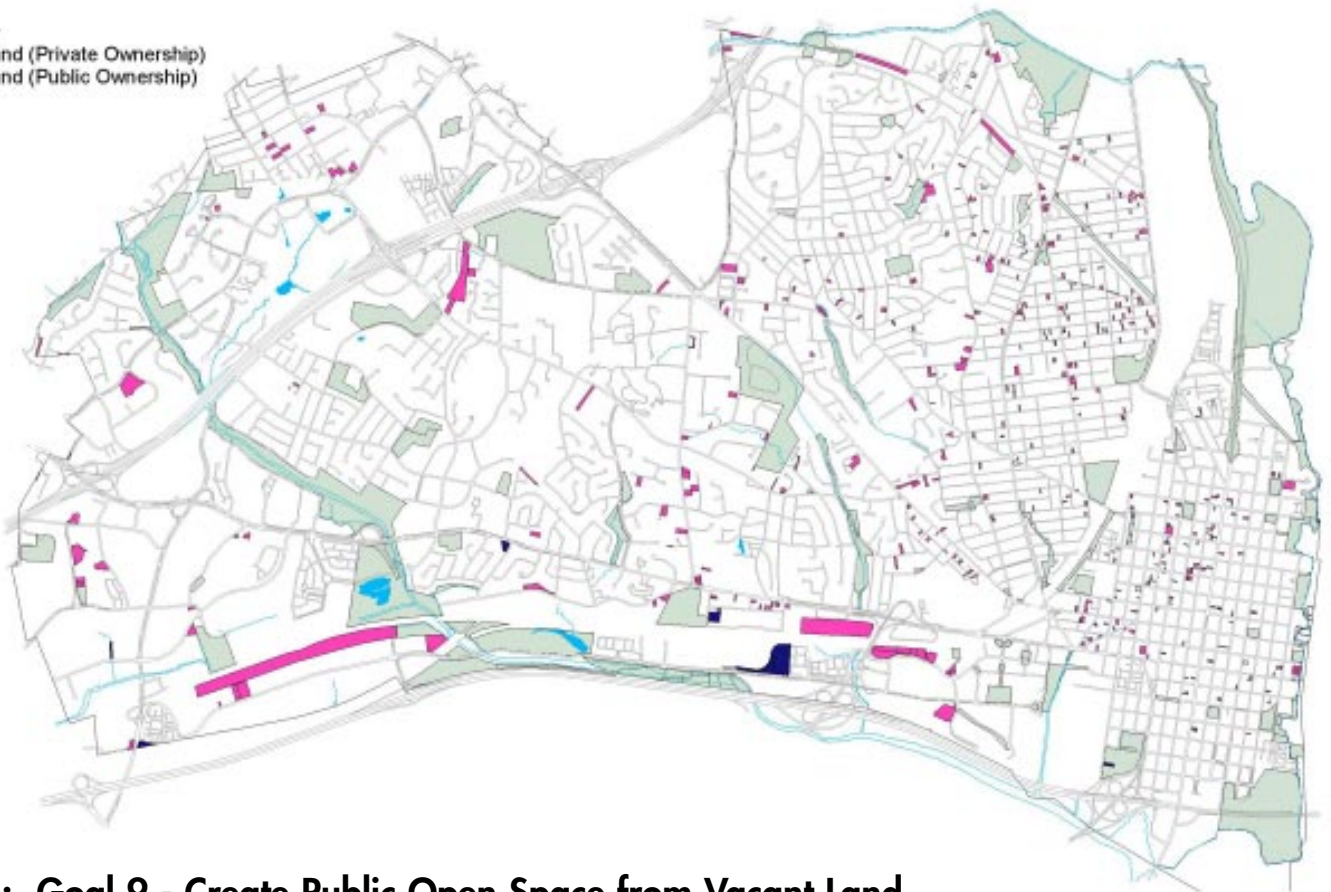
Figure 25: Goal 9 - Create Public Open Space from Vacant Land

City, Del Ray, etc.)
- Vacant lands with significant trees, sloping terrain, and other natural resources
- Land with historical and cultural resources
- Underutilized building sites that could be converted to recreational open space uses where open space is limited (i.e., west end of City)
- Land with the potential to become easements

Implementation Strategies for Goal 9

- Undertake a detailed survey of all vacant lands, rights-of-way, and alleys/street ends in order to understand the City's potential open space opportunities for these sources.

- For public vacant lands:
  - Establish a vacant land program to convert underutilized and vacant land into public open space.
  - Transfer critical vacant land sites to the Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities (see criteria established earlier in this chapter for determining critical sites).

- For private vacant lands:
  - Actively identify "key" vacant parcels or portions of larger vacant parcels according to criteria listed earlier in this chapter.
  - Purchase or otherwise acquire strategic sites for open space purposes.
  - Actively seek grants and other funding sources to ensure that resources other than those of the City can be used for this purpose.

- Work collaboratively with other citywide interests (e.g., schools, and affordable housing advocates) to define a strategy from which everyone stands to gain in the definition/use of vacant properties.

- Reference conservation easements and other protection measures as a precursor to acquisition.

GOAL 10. LINK AND EXPAND PEDESTRIAN, BICYCLE AND TRAIL SYSTEM

Existing trails

The City of Alexandria has established a strong initial system of trails through its Bicycle Transportation and Multi-use Trail Master Plan adopted by City Council in 1998. This City needs to fully implement this plan and maximize non-vehicular, City-wide trail linkages connecting neighborhoods, public facilities and parks, retail establishments, and employment centers in order to encourage healthful recreation and non-motorized transportation. Many of the open spaces identified in this study are suitable for inclusion in the bicycle and trail system. This goal is crucial in the framework concept of "making connections," particularly in the stream valleys, along the Potomac River, and in the

Green Crescent areas.

Recommendations for Goal 10

- Fully integrate the City's multi-use trail system into the City's transportation planning process, thereby recognizing bicycling and walking as important components in addressing Alexandria's transportation needs. Special consideration should be given to those segments of the population without access to personal vehicles, principally children, the economically disadvantaged, and the physically challenged.

- Expand the City's multi-use trail system to address the objective of the City's bicycle and trail master transportation plan to "reduce the rate of increase of vehicle trips."

- Expand the City's multi-use trail system to address the need to expand recreational opportunities to improve the physical health of the citizens of Alexandria.

- Implement the Alexandria Heritage Trail as a component of the multi-use trail plan to promote historical and cultural understanding of the City, thereby promoting educational and tourism opportunities.
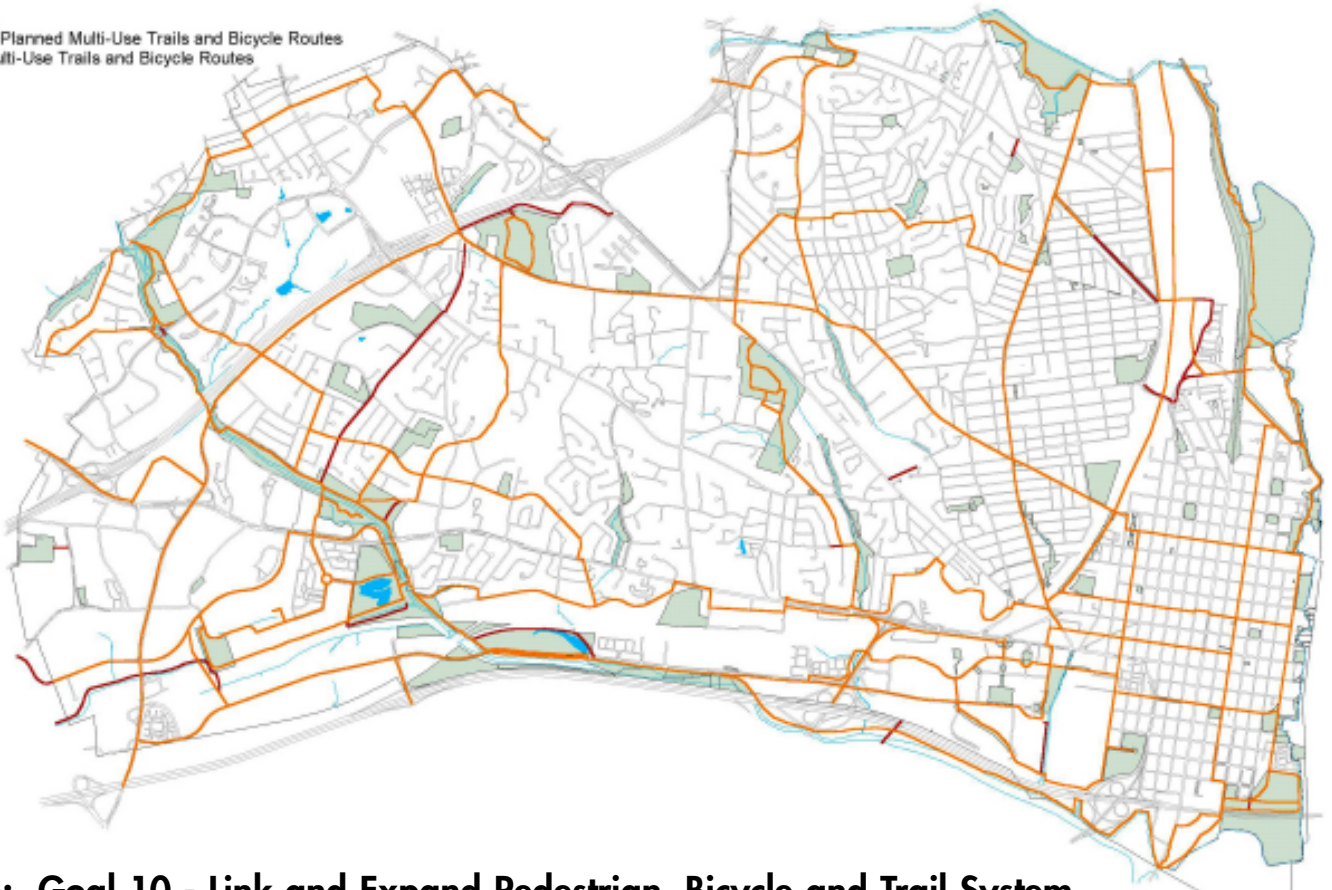
Figure 26: Goal 10 - Link and Expand Pedestrian, Bicycle and Trail System

Trail at Oronoco Bay Park

Trail at Oronoco Bay Park

Implementation Strategies for Goal 10

- Work with the Department of Transportation and Environmental Services to implement bike trails in public rights-of-ways (e.g., streets)

- Work on a site-by-site basis with private property owners to seek easements for trail development and expansion.

- Reassess and revise the Alexandria Trails Plan to provide the connections identified in the Open Space Plan.

- Alexandria's Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities and Department of Transportation and Environmental Services should coordinate regional planning efforts for trail linkages with Fairfax and Arlington Counties, VDOT and the National Park Service.

- The City should aggressively seek private, state, and Federal funding for continued trail development (see Chapter 6).

- The Departments of Transportation and Environmental Services; Recreation, Parks, and Cultural Activities; and Office of Historic Alexandria should work together to improve trail signage, provide public education through pamphlets, maps, and web sites, mark historic sites and natural resources, and create events to encourage trail use by both walkers and riders.

- Evaluate the City's network of public alleys and define those most appropriate for use as trail and open space connectors.

- The Departments of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities and Transportation and Environmental Services should collaborate with the School Department to identify "Safe Routes to School" using the trail system and other public streets. Coordinate with the proposed "Safe Routes" national effort and seek funding when it becomes available.

- The Department of Transportation and Environmental Services and the Department of Planning and Zoning should encourage developers to include facilities for bicyclists and walkers in their Transportation Management Plans.

- The Departments of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities and Transportation and Environmental Services should develop a multi-lingual public education campaign to promote bicycling and walking as effective and healthful ways to get around town while reducing traffic congestion.

King Street metro functions as a major gateway to the city of Alexandria

Commonwealth Ave streetscape

GOAL 11. ENHANCE STREETSCAPES AND GATEWAYS

Streets, and their associated streetscapes and gateways, are crucial open space resources for a community. They function as places of trade, play, communication and gathering. They are the front doors for our neighborhoods. King Street, recently improved with brick sidewalks, trees and furnishings, is Alexandria's main street and a memorable place to gather for important events. Commonwealth Avenue is a desirable address because of its tree-lined median and attractive streetscape. With few opportunities for open space development, we need to look to our streets as places for beautification and linkage.

The Plan encourages the City to develop an interconnected network of pedestrian friendly streets. In addition, the City should create entrance gateways that provide a positive image of arrival.

Recommendations for Goal 11

- Enact comprehensive streetscape enhancements on the following roadways:

Protect:
- Mt. Vernon Avenue
- Commonwealth Avenue
- Braddock Road
- King Street
- Quaker Lane
- Jordan Street
- Howard Street
- Beauregard Street
- Seminary Road
- Russell Road

Enhance:
- Washington Street
- Route 1
- Mt. Vernon Avenue
- Braddock Road
- King Street
- Beauregard Street
- Duke Street
- Eisenhower Avenue
- Van Dorn Street
- West Glebe Road

- Create entranced gateways at the following locations:
  - **Highway intersections:**
    — I-395 at:
      - King Street
      - Quaker Lane
      - Seminary Road
      - Duke Street
    — I-495 at:
      - Telegraph Road
      - Mill Road
      - Clermont
      - Route 1
      - Washington Street
      - Van Dorn Street
    — At Major Street Entry Points:

- Van Dorn Street
- Telegraph Road
- Route 1 at Jefferson Street
- Washington Street at Hunting Creek & Memorial Circle
- Edsall Road
- Beauregard Street at Lincolnia Road
- Leesburg Pike at Beauregard Street
- Seminary Road at Colfax Avenue
- West Glebe Road at Four Mile Run
- Mount Vernon Avenue at Four Mile Run
- Route 1 at Four Mile Run
- Washington Street at north end of City
— At entry points along trails:
- Trail at Green Crescent and Fairfax County
- Holmes Run at Fairfax County
- Seminary Road at Fairfax County
- Four Mile Run at Mt. Vernon Avenue
- Mt. Vernon Trail/Potomac National Heritage Trail
- Potomac River Waterfront Walk
- Metro pedestrian gateways
- King Street at the Potomac River
- Alexandria Heritage Trail hubs- Chinquapin Park, Jones Point, Dangerfield Island

Figure 27: Goal 11 - Enhance Streetscapes and Gateways

- Produce a guide to historical buildings and open space features to strengthen the development of a street/gateway enhancement plan.

Implementation Strategies for Goal 11

- Establish an interagency working group with representation from the Departments of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities; Transportation and Environmental Services; and Planning and Zoning as well as from the Office of Historic Alexandria and VDOT, and other relevant commissions and groups to create and implement a comprehensive streetscape program for the City. This should encompass:
  - Signage
  - Sidewalks
  - Intersections/crosswalks
  - Lighting
  - Street furniture
  - Landscaping and street trees
  - Historical sites
  - Undergrounding utilities
  - Median treatment

- This interagency group should also consider implementation of a gateway improvement program, to include:
  - Special planting
  - Lighting
  - Signage
  - Paving
  - Historic overviews
  - Irrigation and maintenance
  - Improvements to highway interchanges within the City's limits

- Establish design guidelines for streetscape elements that recognize and reflect the individual character of each neighborhood or area of the City. These might be derived, in part, from the historical features of each area.

- Require adherence to design guidelines for development applications and other approvals affecting streetscape.

- Provide adequate levels of infrastructure to support and maintain these streetscape/gateway programs. In addition to City funding, consider calling upon volunteer programs such as Tree Stewards, Adopt-a-Park, and Adopt-a-Marker programs for heritage trail sites in order to support these efforts.

GOAL 12. EXPAND CITYWIDE STREET TREE PROGRAM AND PROTECT EXIST ING TREES AND WOODLAND AREAS

Our City's beauty is created, in part, through its street trees, wooded proper-ties and environmental corridors. The City has an active program to continue planting street trees and protect vegetation in its parks. The City should maxi-mize opportunities to enhance its tree coverage and protect its natural wood-land resources.

Recommendations for Goal 12

- Protect significant tree-lined arterials, parkways, thoroughfares, and boulevards, including:
  - Holmes Run Parkway
  - Taylor Run Parkway
  - Timber Branch Parkway
  - North Beauregard Street
  - Commonwealth Avenue
  - Ft. Williams Parkway

- Identify and address potential tree cover protection areas, including:
  - Beverly Hills
  - Episcopal Seminary / High School site
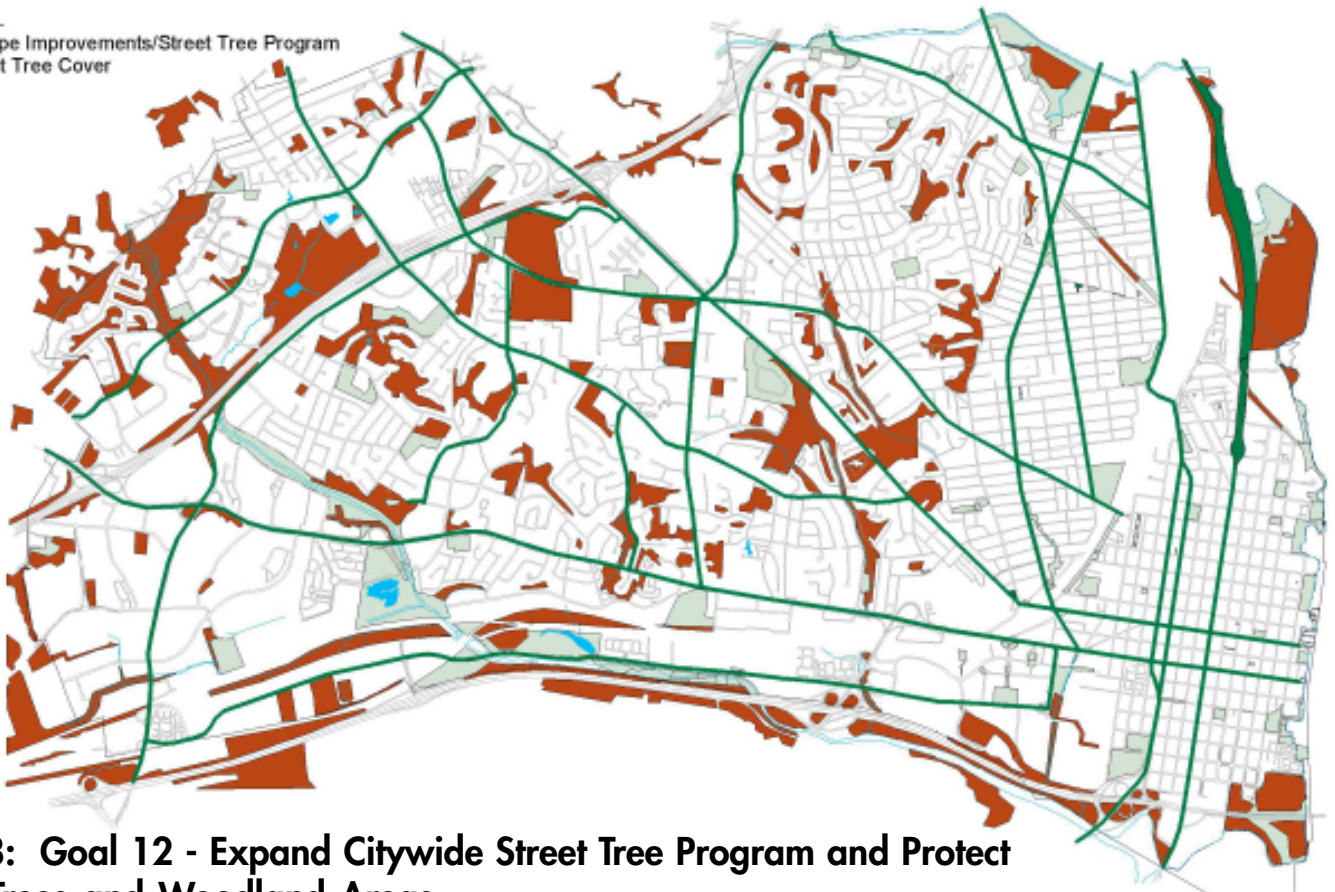
Figure 28: Goal 12 - Expand Citywide Street Tree Program and Protect Existing Trees and Woodland Areas

Woodland area

- Inova Hospital
- St. Agnes / St. Steven's School sites
- Rosemont
- Del Ray
- Park Fairfax
- Old Town
- Neighborhoods bordered by:
  - Seminary Road, I-395 and Fairfax County
  - I-395, King Street, Quaker Land and Seminary Road
  - Braddock Road, Russell Road, Quaker Lane and Janney's Lane
  - Quaker Lane, West Glebe Road, Cameron Mills Road and Crestwood Drive

- Address stream valleys protection areas including:
  - Four Mile Run, Holmes Run, Cameron Run, Taylor Run, Old Cameron Run, Timber Branch, Backlick Run, Strawberry Run, Hooffs Run, Great Hunting Creek, and Lucky Run

- [See recommendations for specific streetscape programs below.]

Implementation Strategies for Goal 12

- Establish an aggressive campaign to involve community organizations in protecting existing trees and planting new trees within each neighborhood. Provide incentives for the planting and maintenance of trees on private property.

- Strengthen existing tree protection regulations. Establish a City Tree Plan and identify areas for increased forestation.

- Support and strengthen the newly established Arlington and Alexandria Tree Steward Program to assist in tree maintenance, planting, and public education.

- Request the Department of Planning and Zoning to research the feasibility of establishing a Tree Cover Overlay District. This designation would provide an additional means of protection for trees in areas of the City where these are essential to their quality and character. Distinguish between areas where tree crown cover is provided on private versus public lands.

- Amend City's landscape and streetscape guidelines to improve tree planting areas (e.g., continuous trenches, enlarged planting areas, greater soil volumes, irrigation and drainage) and increase tree coverage requirements for new developments where possible.

- Strengthen the City's ability to maintain its existing tree inventory (e.g., institute a watering program for new trees, etc.).

- Evaluate existing City tree crown cover based on current American Forests recommended standards for residential and commercial areas.

- Create specific agreements with VDOT for maintenance of wooded areas along highways through the City.

King Street metro station

GOAL 13. ENCOURAGE THE CREATION OF CIVIC PARKS AT AND ADJACENT TO METRO STATIONS

Open spaces adjacent to Metro Stations can serve as important civic spaces; they should function as welcoming spaces to our community. Currently Metro Station areas consist primarily of roads, parking lots and bus shelters. As these areas become sites for redevelopment, civic parks should be key elements in the development program that can accommodate civic gatherings, events and other formal and informal outdoor uses.

Recommendations for Goal 13

- Coordinate with WMATA to enhance opportunities at each Metro station area, to create and upgrade civic spaces, and provide safe pedestrian connections.

- Provide open space/greenway linkages between Eisenhower Avenue

Legend

▢ Potential Metro Civic Parks
▢ Parks
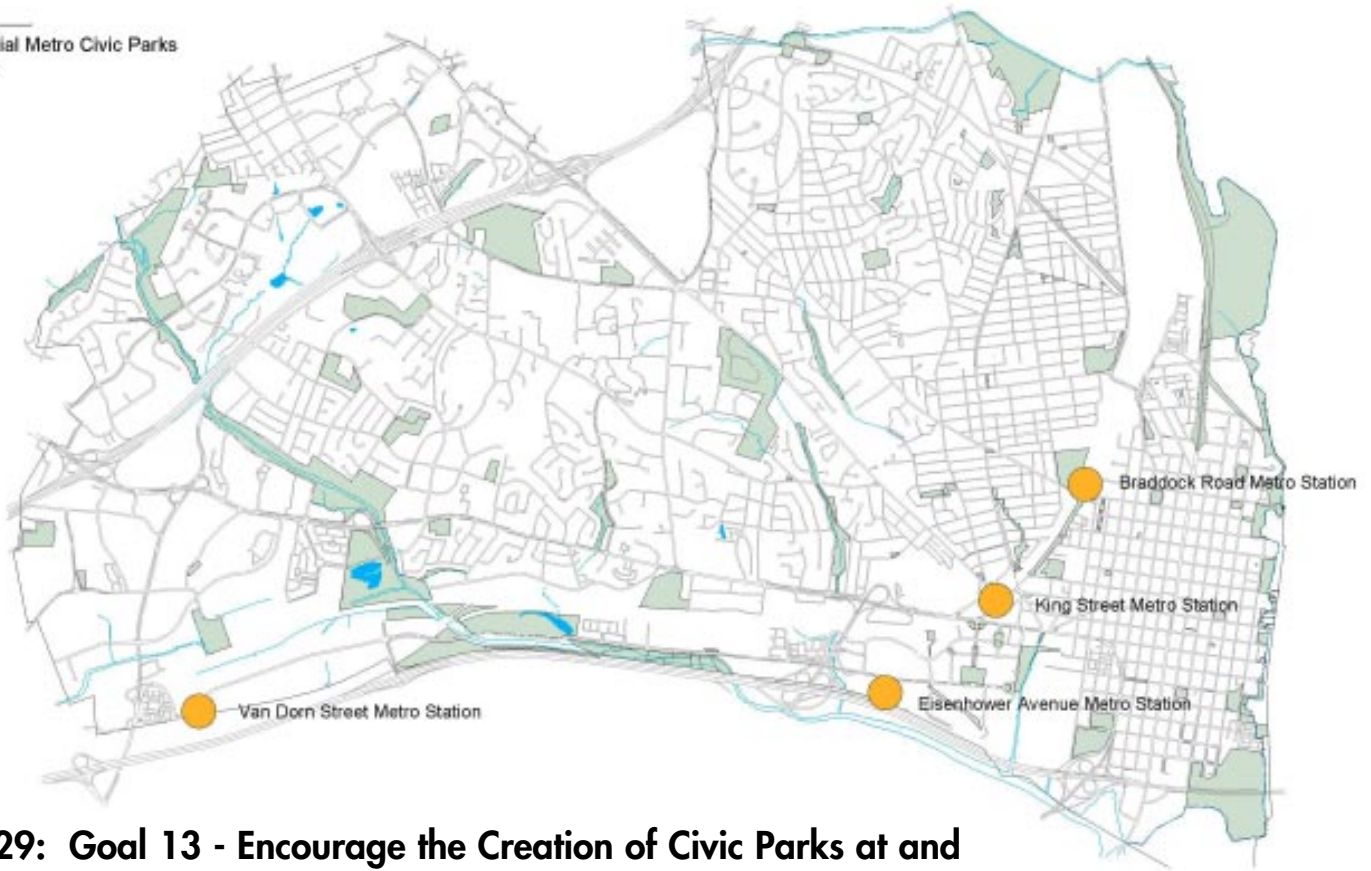
Figure 29: Goal 13 - Encourage the Creation of Civic Parks at and Adjacent to Metro Stations

Metro Station and Cameron Run Stream Valley.

- Provide a new, safe open space/greenway linkage between the Parker Gray / Slaters Lane areas and the Braddock Road Metro Station.

- Provide a new, safe open space/greenway linkage between the Eisenhower Avenue Metro Station and the Potomac River waterfront.

- Develop signs for Metro Stations to mark access to trails and open spaces.

Implementation Strategies for Goal 13

- Establish a collaborative relationship with the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) to develop a program for upgrading open space at Metro stations.

- Establish a working relationship between the appropriate City departments and WMATA to maximize opportunities to create additional civic space in new joint development efforts in and around the City's four Metro stations.

- Seek opportunities to link Metro stations to Alexandria's trail network.

Interstate 395

GOAL 14.   BEAUTIFY INTERCHANGES AND HIGHWAY CORRIDORS

Like civic spaces at Metro Stations, interchanges and highway corridors function as the front doors to our community for the driver. Interstate—395 has a narrow but significant strip of vegetation along its edges and I-95 runs parallel to Cameron Run. The City should work with VDOT to ensure protection of vegetation along Interstate highway corridors that traverse and bound the City, and to upgrade the landscape qualities of all of these highway interchanges and corridors.

Recommendations for Goal 14

Interstate 395

- Enhance and protect conditions at the following locations:
  - Interchanges:
    —I-95 at:
      - Route 1
      - Telegraph Road
      - Eisenhower Avenue
      - Van Dorn Street

    — I-395 at:
      - Duke Street
      - Seminary Road
      - King Street

- Quaker Lane

- Highway Corridors:
  — I-95, from Wilson Bridge to Van Dorn Street
  — I-395, from Quaker Lane to Duke Street

- Roadway enhancements should maximize opportunities for forestation and reforestation where appropriate.

Implementation Strategies for Goal 14

- The Departments of Transportation and Environmental Services and Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities should collaborate with VDOT on upgrading maintenance of, and developing design standards for, highway interchanges and corridors throughout Alexandria.

- The City should monitor all highway expansion programs proposed by VDOT to ensure protection of existing landscape plans.

GOAL 15. PROTECT PRIVATELY OWNED OPEN SPACE

Most of Alexandria's open space is privately owned and inaccessible to the general public. Nevertheless, this land provides valuable green space for its
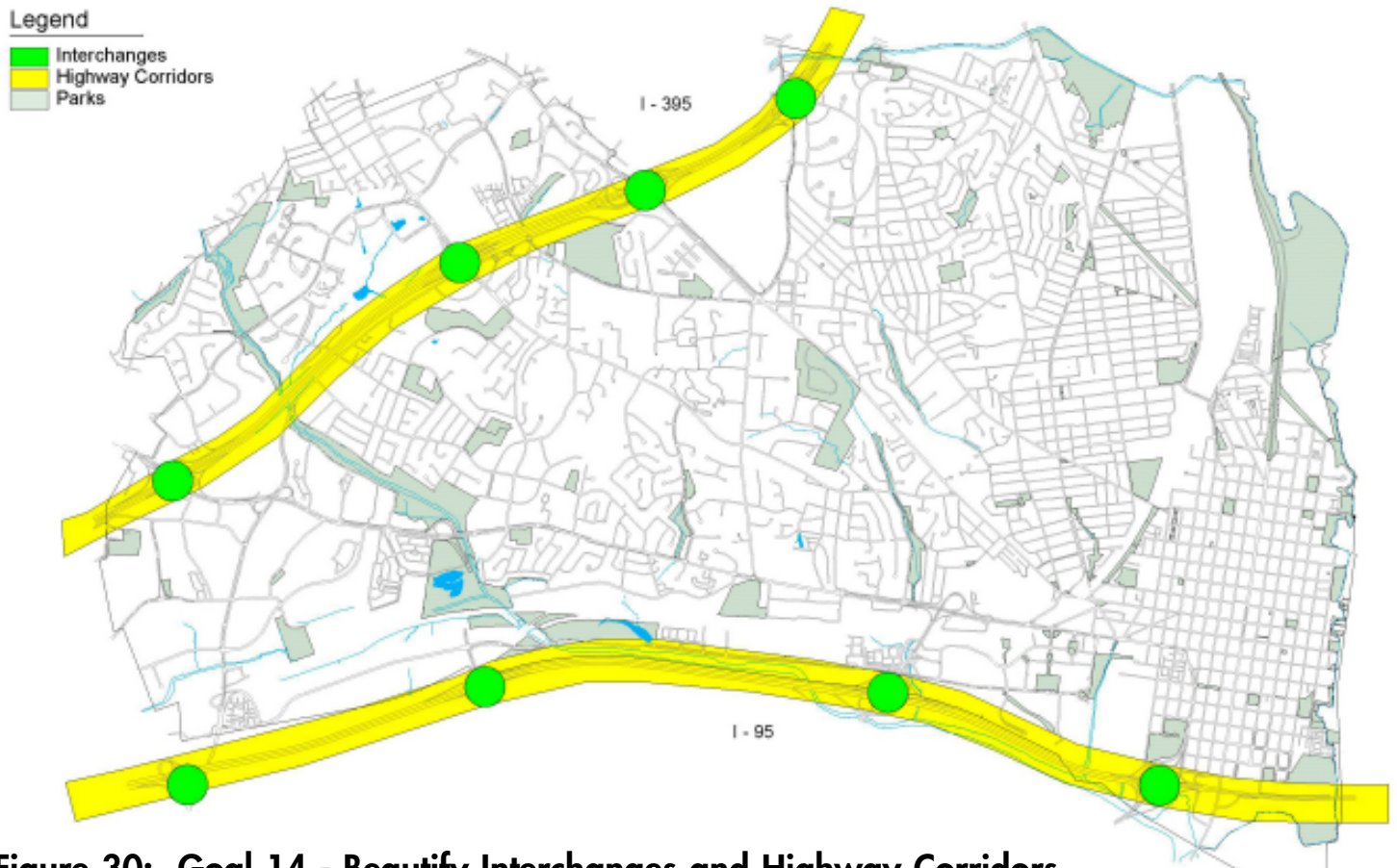
Figure 30: Goal 14 - Beautify Interchanges and Highway Corridors

surrounding community, creates a significant visual amenity, and contributes to the control of microclimatic conditions in the City. Individual property owners, even those with relatively small amounts of open space, can participate in efforts to retain that open space by making careful land use decisions on the need for home additions, for subdivision of large lots to create additional dwellings, on the creative use of easements to provide protection as well as some tax benefit for retaining open space.

Recommendations for Goal 15

- Educate private landowners on the importance (economic, aesthetic, environmental) of their open spaces, and on available tools for preserving and protecting that space (e.g., easements, etc.).

- Explore legal and planning strategies to encourage private landowners to preserve and protect their open space areas.

- Request that the Office of Real Estate Assessment undertake a study comparing the values of private properties in Alexandria adjacent to/ not adjacent to open space in order to document the quantitative value of open space for the City.

Implementation Strategies for Goal 15

- In furtherance of the strong conservation policy of the City of Alexandria, preserve privately owned open space that meets any one of the following criteria that have been identified by representatives of the people of Alexandria as yielding significant public benefit and therefore being worthy of preservation or conservation.

  - Open small areas of privately held open space in already congested and developed areas for passive neighborhood enjoyment, visual relief, scenic value, and screening and buffering pruposes.

  - Open space that provides relief from urban closeness, especially small lots in dense urban neighborhoods containing neighborhood gardens, trees or other natural features.

  - Land areas to enhance buffering and screening between uses, such as between a developed area and a park or historic site.

  - Land adjacent to public parkland, institutional sites, natural areas, water bodies, cemeteries, other land preserved by easement, all in furtherance of the specific Goals of this Open Space Plan.

- Open space that contributes to the scenic enjoyment of the general public if development of the property would impair the scenic character of the urban landscape or would interfere with a scenic panorama that can be enjoyed from a park, nature preserve, road, water body, trail, or historic structure or land area, and such area or transportation way is open to, or utilized by, the public.

- Open space containing or adjacent to any designated historical or cultural resource that provides a buffer or context for such resources.

- Open space that contains any specimen trees, significant groupings of hardwood or other trees that add to the city's tree canopy, open meadowlands, sloping terrain or other significant natural features;and

- Open Space not identified above that meets Goals 1-14 of the Alexandria Open Space Plan

- Provide a biannual seminar on easements that are currently available to all residents of the City. Such easements are available through the Alexandria Historical Restoration and Preservation Commission, and through other organizations accepting easements. Individuals owning properties highlighted in or close to those identified in the Open Space Plan, as well as representatives from the real estate and development communities would be specifically invited to attend these sessions.

- Actively support the request for an amendment to Article 4 of Chapter 32,Title 58.1 of the Virginia Code, which would decrease to one-quarter acre the minimum acreage required to receive the tax benefit for creation of an easement.

- Support an increase to the recordation tax for real property deeds recorded for conveyance of land within the City. If then approved by the General Assembly, this authorization could provide the beginning of an open space purchase fund.

- Consider zoning mechanisms to address the problem of infill development and the incremental loss of open space as a result of home additions and individual land use decisions.

- Appropriate significant public financial resources and grant real estate tax relief in order to demonstrate a commitment by the City to the protection or privately owned open space through conservation easements and other preservation tools.

A. PRIORITY ACTIONS

It is evident from the list of actions described in Chapter 5, that the implementation of the Open Space Plan will be a long-term effort on the part of the City. However, that effort needs to begin with a few meaningful steps. At the Open Space Summit, participants were asked to identify the three actions that they considered to be top priorities for the City to accomplish in the short-term. The Open Space Steering Committee took these responses into account when developing the list of priority actions for the City to undertake first in its implementation of the Plan. As a result of this process, the following eleven priorities were identified (in no specific order):

- Work with the community to **create the Alexandria Open Space Conservancy**

- Employ a full-time, professional grants writer to pursue public and private sector funding for open space and trails related activities. It is possible that this position could be shared between the Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities and the Department of Transportation and Environmental Services (T&ES).

- Work actively to achieve settlement on the following properties in order to **begin completion of the Alexandria Waterfront Plan**:
  - 1 and 2 King Street
  - 0 Prince Street

- The Departments of Parks and Recreation, T&ES, and Planning and Zoning should collaborate in the **preparation of a Greenway Management Plan for the Holmes Run Stream Valley** to serve as a model for other stream valley plans. This should be developed in conjunction with the proposed Watershed Management Plan to be undertaken by T&ES, as well as the planning project for Four Mile Run being carried out in conjunction with Arlington County.
  - This plan should address the protection and enhancement of open space, as well as issues of acquisition/easements, rehabilitation, and interpretation of the full range of site resources.
  - Once the Greenway Management Plan model is established, plans should be undertaken for the city's remaining stream valleys, as listed in the Open Space Plan (i.e., Cameron Run, Holmes Run, Taylor Run, etc.).

- Focus on **RPA protection and enhancement**:
  - Do not allow encroachments in the RPA buffers
  - Focus on vacant land immediately adjacent to RPA's for protection
  - Focus on RPA's for environmental restoration

- **Strongly consider the following properties for easements, acquisition, or other methods of open space preservation** within the short term.

These sites are critical to achieving the goals of the open space plan: *(Note: Specific addresses will be added, where applicable)*

- Episcopal High School west tract (at Braddock Road and North Howard Street, south to Maple Tree Court and east to approximately Marlboro Drive)
- Second Presbyterian Church site (at Janney's and Quaker Lanes)
- Series of open spaces east of Seminary Plaza and Library Lane, between Braddock and Seminary Roads
- Land in the southwest quadrant at the intersection of North Beauregard and Armistead Streets
- Multiple small linear sites on the south side of East and West Glebe Roads, between Route 1 and I-395, that would allow for the creation of a linear park in the Del Ray area
- Multiple sites, west of Holmes Run, north of Eisenhower Avenue between Clermont Avenue and Burnside Place (west of Van Dorn Street)
- A site to the west of Telegraph Road between Longview Drive and the railroad right-of-way
- As much as possible of the power plant site at the north end of Old Town (at Slaters Lane, east of the George Washington Memorial Parkway) as the plant's operations become reconfigured over time
- Exxon/Mobil-Freedmen's Cemetery site at South Washington and Church Streets
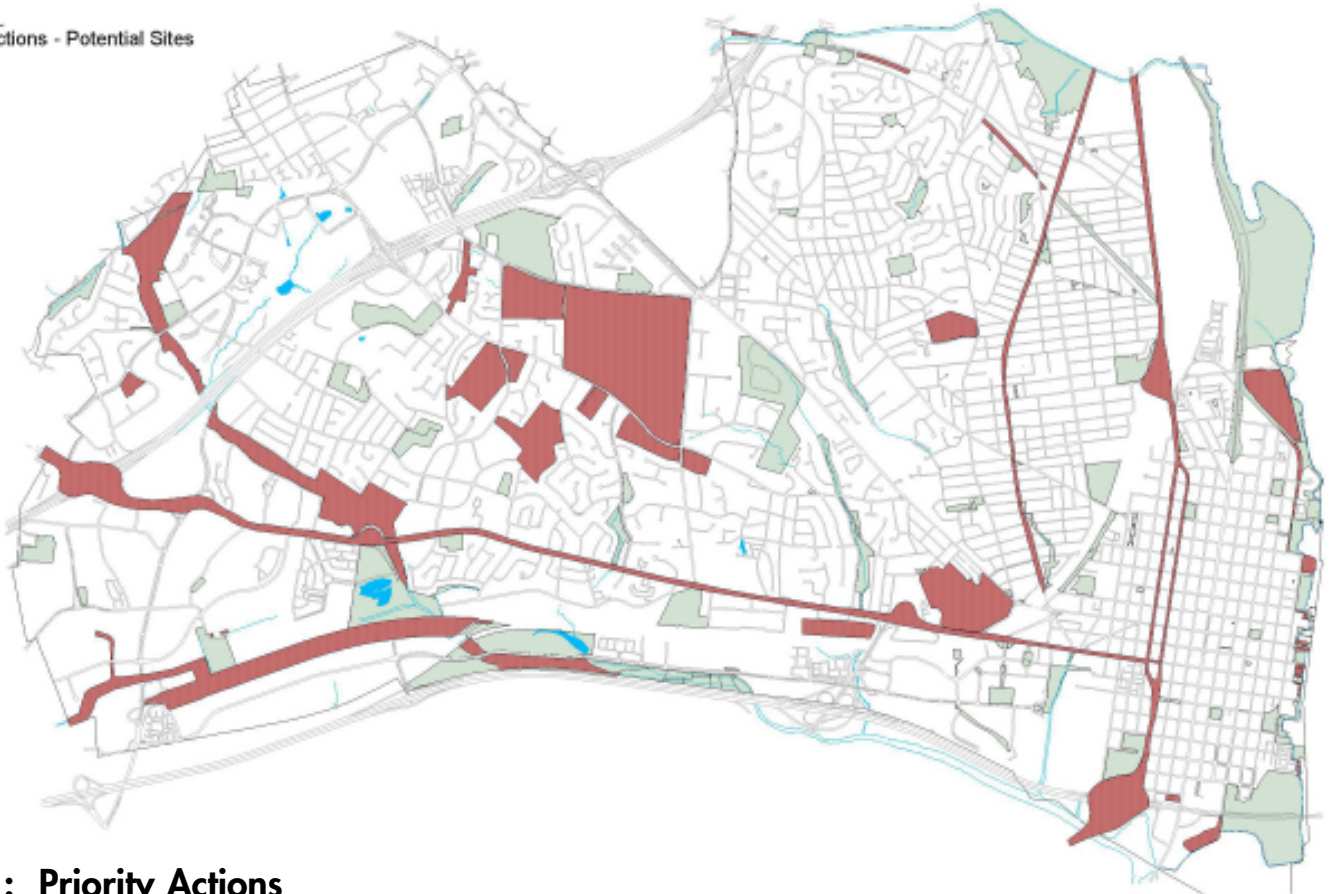
Figure 31: Priority Actions

- **Revise the City's existing zoning requirements** to achieve better open space in new developments.

- **Consider the open space opportunities east of Simpson Field** for the creation of active recreational facilities.

- The Open Space Conservancy should, as one of its initial tasks, work with the Episcopal Church, the George Washington Masonic Memorial, and possibly other large institutional landholders, to **develop a workable Open Space Conservation Strategy for institutional land** within the Episcopal High School, the Theological Seminary, St. Agnes and St. Stephens Schools, and Masonic Memorial properties.

- **Rehabilitate Commonwealth Avenue** as a significant parkway and model for future parkways in the City. Rehabilitation tasks would include:
  - Clearing of dead/diseased vegetation, replacement and infill with new vegetation, replanting of median strips and extension of medians where feasible, and on-going maintenance activities.

- **Implement the following new path/trail linkages**:
  - A new stream crossing of Holmes Run at Chambliss Street to connect neighborhoods to the north and south of Holmes Run. This route will also provide a safe, non-motorized commuter connection and will link to the proposed Fairfax County path to Columbia Pike as well as the Holmes Run trail. (Note: the City is about to begin a design feasibility study on this trail)
  - An off-street path through the eastern end of Eisenhower Valley to connect the off-street Eisenhower Valley path (which ends at Telegraph Road) to the streets of Old Town at Payne Street.
  - A multi-use path from Booth Park (west end of Cameron Station) to the Fairfax County line, along Backlick Run. Also, work with Fairfax County to extend this to the west. This project would allow for the reclamation of Backlick Run.

- **Establish a streetscape and gateway enhancement program for Route 1** through the City.
  - Once this program has been completed, carry out a similar program for the Duke Street corridor.

- **Implement a CITYgreen analysis** [1] to assess the amount of tree cover currently in the City. Define a legally enforceable strategy for protecting existing tree cover, preventing substantial reduction to this tree cover, and enhancing the tree cover throughout the City.

B.   FUNDING SOURCES AND STRATEGIES

This section addresses various funding mechanisms related to implementation

of the Alexandria Open Space Plan. The discussion is organized around four general categories:

1. **Organization for Fundraising and Stewardship**
2. **Funding for Acquisition and Development**
3. **Funding for Operations**
4. **Use of Public and Institutional Grants**

It should be noted that while individual approaches to funding are identified in terms of one of these four categories, there is often overlap among categories with regard to specific implementation strategies that the City might wish to adopt.

The funding strategies described below can be applied, at different levels, to each of the goals set forth in the Open Space Plan, as presented in Chapter 5 of this report. Therefore, accompanying the discussion of each funding option is a listing of those goals to which these options are most applicable. This arrangement should assist the City of Alexandria in developing an open space strategy that achieves the open space goals that it has defined, within a realistic time frame.

The funding strategy is an important element of the open space plan, because it seeks to identify a variety of tools that can provide sustainable, practical funding support for protecting, expanding and promoting Alexandria's open space resources. Currently, the City uses some tools, such as proffers, and in one instance, land use assessment abatement techniques, to fund open space land acquisition. It uses other tools, such as a volunteer program to provide operational support. The tools discussed below will expand these current efforts.

- **ORGANIZATION FOR FUNDRAISING AND STEWARDSHIP**

Applicable Goals: 1, 4, 6, 7, 8, 12, 15

One of the lessons learned from the study of successful open space and land preservation efforts elsewhere is the need for a strong advocacy/support group. Examples abound. At the national level, the Nature Conservancy performs this function, and at the regional level, the Potomac Conservancy is active. Functions can include education, lobbying, funding support to others, direct funding of land and easement acquisitions, holding title to open space properties, as well as operational support. For the Alexandria Open Space Plan, the creation of a locally focused Open Space Conservancy is a key recommendation.

Typically such a group is established as a 501(c)(3) not-for profit organization, which enables it to engage in extensive fundraising efforts. In this way, the 501(c)(3) advocacy/support group can act as an intermediary between donors and government. Contributors do not feel that they are giving their

money to the government per se, but to a benevolent organization, and they often have a higher level of confidence that their funds will be protected and used in the manner intended. In addition, donations of either land or cash are tax deductible to the donor.

While some advocacy/support groups limit themselves to fundraising, education and non-operational activities, other groups, which are typically "friends" groups, take more active roles in operations. Involvement can include input on management and staffing decisions, participation in concessions and programs, and/or management responsibility for specific facilities or services.

For the City of Alexandria, the Historic Alexandria Foundation can serve as a model for what can be accomplished by a strong support/advocacy group. The Foundation has been active in protecting and preserving the city's historic resources. It partners with individual residents and corporate citizens, raises funds, and is a funding source for small grants (typically between $2,000 and $5,000 annually). It educates, facilitates, and coordinates.

Elsewhere in Northern Virginia, the private Potomac Conservancy and the Northern Virginia Conservation Trust perform many of the same functions as the Historic Alexandria Foundation. These kinds of functions are critical to the successful implementation of the Open Space Plan and may best be performed by an Alexandria Open Space Conservancy dedicated to open space preservation within the Alexandria community. Such an entity may need to partner, from time to time, with other groups (e.g., the Northern Virginia Conservation Trust) when the need arises.

- **FUNDING FOR ACQUISITION AND DEVELOPMENT**

Applicable Goals: 2, 3, 4, 5, 9, 10

This section outlines funding mechanisms for the expansion of existing open space and developing new open space opportunities. Acquisition and development of open space may involve dedicated funding, other city funding mechanisms, balanced development schemes, and/or the purchase of easements on available property. In addition to their usefulness as tools for acquisition and development, these funding strategies may also be useful for preservation and maintenance purposes.

Dedicated Trusts and Funds

One characteristic of successful programs dealing with open space land acquisition is the presence of a dedicated structure that serves to protect incoming funds and to ensure that monies go for the specified use(s), such as land acquisition, open space recreation, natural resource protection, cultural/historic open space resource protection or other uses identified in this plan. Types of organizational structures include land banks, land trusts, or land preservation funds. Names are less important than the functions they provide,

and their (perceived) independence from government. Several local jurisdictions have established dedicated structures for collecting and dispersing funds for open space land acquisition. Based on these successful models and other models within the City and elsewhere, the City of Alexandria should consider the establishment of a dedicated open space fund to support many of the goals set forth in the open space plan.

Alexandria-based and other local examples of dedicated structures and funding mechanisms include the following:

Land Trust – The Fairfax County Park Authority Land Trust is a dedicated fund into which residents and community interests can make voluntary donations intended for the purposes of land acquisition. Initially, the fund received limited promotional support and, consequently, its success was also limited. As of June 2001, the trust fund had received $130,000 in donations. Subsequent to that date, a full time director was hired and the expectations for much stronger fundraising are high.

Conservation Fund – The Fairfax City Open Space Conservation Fund is a dedicated fund for land acquisition that has been established by the City of Fairfax. It provides for an increase in the local real property tax rate on residential and commercial properties, of up to $.05 per $100 of assessed valuation. There is a five-year term limit. Voter support was high in the non-binding referendum that passed by a 2-1 margin. For the current year, the incremental tax rate has been set at $.03 per $100, and it is anticipated that receipts for the year will total some $1 million. An equivalent tax of $.03 per $100 applied to residential and commercial property in Alexandria could generate almost $5 million.

A similar funding model for the open space plan could involve the dedication of a portion of other taxes to the purchase of open space property. An option that was initiated by and endorsed by the Alexandria City Council is the implementation of a local Recordation Tax. This increased tax would require approval from the Virginia General Assembly which, in the past, has been reluctant to pass the necessary legislation. However, for the current year, the assembly has agreed to include this funding mechanism in a study of funding issues.   Elsewhere in Northern Virginia, the Town of Vienna has been considering an increase in the local meals (restaurant) tax for a set number of years to fund the purchase of land for a new park.

Historic Alexandria Preservation Fund - A precedent for a dedicated fund already exists in Alexandria in the form of the Historic Alexandria Preservation Fund of the Historic Alexandria Foundation. Resources in this fund are generated through the Foundation's annual antiques sale.   A total of $5,000 is used annually to support the successful grants program of the organization.

Local Service District – The Code of Virginia (15.2-2400) permits localities to establish service districts for the purposes of providing enhanced services and/or facilities. Districts typically focus on transportation services, fire services, or sewer and water services. They are funded by a special property tax surcharge. In Northern Virginia, special service districts are used to support facilities such as the Reston and McLean Community Centers. Legislation was recently passed to allow the establishment of service districts for the purpose of purchasing land and maintaining open space areas.

Open Space Fund (developer fees) – A program providing for developer fees and contributions can be established that would be dedicated to funding the acquisition and development of additional open space. Many communities have been successful in implementing this source of funding. Individual development sites are often not large enough, or are inappropriately located, to supply valuable open space for public use and enjoyment. Hence, a developer fee, either in lieu of, or in addition to, the provision of on-site open space would add to other funds, and would make purchases and development of desirable sites possible.

Other Funding Mechanisms

1. **Bonds:**

   - **General Obligation Bonds** – General Obligation bonds are instruments of local government capital finance. The government sells the bonds to raise funds, and then pays back the principal and interest on the bonds after a period of time has elapsed, usually 20 to 30 years. Bonds are often used to fund parks and open space projects. Depending on state or local law, bonds either require voter approval (such as in most Virginia counties) or city council authorization (such as in Alexandria and most Virginia cities.) For example, the 1998 Fairfax County Bond issue, which was supported by over 70 percent of the voters, included some $20 million out of a total of $75 million for land acquisition. Arlington County schedules a bond referendum package every two years and always includes proposals for parks bond funding. Arlington voters have approved these bond issues by substantial margins in all but one instance over the past two decades.

   - **Revenue Bonds** – Unlike General Obligation bonds, capital improvement bonds (such as revenue bonds) are not subject to levy limits and require only a public hearing, not a referendum. However, revenue bonds are typically used only on projects specifically included in a capital improvement plan, and when a dedicated source of funding is identified as the source of repayment. Dedicated funding sources can include certain taxes, utility fees, and other fees and revenue streams.

Examples:

- In Virginia, transportation revenue bonds have been issued using part of the existing state recordation tax as a revenue source.

- In 1998, Austin (Texas) citizens voted to apportion part of their rising property tax coffers to acquiring more open space. Citizens approved a $40.45 million bond offering to be repaid over 30 years. Thus far, 500 acres of open space have been purchased with the bond money.

2. **Taxes and General Fund Money:**

- **Property Taxes** – In Virginia, local governing bodies can approve an increase in the local property tax rate to finance a bond issue or to provide cash for open space acquisition, create a community-managed open space trust fund, or pay for a specific open space purchase. Typically, the increases can range from 1 to 2 cents on every $100 of assessed valuation. The City of Fairfax advisory referendum mentioned above and subsequent Fairfax City Council action present a good example of how a community-supported increase in property taxes can be utilized for the acquisition of open space.

- **Sales Taxes** – In some communities, the local sales tax rate has been increased to finance bonds for open space acquisition, create a trust fund, or pay for the acquisition of a specific piece of property. This approach is typically very beneficial for cities. Large sums of money can be generated from a very small tax increase on purchased goods and, in many cases, a large proportion of a city's retail sales typically comes from non-residents and visitors who end up paying for a share of the city's open space acquisition projects. In Virginia, the extension of the sales tax would require approval from the general assembly. In the immediate future, transportation and education capital projects are likely to be the only candidates for sales tax increase; however, if a sales tax increase is approved for education and/or transportation, it will make it easier financially for open space acquisition projects to be included in Alexandria's Capital Improvement Program.

- **General Fund Support** – A community may also choose not to raise tax rates, per se, when financing a bond or providing funds for direct purchase for open space land. In the 1990's, many governments used General Fund surpluses to support such initiatives. The City of Alexandria's large annual contribution to capital reserves from the General Fund ($14 million is proposed in FY 2003) is a good example of this reallocation.

Easements

A tool that is growing in acceptance by non profit organizations and govern-

ments is the conservation easement. A conservation easement is a legally recorded agreement by which landowners may voluntarily restrict the use of their land. Provided that certain conditions are met, donors of easements may be eligible for certain income, estate, and property tax benefits. The income and estate tax benefits can be substantial, while the property tax benefits may or may not be substantial, depending largely on the relinquishment of development rights.

To gain preferential tax treatment, the land to be protected must often provide a recognizable public benefit, such as protecting rare species, public water supplies, or scenic vistas visible from roads. Public access is not necessarily a requirement. Although the duration of a conservation easement can vary depending on the desires of the landowner, tax benefits generally are available only for perpetual easements. A landowner that conveys a conservation easement retains all rights to use the land for any purposes that do not interfere with the preservation of the property as stated in the terms of the easement.

In 2002, the Commonwealth of Virginia enacted new legislation that will allow landowners who provide substantial easements to "sell," or transfer for cash, the value of the resulting tax deduction, provided that their income is too low to benefit from the deduction. This significant legislation will mean that landowners on fixed, or other limited, incomes who could not formerly take advantage of the tax credit incentive would be able to obtain cash in lieu of this credit. The law was also changed to allow a minimum of one-quarter acre (versus the one acre previously required) to be eligible for conservation easement tax credits.

Examples:
• Fairfax County's land acquisition plan involves approaching owners about putting easements on their property. Since 2000, 241 acres have been protected through easements.

• The Northern Virginia Conservation Trust has been working with private landowners in Fairfax, Loudoun and Arlington Counties, as well as recently in the City of Alexandria, to secure conservation easements. Successes include a 12-acre residential parcel in Great Falls and a wooded 13-acre parcel near Waterford.

• In Alexandria, this approach was recently used to secure Civil War era fortifications and adjacent open space at Battery Heights.

The use of conservation easements will be an excellent tool in making the linkages/connections recommended in the Open Space Plan, in order to achieve a continuous open space system within the city, and the use of easements will supplement implementation of the Potomac River Waterfront Plan.

Working with landowners and development attorneys to secure conservation easements will be an important part of the overall strategy for preserving

Alexandria's open space. Much of the effort here will be locating willing landowners and educating them about the benefits of this action. A key part of the strategy will be to position the City so that it has the Right of First Refusal on large parcels of land and other critical properties, as they become available.

The purchase of easements, rather than voluntary conveyances has also been a viable preservation tool in the past. However, this approach is subject to the ups and downs of economic cycles, and in the near term, may be somewhat more difficult given the current economic climate. Availability of funding through private and institutional sources has been adversely impacted by the recent performance of the stock market, and one important source of public funds has been curtailed. In the latter case, the Virginia Outdoors Foundation (V.O.F.), the state-sponsored vehicle for the purchase of easements for large expanses of land, was de-funded in 2001. (Also, it should be noted that Alexandria has not established a Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) program, so the V.O.F. reports that the City is unlikely to benefit from V.O.F. programs even when funding is available.)

Balanced Development

Balanced development can be loosely defined as financing the preservation of open space by developing only a portion of the property in question. Normally, balanced development initiatives are undertaken when a desirable tract of land becomes available on the open market. The balanced development approach allows the government to guide the development of the property and ensure the enhanced and continuing value of the property in question, as well as surrounding properties.

Often, because of the economic highest and best use valuation, local government cannot financially or technically compete with the private sector when it comes to bidding for new land. The balanced development approach makes competition with the private sector easier for local government, by enlisting a third party entity to purchase the land for it. The third party then resells its land to the different entities involved. It may sell 20 percent of the land to an interested developer and the remaining 80 percent to the government. Because the third party is often a non-profit group or a conglomeration of local business, citizens, and environmental groups, the governmental entity is charged little for its portion of the land. In this way, a large percentage of the open space is preserved at a reduced cost to the public. However, this approach requires a private entity with significant financial capabilities.

Within the City of Alexandria, the balanced development approach might be most applicable in areas such as Eisenhower Valley, where substantial new development is likely to occur and where preservation of open space as part of the development planning process will help preserve and enhance the city's "last remaining open space frontier."

- **FUNDING FOR OPERATIONS**

Applicable Goals: 1, 4, 6, 7, 8, 12

This section presents examples of funding mechanisms that can offset the operational costs of parks and open space. Most of the programs below aid in the maintenance/preservation/restoration of open space – a focus of the above goals.

Volunteer Programs

Volunteer programs have been used successfully to reduce budgetary requirements, enhance parks system operations, and generate a base of support for private contributions. Specific examples of volunteer applications include docent living history activities, security, gardening and landscaping, event registrations, and so forth. As a mechanism for preserving, protecting, and expanding open space in Alexandria, volunteer groups can organize as friends groups or be managed by the Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities. They can help with environmental clean-up activities, education awareness, administrative work, and other activities.

The Alexandria Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities has already experienced success with the use of volunteers. However, by placing greater emphasis on volunteer programs, the City will likely achieve an even greater level of success. To this end the following actions should be considered: greater attention to volunteer recruitment and training, establishment of well-defined volunteer responsibilities and guidelines, and performance monitoring. It is also important to continue to give feedback and recognition to the volunteers.

Based on the experience of other programs, it is estimated that Alexandria could expect to generate some 10,000 to 15,000 volunteer hours, or the equivalent of some five to eight full time employees, by utilizing volunteers. Savings from these volunteer hours could be used for other necessities or the hours could be used to maintain/preserve existing open space.

Another benefit of active volunteer programs is the use of volunteer hours to fulfill certain matching requirements on grants. Valued at, say, $15 per hour on average, the potential hours identified above could be worth $150,000 to $225,000 for the purposes of matching grant applications. (Note: depending on the type of service or activity, the value of labor contributions might range from $7 to $50 per hour).

Corporate Funding Support

The use of corporate resources in supporting parks & recreation activities and open space preservation initiatives is a relatively new phenomenon, and there are mixed opinions as to whether tapping corporate support is appropriate,

and if so, under what circumstances. Nonetheless, it is a potential funding resource, and one of the early tasks in the implementation of the Open Space Plan should be, in concert with others in City government, to make a final determination regarding its desirability. With this caveat, the subject of corporate funding support is discussed in the paragraphs below.

Corporate funding support could apply to both operations and acquisition; however, because of the generally short term nature of the commitment and magnitude of funding that might be generated, it is perhaps most practical to address corporate support under the operational funding heading.

Corporate support can also be either direct or indirect. Direct support, which includes sponsorships, advertising and naming rights, is typically done by the corporation itself through its marketing or public affairs functions. Direct support is discussed below. For the purposes of this discussion, indirect support refers to funding through a corporate foundation, which is discussed later.

Corporate sponsorship and advertising involve funds paid to a parks agency in return for establishing a linkage between the corporation (or in some cases, institution) and park users. This linkage can be achieved through identification of the corporation as an underwriter of an event, such as a concert. Placement of advertising materials in event brochures or advertising on scoreboards are examples of this identification strategy. The same linkage and corporate exposure can be achieved through identification of the corporate donor as a sponsor of the agency or designation of corporate products as the "official" products of the agency. Examples of the latter could range from exclusive pour rights for a soft drink company to exclusive suntan lotion for aquatic facilities. Ultimately, the value of corporate sponsorship or advertising is a function of exposure, or number of people who will receive the message. For the Alexandria Open Space Plan, a global, comprehensive approach to corporate sponsorship would make sense. By including the total recreational budget of the Recreation and Parks Department, the level of exposure would be maximized, thus maximizing the corporate income potential. Including trails and other open space assets is important to this strategy because of the high levels of utilization that can be achieved in this manner.

The second approach to tapping into corporate funding is through the sale of naming rights. Typically, this approach involves funds paid to a public agency/facility owner by a corporation in exchange for the right to affix the company's name to the facility. This funding approach is most common for large sports venues such as stadiums and arenas; however, it is making its way into other types of facilities, and it appears likely that it is just a matter of time before naming rights reach into the public recreation domain. For example, several public recreation providers have sponsorship agreements with product and service providers, and in a related area, the Fairfax County School Board is actively investigating the issues of naming rights for its facilities. For the Alexandria Open Space Plan, trailhead signage, benches, parks and other recreational facilities could all lend themselves to this approach.

- **USE OF PUBLIC AND INSTITUTIONAL GRANTS**

Applicable Goals: 1 through 15

Public and institutional grants may be used for both acquisition of open space and funding of operations. Historically, grants have ranged in value from as little as $100 to over $1 million. As noted previously, the resources available for grants are subject to normal economic cycles. Currently, the amount of awards and the frequency with which grants are awarded is decreasing. State governments across the country have de-funded many open space-related grants as public coffers shrunk in response to a slowing economy. However, as the economy strengthens, the level of grant funding should bounce back, and as part of a long-term strategy, grants should continue to be useful sources of funding.

In the face of shrinking resources and increased competition for grant funding, knowledge of and experience with grants will be increasingly important for success. The retention of a full-time professional grant writer, and perhaps a development consultant, focused on open space and trails grants will be critical since specific experience and skill sets are useful in the grant writing and implementation processes. As well, success in tapping corporate and institutional funding most often involves understanding the donor's requirements and needs, and tailoring a responsive proposal that links these requirements and needs to a <u>specific</u> project or program.

With both public and institutional grants, separation of the recipient from government through establishment of an open space conservancy to receive the donations may, at times, also be important.

Sources of public and institutional grants that could be pursued in the implementation of the Alexandria Open Space Plan are identified below.

Public Grants

Public grant programs are typically administered at the state level, and include programs that disperse funds coming from the federal government, as well as from programs that originate at the state level. A smaller number of programs are administered directly by the federal agency controlling the funding.

<u>*Land and Water Conservation Fund*</u> (Applies to goals:1, 4, 5, 9, 15)
The Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund is administered through the Virginia Outdoor Foundation. It is available for the acquisition and development of outdoor recreation areas and facilities and requires a 50/50 match from localities.

<u>*North American Wetlands Conservation Act Grants*</u> (Applies to goals 3 and 4)

North American Wetlands Conservation Act Grants are disbursed by the federal government through the Department of the Interior and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Grant funds support acquisition, restoration, and enhancement projects involving wetland and wetland associated uplands. Begun in 1989, the program provides matching grants to private or public organizations or to individuals who have developed partnerships to carry out wetlands conservation projects in the United States, Canada, and Mexico. Funds for the grant have been increasing gradually almost every year since its inception. In 2001, $40 million was allocated for N.A.W.C.A. grants. Most of this money was matched on a 2:1 basis. A few were matched at 1:1. The N.A.W.C.A. small grant program provides funding up to $50,000. An average small grant amounts to just under $40,000. The N.A.W.C.A. large grant program provides between $50,000 and $1 million.

Chesapeake Bay Restoration Fund (Applies to goals 1, 3 and 4)
The Chesapeake Bay Restoration Fund supports environmental education and action-oriented conservation and restoration projects within Virginia's Chesapeake Bay watershed. The fund earns revenue by selling license plates with Chesapeake Bay designs on them. It disperses its earning through grants to state and local governments, as well as nonprofit entities. In 2001, the fund awarded more than $450,000 in grants to some 75 different projects.

Recreation Trails Program (Virginia Recreation Trails Fund)(Applies to goals 5 and 10)
This is a small, competitive grant program that distributes monies from the ISTEA/TEA21 program.   It is intended to aid the construction and rehabilitation of recreational trails. The funding, which is administered by the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), is not restricted to non-motorized trails, but they are its focus. Grant monies cannot be used for planning, or for construction of "incomplete" trails (i.e., those that are designed to be a part of a future system.) Stand-alone trails, as well as connector trails, are the focuses of this funding. This is an 80/20 matching fund grant, with 20 percent of the total project costs required of the local organization. Grants range from $10,000 to $150,000, with typical grants amounting to $50,000 to $60,000. Total funds available in 2001 are $800,000 (2000 funding totaled about $1 million.) The grant is funded at least through 2003 and, if renewed at that time, would be funded for an additional six years. The W&OD trail in Northern Virginia has been a recipient of these funds in the past. The City of Alexandria is also a current recipient of TEA21 funding for the Eisenhower Bike Trail project, and has applied for additional funding under this program.

Virginia Land Conservation Fund (Applies to Goals 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 9)
The Virginia Land Conservation Fund (VLCF) has been set up to provide matching grants to localities, public bodies, and nonprofit organizations for purchasing fee simple title to and interest in real property for land conservation purposes. Grant categories are:

- Open Spaces and Parks
- Natural Area Protection
- Historic Area Preservation
- Farmlands and Forest Preservation

In the past, grants have been used to help the Nature Conservancy acquire 458 acres of land adjacent to the Commonwealth's Cleveland Barrens Natural Areas Preserve, to help Fairfax County acquire 2.9 acres of easement at three sites in Vienna and Oakton, and to help York County acquire nine easements on the York River beach to provide a continuous pedestrian linkage/trail along the riverfront.

Historically, VLCF grants have ranged in value from $30,000 to $1 million, with an average gift of $140,000. However, the Virginia State Assembly appropriated no funding for the VLCF in 2001, and the VCLF does not expect any new funding in 2002. The fund has suspended acceptance of applications for the time being.

Transportation Enhancement Activities (Applies to goals 10, 11, 12, 13, 14)
Transportation enhancement grants are administered by the Virginia Department of Transportation and are available for a wide range of activities defined in 12 categories, some more specific than others. Examples of projects eligible for grant funding include trails, streetscapes (pedestrian amenities), landscaping, preservation of scenic easements, billboard removal, and restoration of historic properties related to transportation (train depot, lighthouse, etc.) This is an 80/20 matching fund grant, and allows for the local 20 percent to be in the form of cash, or donations of land, materials, or in-kind services. There is no minimum, but the agency will only pay up to $1 million annually to a single entity. Total grant funding available in the State of Virginia for 2001 was $18.5 million, and is expected to remain at or above this level. Typical grants total $150,000 to $250,000, but projects as small as $5,000 to $6,000 are frequently funded.

Certified Local Government Grants)(Applies to goals 1, 2, 6, 8)
The Certified Local Government(CLG) Grant program establishes a partnership between local governments, the federal historic preservation program, and a state's Department of Historic Resources (DHR). The program allows state DHR's, to recommend for certification local governments that have put key elements of a sound local preservation program in place in their communities. Designation as CLGs gives local governments a way to participate more formally in the state and national historic preservation programs. The City of Alexandria qualifies for CLG grants, as it is one of 24 CLG's in Virginia.

Because CLG grants use federally appropriated funds, the de-funding of CLG's is less likely than the de-funding of grants supported by the state General Assembly. Typically, Virginia's CLG budget is $85,000. Awards range in size from $5,000 to $25,000, with an average award of $15,000. Generally, there is a match of some sort, but no match is required. CLG grants may

be used for surveys of architectural or archaeological resources and historic preservation planning, among other things.

Historic Preservation Project Grant (Applies to goals 1, 3, 4, 6, 8)
In 2001, the General Assembly in the State of Virginia <u>did not</u> appropriate funds for Historic Preservation Project Grants. In the past, these grants were used to preserve/restore local historic sites and natural areas. In a "normal" year, the state legislature would award up to 75 grants ranging in value from $5,000 to $100,000. The Historic Alexandria Foundation received $10,000 in 2001, and $28,500 in 2002 from this source for two sites in the City.

Partners for Fish and Wildlife (Applies to goals 6, 7, 15)
These grants, administered by the US Fish & Wildlife Service, are primarily given for voluntary habitat restoration projects, as they are geared more toward restoration than toward acquisition. Most recipients are private land-owners. Projects are extremely varied in nature, but can include restoration, planting, dam removal, outreach, habitat preservation and easements. This agency funds relatively few projects in urban areas. All grants are matching, and the ratio of federal to other funds ranges from 1:3 to 3:1, depending on the project and the number of partners involved. Total annual distributions range from $1 to $1.5 million, and the typical grant is $50,000 to $100,000.

Community Development Block Grants (CBDG) *(Applies to goals1, 7, 9)*
Funded by the Department of Housing and Urban Development and adminis-tered at the local level. Focus is mainly in providing affordable housing for low and moderate-income families. Can be used for the development of recre-ational facilities and open space; however, since the city is dedicated to affordable housing, its limited funding available through CBDG is unlikely to be utilized for open space initiatives.

Urban and Community Forestry Grants (Applies to goals 11, 12, 13, 14)
These grants are administered by the U.S. Forest Service of the Department of Agriculture. The funds promote improvements to urban areas and communities through the provision of forestry resources.

Other Public Grant Programs: In addition to the programs identified above, there are several additional programs that could benefit Alexandria's Open Space program. These include:

- *The National Park Service's Gateway program*, which provides funding for trail markers and interpretive signs.
- *Chesapeake Bay Foundation grants*, that provide support for educa-tional programs and materials such as brochures.
- *Virginia Tourism Corporation matching grants*, provide up to $10,000 for the promotion of special events and educational programs.
- *Urban Park and Recreational Recovery (UPARR) grants* from the Fed-

eral government to improve recreation facilities in urban areas.

- *Federal Brownfield/Grayfield grants* to help clean up open space areas that were formerly occupied by polluting uses.

Institutional Grants

The Virginia Land Endowment (Applies to goals 1, 4, 5, 7, 9)
The Virginia Land Endowment is an institutional grantor that uses its capital to encourage pollution prevention, open space conservation, and environmental education. In 2001, the endowment supported The Land Conservation Fund in Arlington, VA with a $100,000 matching grant.

The Northern Virginia Conservation Trust (Applies to goals 1, 4, 5, 7, 9)
The Northern Virginia Conservation Trust was originally established to promote open space preservation in Fairfax County. It has now expanded its geographical coverage and has undertaken projects in the inner and outer suburban counties and cities of Northern Virginia, including the City of Alexandria. Activities include providing grants to support partners in land acquisition and purchase of easements, advocacy and education.

Various Foundations (Applies to goals 1, 4, 5, 7, 9)
There are a number of private foundations that directly and indirectly support objectives of this plan including education, land acquisition and support for general operational and administrative expenses. Some of these foundations are national in scope, but located in the region. This geographical proximity could be advantageous in working to secure funding. Examples of foundations with national coverage based in Washington, DC include: The Moriah Fund and the Wallace Genetic Foundation. Examples of funds that focus exclusively or primarily on Virginia include the Virginia Environmental Endowment, and the Mark and Catherine Winkler Foundation. The latter is based in the City of Alexandria and actively supports land acquisition and O&M expense coverage. In addition, the Virginia Outdoors Foundation, which has been identified as a potential funding source, is involved in the acquisition of open space lands and conservation easements under its own name.

C.   CONCLUSIONS

The implementation of Alexandria's Open Space Plan will result in the creation of a connected open space system that accomplishes several objectives. It maximizes the accessibility of the City's open spaces for all of its residents. In addition, it enhances and protects the City's significant existing open space assets, such as its waterfront, its stream valleys, and its institutional lands. And, through the creation of the Open Space Conservancy, it establishes a mechanism for adding to the City's open space assets as opportunities arise.

The provision of an outstanding open space system will serve Alexandria well, for a long time to come. It will attract new residents to the City, it will encourage those living here to remains, and it will illustrate how a dense and diverse

community can be tied together through its varied and beautiful open spaces.

[8] CITYgreen, a software program developed by American Forests, uses Graphic Information Systems (GIS) technology to assess the changing structure of a landscape over time, with particular emphasis on tree cover issues.

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Planning District #1

Ref. #	Park Name	Location	Primary Use	Secondary Characteristics	Service Area	Owner	Acreage
1-01	African American Heritage Park	500 Holland Lane	Passive	Cultural/Historical Educational	Regional	Public	7.60
1-02	Alexandria Schools Rowing Facility (Oronoco Bay Park)	1 Madison Street	Active	Environmentally Sensitive Natural Resource Area Educational Recreational Riverfront	Regional	Public	0.73
1-03	"Alley Way"	Pitt St. to St. Asaph St. 200 South Block	Trails Streetscapes / Scenic Roadways	Urban Plaza / Streetscape	Block	Public	0.31
1-04	Armory Tot-Lot	200 block of South Royal Street	Passive	Recreational	Block	Public	0.20
1-05	Charles Houston Community Center	901 Wythe Street	Active	Educational Recreational	Citywide	Public	1.3 open space
1-06	Chetworth Park	810 Chetworth Place	Active	Dog Park Recreational	Block	Public	0.28
1-07	City Property	First and Payne Streets	Passive	Dog Park	Block	Public	1.37

Reference Number key:
1 - Planning District #1
2 - Planning District #2
3 - Planning District #3
4 - Significant Private Open Spaces

City of Alexandria

Open Space Classification **Overview**

Planning District #1

Ref. #	Park Name	Location	Primary Use	Secondary Characteristics	Service Area	Owner	Acreage
1-08	Daingerfield Island Park	George Washington Memorial Parkway (1 Marina Drive)	Passive	Environmentally Sensitive Recreational Natural Resource Area Riverfront	Regional	Public	130.03
1-9	Dr. Oswald Durant Memorial Center	1605 Cameron Street	Passive	Recreational Educational	Citywide	Public	1.76
1-10	Ford's Landing	99 Franklin Street	Passive	Environmentally Sensitive Recreational Riverfront	Regional	Public	0.59
1-11	Founder's Park	351 Union Street	Passive	Dog Park Environmentally Sensitive Recreational Riverfront	Regional	Public	4.70
1-12	George Washington Memorial Parkway	Northern Section between 1st Street and Four Mile Run	Streetscapes / Scenic Roadways	Cultural/Historical	Regional	Public	45.50
1-13	Helen Miller & Bernard Hunter Park (formerly Fayette & Queen Park)	224 North Fayette Street	Active	Recreational	Neighborh	Public	0.32
1-14	Interior Park	1321 Oronoco Street	Passive	Recreational	Block	Public	0.30

Reference Number key:
1 - Planning District #1
2 - Planning District #2
3 - Planning District #3
4 - Significant Private Open Spaces

City of Alexandria

Planning District #1

Ref. #	Park Name	Location	Primary Use	Secondary Characteristics	Service Area	Owner	Acreage
1-15	Jefferson Houston School	1501 Cameron Street	Active	Recreational Educational	Citywide	Public	4.68 open space
1-16	Jones Point Park	100 Jones Point Drive	Active Passive	Cultural/Historical Environmentally Sensitive Natural Resource Area Recreational Riverfront	Regional	Public	52.30
1-17	King Street Gardens	1806 King Street	Passive Streetscapes/Scenic Roadways	Urban Plaza / Streetscape Cultural/Historical	Citywide	Public	0.15
1-18	King Street Park	King Street at the Potomac River	Passive	Cultural/Historical Urban Plaza / Streetscape	Citywide	Public	0.19
1-19	Lee Center	1108 Jefferson Street	Active	Recreational	Citywide	Public	4.10
1-20	Lloyd House Garden	220 North Washington Street	Passive	Cultural/Historical Educational	Citywide	Public	less than 1.0
1-21	Lyles-Crouch Open Space (adjacent School)	530 South Saint Asaph Street	Active	Recreational Educational	Neighborh	Public	1.27 open space

Reference Number key:
1 - Planning District #1
2 - Planning District #2
3 - Planning District #3
4 - Significant Private Open Spaces

Planning District #1

Ref. #	Park Name	Location	Primary Use	Secondary Characteristics	Service Area	Owner	Acreage
1-22	Market Square	300 King Street	Passive	Urban Plaza / Streetscape	Citywide	Public	0.75
1-23	Metro Linear Park	1607 Suter Street (Buchanan to Braddock)	Passive Trails	Recreational	Citywide	Public	1.97
1-24	Montgomery Park	901 North Royal Street	Active	Dog Park Recreational	Neighborh	Public	2.00
1-25	Nannie J. Lee Recreation Center and Pool	1108 Jefferson Street	Active	Educational Recreational Cultural/Historical	Citywide	Public	10.00
1-26	Old Cameron Run Channel	2251 Mill Road	Passive	Natural Resource Area Environmentally Sensitive	Neighborh	Public	2.70
1-27	Old Town Pool (includes Buchanan Street Park)	1609 Cameron Street (west side of Durrant Center)	Active	Recreational	Citywide	Public	2.51
1-28	Oronoco Bay Park (also contains Alexandria Schools Rowing Facility)	701 North Lee Street	Passive	Environmentally Sensitive Natural Resource Area Recreational Riverfront	Regional	Public	4.50

Reference Number key:
1 - Planning District #1
2 - Planning District #2
3 - Planning District #3
4 - Significant Private Open Spaces

Planning District #1

Ref. #	Park Name	Location	Primary Use	Secondary Characteristics	Service Area	Owner	Acreage
1-29	Pendelton Park	1333 Pendelton Street	Passive	Recreational	Block	Public	0.30
1-30	Point Lumley	East End of Duke Street	Passive	Environmentally Sensitive Natural Resource Area Riverfront	Regional	Public	0.15
1-31	Portner Park	1400 Portner Road	Passive	Dog Park	Block	Public	0.24
1-32	Potomac Yards (City's open space component only)	Jefferson Davis Highway	Active	Recreational	Citywide	Public	70.0
1-33	Powhatan Park	1009 Douglas Street	Active	Recreational	Neighborh	Public	1.47
1-34	"Rivergate" Park	2 Montgomery Street	Passive	Natural Resource Area Environmentally Sensitive Recreational Riverfront Cultural/Historic	Regional	Public	1.97
1-35	Roberdeau Park (includes Shipyard Park)	End of Wolfe and Wilkes Streets at Potomac River	Passive Trails	Environmentally Sensitive Natural Resource Area Recreational Riverfront	Regional	Public	0.86

Reference Number key:
1 - Planning District #1
2 - Planning District #2
3 - Planning District #3
4 - Significant Private Open Spaces

Planning District #1

Ref. #	Park Name	Location	Primary Use	Secondary Characteristics	Service Area	Owner	Acreage
1-36	Tide Lock Park	Canal Center Plaza	Trails	Cultural/Historical Environmentally Sensitive Natural Resource Area Recreational Riverfront	Regional	Public	6.7
1-37	Torpedo Plaza	End of King Street	Passive	Cultural/Historical Riverfront Urban Plaza / Streetscape Environmentally Sensitive Recreational Natural Resource Area	Regional	Public	1.50
1-38	Washington Way	120 North Pitt Street	Streetscapes / Scenic Roadways	Urban Plaza / Streetscape	Block	Public	0.01
1-39	Waterfront Park	1 A Prince Street	Passive	Environmentally Sensitive Recreational Natural Resource Area Riverfront	Regional	Public	1.50
1-40	West's Point (connected with Founder's Park)	1 Oronoco Street	Passive	Environmentally Sensitive Natural Resource Area Recreational Riverfront	Regional	Public	0.07
1-41	Wilkes Street Tunnel	Wilkes Street (between Royal and Fairfax Streets)	Streetscapes/Scenic Roadways	Urban Plaza/Streetscapes	Neighborh	Public	0.21
1-42	Windmill Hill Park (includes Potomac View Park and Old Town Yacht Basin)	501 North Royal Street	Active	Recreational Cultural/Historical Environmentally Sensitive	Neighborh	Public	3.48

Reference Number key:
1 - Planning District #1
2 - Planning District #2
3 - Planning District #3
4 - Significant Private Open Spaces

City of Alexandria

Open Space Classification **Overview**

Ref. #	Park Name	Location	Primary Use	Secondary Characteristics	Service Area	Owner	Acreage
1-43	Wythe Street Plaza	701 N. Fairfax Street	Passive	Environmentally Sensitive Recreational	Neighborh	Public	0.37
2-01	Angel Park	201 West Taylor Run Parkway	Active	Environmentally Sensitive Natural Resource Area Recreational	Neighborh	Public	10.34
2-02	Beach Park (Maury School adjacent)	201 Rucker Place	Active	Recreational	Neighborh	Public	1.30
2-03	Beverly Park	620 North Overlook Drive	Passive	Recreational	Neighborh	Public	1.90
2-04	Braddock Field (George Washington School adjacent)	1005 Mount Vernon Avenue	Active	Recreational	Citywide	Public	6.6
2-05	Braddock Road Dog Park	5 East Braddock Road	Passive	Dog Park	Block	Public	0.22
2-06	Charles Barrett Open Space (Charles Barrett School adjacent)	1115 Martha Custis Drive	Active	Recreational Educational	Neighborh	Public	4.87

Reference Number key:
1 - Planning District #1
2 - Planning District #2
3 - Planning District #3
4 - Significant Private Open Spaces

City of Alexandria

Open Space Classification **Overview**

Planning District #2

Ref. #	Park Name	Location	Primary Use	Secondary Characteristics	Service Area	Owner	Acreage
2-07	Charles W. Hill Park	300-304 East Oxford Avenue	Passive	Dog Park	Neighborh	Public	0.37
2-08	Chinquapin Park and Recreation Center (TC Williams HS adjacent)	3210 King Street	Active	Dog Park Educational Environmentally Sensitive Natural Resource Area Recreational	Citywide	Public	22.80 open space; 0.07 center
2-09	Cora Kelly School and Recreation Center (Four Mile Run noted separately)	25 West Reed Street	Active	Recreational Educational	Citywide	Public	01.41 open space
2-10	Elbert Triangle	511 Four Mile Road	Streetscapes / Scenic Roadways Passive	Urban Plaza / Streetscape	Neighborh	Public	0.13
2-12	Forest Park	1099 Frances Hammond Parkway	Passive	Natural Resource Area Recreational	Neighborh	Public	15.9
2-13	Four Mile Run Park (Cora Kelly School adjacent)	3700 Commonwealth Avenue	Trails Active	Dog Park Environmentally Sensitive Natural Resource Area Recreational	Regional	Public	55.90
2-14	Gentry Park	Guthry Avenue and Mosby Street	Passive	Recreational Streetscapes/Scenic Roadways	Neighborh	Public	0.21

Reference Number key:
1 - Planning District #1
2 - Planning District #2
3 - Planning District #3
4 - Significant Private Open Spaces

Planning District #2

Ref. #	Park Name	Location	Primary Use	Secondary Characteristics	Service Area	Owner	Acreage
2-15	George Mason Open Space (George Mason School adjacent)	2601 Cameron Mills Road	Active	Recreational Educational	Neighborh	Public	8.20
2-16	George Washington Middle School	1105 Mt. Vernon Avenue	Active	Recreational Educational	Neighborh	Public	12.90
2-17	Goat Hill Park	33 Kennedy Street	Passive	Recreational	Neighborh	Public	1.50
2-18	Hillside Park	264 Burgess Avenue	Passive	Dog Park	Neighborh	Public	0.55
2-19	Hooff's Run Park and Greenway	18 A East Linden Street	Trails Passive	Dog Park Environmentally Sensitive Natural Resource Area Recreational	Neighborh	Public	2.40
2-20	Hume Springs Park	100 Dale Street	Passive	Dog Park Recreational	Neighborh	Public	0.50
2-21	Landover Park	3301 Landover Street	Passive	Recreational	Neighborh	Public	0.80

Reference Number key:
1 - Planning District #1
2 - Planning District #2
3 - Planning District #3
4 - Significant Private Open Spaces

City of Alexandria

Open Space Classification **Overview**

Ref. #	Park Name	Location	Primary Use	Secondary Characteristics	Service Area	Owner	Acreage
2-22	Lynhaven Gateway	Lynhaven and Wesmond Drives	Passive Streetscapes/Scenic Roadways	Recreational Urban Plaza/Streetscape	Block	Public	0.05
2-23	Lynhaven Park	5 East Reed Avenue	Passive	Recreational	Neighborh	Public	0.30
2-24	Mac Arthur School (Forest Park noted separately)	1101 Janney's Lane	Active	Educational	Neighborh	Public	3.30
2-25	Mason Avenue Mini Park	10 East Monroe Avenue	Passive	Recreational	Block	Public	0.30
2-26	Maury School (Beach Park noted separately)	600 Russell Road	Active	Educational	Neighborh	Public	1.60 open space
2-27	Monticello Park	320 Beverly Drive	Passive	Cultural/Historical Dog Park Environmentally Sensitive Natural Resource Area	Neighborh	Public	6.20
2-28	Mt. Jefferson Park and Greenway	301 Hume Avenue	Trails	Dog Park Recreational	Neighborh	Public	6.70

Reference Number key:
1 - Planning District #1
2 - Planning District #2
3 - Planning District #3
4 - Significant Private Open Spaces

Planning District #2

Ref. #	Park Name	Location	Primary Use	Secondary Characteristics	Service Area	Owner	Acreage
2-29	Mt. Vernon School and Recreation Center (Colasanto Center noted separately)	2601 Commonwealth Avenue	Active	Educational Recreational	Citywide	Public	5.87 open space
2-30	Nicholas Colasanto Center and Pool (Mt. Vernon School adjacent)	2404 Mount Vernon Avenue	Active	Recreational Cultural/Historical	Citywide	Public	0.20
2-31	Robert Leider Park	3002 Valley Drive	Passive	Natural Resource Area	Block	Public	1.30
2-32	Russell Open Space	10 Russell Road	Streetscapes / Scenic Roadways		Neighborh	Public	0.30
2-33	Simpson Stadium Park	426 East Monroe Avenue	Active	Recreational Dog Park	Citywide	Public	13.70
2-34	St. Asaph Park	215 East Ida Avenue	Passive Streetscapes / Scenic Roadways	Urban Plaza / Streetscape	Neighborh	Public	0.44
2-35	Sunset Mini Park	4 Sunset Drive	Passive	Recreational	Block	Public	0.20

Reference Number key:
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2 - Planning District #2
3 - Planning District #3
4 - Significant Private Open Spaces

Planning District #2

Ref. #	Park Name	Location	Primary Use	Secondary Characteristics	Service Area	Owner	Acreage
2-36	T.C. Williams High School (Chinquapin Park noted separately)	3300 King Street	Active	Educational	Citywide	Public	15.90 open space
2-37	Taylor Run Park	Between East and West Taylor Run Parkways	Passive	Natural Resource Area Environmentally Sensitive	Block	Public	10.40
2-38	Timberbranch Parkway	Island dividing E. and W. Timberbranch Parkway	Passive	Dog Park Environmentally Sensitive Natural Resource Area	Block	Public	5.96
2-39	Timberland Park	access between #66-68 Kennedy Street	Passive	Dog Park Recreational	Block	Public	0.25
2-40	Union Station Historical Marker	1900 King Street	Passive	Cultural/Historical	Neighborh	Public	n/a
2-41	Warwick Pool	3301 Landover Street	Active	Recreational	Citywide	Public	0.25 open space
2-42	Woodbine Park	1509 Woodbine Street	Passive	Recreational	Block	Public	0.10

Reference Number key:
1 - Planning District #1
2 - Planning District #2
3 - Planning District #3
4 - Significant Private Open Spaces

Planning District #3

Ref. #	Park Name	Location	Primary Use	Secondary Characteristics	Service Area	Owner	Acreage
3-01	270 South Reynolds Street Open Space	270 South Reynolds Street	Passive	Natural Resource Area	Block	Public	1.0
3-02	Armistead L. Booth Park/Samuel W. Tucker School	5500 Edsall Road	Active	Recreational Environmentally Sensitive Educational	Neighborh	Public	12.52
3-03	Backlick Run (includes Resource Protection Area)	Adjacent to Eisenhower Avenue	Passive Trails	Environmentally Sensitive Natural Resource Area Recreational	Citywide	Public	approximately 1.5
3-04	Ben Brenman Park	5000 block of Duke Street	Active	Dog Park Natural Resource Area Recreational	Citywide	Public	50.37
3-05	Brookvalley Park (part of Holmes Run)	5599 Holmes Run Parkway	Trails	Environmentally Sensitive Natural Resource Area Riverfront	Citywide	Public	35.90
3-06	Cameron Run (includes Resource Protection Area)	Eisenhower Corridor	Trails Passive	Environmentally Sensitive Natural Resource Area Recreational	Citywide	Public	approximately 3.0
3-07	Cameron Run Regional Park and Great Waves Water Park	4001 Eisenhower Avenue	Active	Recreational Environmentally Sensitive	Regional	Public	33.50

Reference Number key:
1 - Planning District #1
2 - Planning District #2
3 - Planning District #3
4 - Significant Private Open Spaces

Rhodeside & Harwell, Incorporated
October 2002
DRAFT

City of Alexandria

Open Space Classification **Overview**

Planning District #3

Ref. #	Park Name	Location	Primary Use	Secondary Characteristics	Service Area	Owner	Acreage
3-08	Chambliss Park (John Adams School adjacent)	2505 North Chambliss Street	Passive	Dog Park Natural Resource Area Recreational	Neighborh	Public	6.00
3-09	Duke Street Dog Park	5000 block of Duke St. East of Beatley Library	Passive	Dog Park	Citywide	Public	1.41
3-10	Clermont Nature Park	access from Clermont Drive	Passive	Natural Resource Area Environmentally Sensitive	Citywide	Public	5.49
3-11	Dora Kelley Nature Park and Buddie Ford Nature Center (William Ramsay School adjacent)	1525 North Chambliss Street	Passive Trails	Educational Environmentally Sensitive Natural Resource Area	Neighborh	Public	34.26
3-12	Ewald Park and Pool	4454 Duke Street	Active	Recreational	Citywide	Public	4.00
3-13	F.C. Hammond Middle School	4646 Seminary Road	Active	Recreational Educational	Neighborh	Public	21.50 open space
3-14	Fort Ward Park	4401 West Braddock Road	Passive Active	Cultural/Historical Dog Park Educational Natural Resource Area Recreational	Regional	Public	41.40

Reference Number key:
1 - Planning District #1
2 - Planning District #2
3 - Planning District #3
4 - Significant Private Open Spaces

Planning District #3

Ref. #	Park Name	Location	Primary Use	Secondary Characteristics	Service Area	Owner	Acreage
3-15	Fort Williams Park	501 Fort Williams Parkway	Passive Trails	Cultural/Historical Dog Park Environmentally Sensitive Natural Resource Area	Neighborh	Public	7.80
3-16	Hensley Park	4200 Eisenhower Avenue	Active	Recreational Riverfront	Citywide	Public	14.80
3-17	Holmes Run Scenic Easement	311 North Pickett Street	Passive	Environmentally Sensitive Natural Resource Area Recreational Riverfront	Citywide	Public	2.80
3-18	James Marx All Veterans Park (part of Holmes Run Parkway)	311 North Pickett Street	Trails	Environmentally Sensitive Natural Resource Area Recreational Riverfront	Citywide	Public	9.60
3-19	James Mulligan Park	3300 28th Street	Passive	Recreational	Neighborh	Public	3.50
3-20	John Adams School and Recreation Center (Chambliss Park noted separately)	5651 Rayburn Avenue	Active	Educational Recreational	Neighborh	Public	5.35 open space
3-21	Lake Cook	4001 Eisenhower Avenue	Passive	Natural Resource Area Recreational	Citywide	Public	7.10

Reference Number key:
1 - Planning District #1
2 - Planning District #2
3 - Planning District #3
4 - Significant Private Open Spaces

Ref. #	Park Name	Location	Primary Use	Secondary Characteristics	Service Area	Owner	Acreage
3-22	Luckett Field	Duke Street and Quaker Lane	Active	Recreational	Neighborh	Public	5.60
3-23	Minnie Howard School & Field	3801 West Braddock Road	Active	Recreational	Neighborh	Public	9.00
3-24	Patrick Henry School/ Park and Recreation Center	4643 Taney Avenue	Active	Recreational Educational	Neighborh	Public	17.00
3-25	Polk School and Open Space	5000 Polk Avenue	Active	Recreational Educational	Neighborh	Public	11.70
3-26	Rynex Nature Area	300 Rynex Drive	Passive	Environmentally Sensitive Natural Resource Area	Neighborh	Public	8.50
3-27	Stevenson Park	300 Stultz Road	Active	Natural Resource Area Recreational	Neighborh	Public	9.50
3-28	Strawberry Run (includes Resource Protection Area)	Adjacent to Fort Williams Parkway	Passive Trails	Environmentally Sensitive Dog Park Natural Resource Area Recreational	Citywide	Public	approximately 1.0

Reference Number key:
1 - Planning District #1
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3 - Planning District #3
4 - Significant Private Open Spaces

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Ref. #	Park Name	Location	Primary Use	Secondary Characteristics	Service Area	Owner	Acreage
3-29	Taney Avenue Park	4149 Taney Avenue	Passive	Natural Resource Area	Neighborh	Public	2.59
3-30	Tarleton Park	4420 A Vermont Avenue	Passive Trails	Dog Park Environmentally Sensitive Natural Resource Area	Neighborh	Public	6.03
3-31	William Ramsay School and Recreation Center (Dora Kelley Park noted separately)	5700 Sanger Avenue	Active	Educational Recreational	Neighborh	Public	18.30
4-01	Alexandria Country Day School	2400 Russell Road	Active	Educational Recreational	Neighborh	Private with Public Access	3.89
4-02	Alexandria Hospital	4320 Seminary Road	Passive	Natural Resource Area	Neighborh	Private with Public Access	65.18 open space; 4.22 buildings
4-03	Alexandria House Park	400 Madison Street	Passive	Natural Resource Area	Neighborh	Private with Public Access	0.50
4-04	Alexandria Water Company	2223 Duke Street	Passive	Natural Resource Area	Neighborh	Private with no Public Access	10.02

Reference Number key:
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4 - Significant Private Open Spaces

Significant Private Open Spaces

Ref. #	Park Name	Location	Primary Use	Secondary Characteristics	Service Area	Owner	Acreage
4-05	Bishop Ireton High School	253 Cambridge Road	Active	Educational Recreational	Citywide	Private with no Public Access	9.94 open space; 1.89 building
4-06	Carlyle Crescent Park	2121 Jamieson Ave	Streetscapes / Scenic Roadways	Dog Park	Block	Private with Public Access	less than 1.0
4-07	Carlyle Towers Open Space	2121 Jamieson Ave	Streetscapes / Scenic Roadways	Urban Plaza/Streetscape	Neighborh	Private with Public Access	less than 1.0
4-08	Christ Church Yard	121 North Columbus Street	Passive	Cultural/Historical	Neighborh	Private with Public Access	less than 1.0
4-09	Episcopal High School and Virginia Theological Seminary	1200 North Quaker Lane 4200 Braddock Road 3737/3630 Seminary Road	Active	Educational Natural Resource Area Recreational Cultural/Historical	Regional	Private with no Public Access	190.34
4-10	First Baptist Church	2932 King Street	Passive	Natural Resource Area	Regional	Private with no Public Access	16.20
4-11	George Washington Masonic National Memorial	101 Callahan Drive	Passive	Cultural/Historical Urban Plaza / Streetscape Educational Recreational	Regional	Private with Public Access	39.87

Reference Number key:
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4 - Significant Private Open Spaces

Significant Private Open Spaces

Ref. #	Park Name	Location	Primary Use	Secondary Characteristics	Service Area	Owner	Acreage
4-12	Lee Fendall House Garden	614 Oronoco Street	Passive	Cultural/Historical Educational	Regional	Private with Public Access	less than 1.0
4-13	Park on Wythe and Payne	Wythe and Payne Streets	Passive	Recreational	Block	Private with no Public Access	less than 1.0
4-14	Presbyterian Meeting House Yard	316 South Royal Street	Passive	Cultural/Historical Educational	Citywide	Private with Public Access	less than 1.0
4-15	Second Presbyterian Church	1400 Janneys Lane	Passive	Natural Resource Area	Citywide	Private with Public Access	7.70
4-16	St. Martin de Porres Senior Center	4650 Taney Avenue	Active	Recreational	Citywide	Private with Public Access	less than 1.0
4-17	St. Mary's School	400 Green Street	Active	Recreational Educational	Neighborh	Private with no Public Access	1.63
4-18	St. Stephens & St. Agnes School	400 Fontaine Street 4401 W Braddock Road 1000 St Stephens Road	Active	Educational Recreational	Neighborh	Private with Public Access	47.69

Reference Number key:
1 - Planning District #1
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4 - Significant Private Open Spaces

Significant Private Open Spaces

Ref. #	Park Name	Location	Primary Use	Secondary Characteristics	Service Area	Owner	Acreage
4-19	Temple Beth El	3830 Seminary Road	Passive	Natural Resource Area	Neighborh	Private with Public Access	3.12
4-20	Trans Potomac / Canal Center Plaza	1033 North Fairfax Street	Passive	Recreational Cultural/Historical	Neighborh	Private with no Public Access	0.84
4-21	Winkler Botanical Preserve	5400 Roanoke Avenue	Passive	Environmentally Sensitive Natural Resource Area Educational Recreational	Regional	Private with Public Access	42.0
4-22	Woodbine Nursing Home	2729 King Street	Passive	Natural Resource Area	Regional	Private with no Public Access	5.31

Reference Number key:
1 - Planning District #1
2 - Planning District #2
3 - Planning District #3
4 - Significant Private Open Spaces

CITY OF ALEXANDRIA OPEN SPACE PLAN
Meeting for Planning District #1 (April 16, 2001)

Public Comments

A. OPEN SPACE DEFINITIONS AND PARAMETERS
- Look at what should be counted as open space, especially for development purposes
- Do not consider parking lots as open space
- To extent possible, use current vacant lands as open space
- Maximize use and visual quality on all open pieces of land
- The use of open space is secondary to the identification of open spaces opportunities
- Need to preserve institutional open spaces (e.g., Episcopal Seminary)

B. SPECIFIC PARCELS, AREAS AND PARKS
- *Old Town*
    - Retain attraction of Old Town for visitors and residents with more and better quality shops
    - Balance types of shops
- Protect *Masonic Temple* lands— an open space icon
- *Carlyle* development—open space must be maintained by City
    - Current open space has maintenance issues
    - Standards should not be allowed to be "gotten around"
- *Portner Park*—
    - Not to be a dog park
    - State owned
    - Private citizen maintained
- *Slaters Lane*—
    - Realignment as proposed by Al Cox most desirable
    - Want a 'modified T' street end to maximize open space potential
- *Vacant Parcels*—(Bashford Lane and Powhatan Street)
    - State owned
    - Could be unfenced open space
    - Five-year plan has been established, corporate sponsors obtained for plantings, donations gathered, State
        Representatives contacted
    - Kept in poor condition now
- *Chetworth Park*—
    - Historically a Victory Garden
    - Move all dog usage out of Chetworth Park to Slaters CAP property
- *The NE*—
    - Has the lowest percent of open space (2.8%) in the entire City
    - Needs even the smallest of 'pocket parks'
    - Needs open space areas without dogs and tot lots
    - Has few streets, is very dense which increases any green or open space value, regardless of size
    - Town homes too intensely developed

C. RIVER FRONTS, STREAMS, WETLANDS, AND NATURAL AREAS
- Habitat Areas
    - Open space areas should be viewed as a way to preserve wildlife corridors
- *Potomac River* –
    - Continuous open space along river needed—with public access
    - Create a buffer zone for water quality
    - Take advantage of all opportunities as they arise
- *Hooff's Run* —
    - Create a continuous access-way along stream

- Need wilderness where children can play

D. STREETSCAPES AND PARKING
- Sidewalks—
    - Serious encroachment from signage, utility poles combined with a lack of width
    - Bike lanes encroach onto sidewalk due to narrow streets or poor planning
    - Create easier Metro access for pedestrians
    - Pedestrian access (convenient and safe) from NE to Potomac Yards
    - Implement the Northeast Pedestrian Plan (Al Cox)
    - Total pedestrian access for the NE
    - Powhatan Street—do not widen, maintain setbacks, and maintain open space
- Commonwealth Avenue to remain single lane, tree-lined boulevard
- Parking
    - Do not consider parking lots as open space
    - More underground parking garages, with open space over them
    - Patent and Trademark Office should have had underground parking, with a park above

E. BIKE USE
- Bike lanes encroach onto sidewalk due to narrow streets and/or poor planning
- Bikes trespass on non-bike corridors and into parks

F. THE CITY OF ALEXANDRIA
- Open space seems to lose out when development money is involved
- The City too often sells or develops vacant lands
- What is being done with the City's Open Space funds?
- Extensions to existing buildings and the addition of new buildings need to be monitored -- look at zoning ordinances, be more diligent at enforcing codes, and do not allow so many variances
- Establish commercial open space regulations
- Develop program to buy lands
- Find more open space
- GIS Mapping
    - Add BMP's and RPA's to GIS layers
    - Add an impervious surfaces layer

G. DEVELOPMENT AND DEVELOPERS
- On non-City maintained open space, the City needs to establish and enforce maintenance standards for developers
- Stop development until open space plan can be approved
- Standards should not be allowed to be "gotten around," they should be adhered to (e.g., Carlyle)
- Better height restrictions needed on all development—need more human-scaled development
- Provide a greater number of public easements/access in new developments
- Greater level of public/private cooperation for all open space areas, including schools

H. MAINTENANCE
- Emphasis on open space maintenance needed
- Some street lights have been out for more than 2 years
- BMP's need to be open space amenities not mosquito breeding grounds

I. ADDITIONAL DESIRES
- Community Spaces
    - Indoors: meeting rooms with capacity for 50-100 people
    - Outdoors: picnic areas and recreation programs
    - Find opportunities for additional Farmers' Markets

- Look for opportunities to create additional Community Gardens—with programmed activities, educational components
- Create additional Open Space Recreation Programs—
    - Parks staffed with recreation leaders, classes, and multi-age appeal
- Gateway Market / Sodibar systems (Rt. 1 & Franklin Streets)

J. FAVORITE OPEN SPACES (When asked this Q.)
- Waterfront—including Jones Point
- Old Town Yacht Basin
- Windmill Hill Park
- Masonic Temple

CITY OF ALEXANDRIA OPEN SPACE PLAN
Meeting for Planning District #2 (April 23, 2001)

Public Comments

A. OPEN SPACE DEFINITIONS AND PARAMETERS
- Review City set-back policies
    - Feeling of being enclosed – buildings too close to sidewalk
    - Old Town vs West End – create a different design criteria
    - Narrows perspective
- Too many privacy fences
- Open space without public access should not count
- Establish Alexandria as a place in a regional trails system
- Attempting to create a park which is something to everyone may result in a park in which nothing is done well

B. SPECIFIC PARCELS, AREAS AND PARKS
- *I-495 —:*
    - Area at Church Street exit could be beautified
- *Braddock Road Metro —*
    - Preserve current open space; plans to put in a "kiss-n-ride" and carve up what is now open space are a problem
    - The sense of open space will be jeopardized by selling air-development rights
    - The neighborhood desperately needs pedestrian access
- *Commonwealth Avenue —*
    - Should be recognized as a park and maintained as such
    - It can be Alexandria's "biggest park"
    - Could tell history of the electric train/trolley in Alexandria; also the substation at Mason may be one of the first in the area
    - Maintenance is currently lacking: curbs are broken, utility projects overrun the median, there is poor pedestrian accessibility, and the plants that die are not replaced
    - Capture opportunities through this boulevard's connection to *Four Mile Run*
    - Install signage for recreational distance measurements
    - It has become a utility conduit and maintenance is spotty
    - It is evolving into a commuter highway
    - Needs: re-greening, granite curbs, street tree replacement, streetscape improvements, preservation of median character, re-establishment of bike trails, and installation of traffic-calming measures
    - Enhance street character with highly articulated connections, and trail accessibility (jogging, walking, and pedestrian)
- *George Washington School—*
    - Needs commuter pedestrian path to Braddock Metro
    - Needs lighting for safety
    - Needs weekend recreational access between parking and sports fields
- *Mt. Jefferson Parkway—*
    - Connect the total park
    - Reassure neighbors regarding area safety; improve visual access to adjacent industrial uses; create noise barriers to Route 1
    - Problems with inadequate maintenance, crime, and flooding
- *Potomac Yards—*
    - Provide additional soccer fields
- *Route 1*
    - Possible gateway park / open space (at Franklin Street)
    - Provide boulevard treatments
    - Transform western side into a boulevard gateway for City
    - Create a park over Route 1

- *Vacant Lot* —(W. Masonic and Russell)
  - Create a pocket park for Garden Club to teach children about gardening
- *Vacant Lot*—(east side of Mt. Vernon, north of Del Rey)
  - Possible pocket park
  - Positioned in the heart of Del Rey
- *Vacant Lot* —(corner of Raymond and Mt. Vernon)
  - Currently a private lot
  - Large amount of foot traffic on Mt. Vernon; a park would be well used

C. RIVERFRONTS, STREAMS, WETLANDS AND NATURAL AREAS
- *Potomac River ---*
  - Connect waterfront for contiguous access
  - Create parks along remaining waterfront parcels
  - Articulate the connection with Four Mile Run
- *Cameron Run—*
  - Enhance aesthetics
  - Improve habitat
  - Widen land area for better public use
  - Improve habitat areas
- *Daingerfield—*
  - Facility is underutilized by the NPS
  - Create a visitor's Center and seaport foundation on Daingerfield Island
  - Could be shared with other uses/users
  - Enhance connections to nearby neighborhoods
- *Four Mile Run—*
  - Coordinate with logical points of interface, such as the schools and Commonwealth Avenue
  - Offers multiple educational opportunities
  - Could have active boating
  - Missed trail opportunities
  - Connect bike path with other trails (Arlington has plans to do just this)
  - Improve connections to the Potomac River
  - Provide facilities for kayaks, fishing, a boathouse, and educational programs
  - Enhance its natural state
  - Re-green
- *Hooff's Run—*
  - Create a continuous open space corridor in this location
  - Enhance streetscape
  - Complete connections
- *Old Cameron Run Channel—*
  - Make more natural, less engineered
  - Enhance aesthetics overall
- Emphasize both Greenway and Blue-way connectivity
- Improve wetland areas (mitigation sites) in stream valleys
- RPA's
  - Should be counted
  - City was 41% impervious (way over the desired < 20%)
  - Install other more pervious surfaces in parking lots etc.
  - City has been bargaining away RPA's
- Non-compatible uses – dog parks, RPA's, and environmentally sensitive areas can't all be in the same open space area
- Re-green all streams
- Maintain parks as water quality buffers along all rivers, streams, and wetland areas

D. STREETSCAPES AND PARKING

- Regulate/limit trees cut by the utility companies or the developers
- Improve all sidewalks in need of repair
- Underground utilities; undergrounding of utilities should be both more uniform and more equitably done throughout the City
- Establish tree planting program for alleys
- Limit or eliminate use of Bradford pears as street trees; use more durable species of street trees
- Del Rey
  - Improve quality of streetscape
  - Save the many large shade trees that we are currently losing
  - Bump-out sidewalks
  - Streetscape improvements are needed in southwest quadrant as well
- View sidewalks as transportation corridors
- Remove signs and posts from the middle of the sidewalks
- Improve connectivity
- Reconnect and use the alleyways
- Enhance street character with highly articulated connections, trail accessibility – jogging, walking, and pedestrian
- Slow down the traffic
- Emphasize the pedestrian
- Create signage for recreational distances

E. BIKE USE

- Connections are needed at:
  - Route 1 Bridge
  - Slaters Lane
  - Beverly Hills / Arlandria
- Improve Four Mile Run connections
- A network of commuter trails and lanes is needed
- Bike lanes are not just recreational
- Create a bike network for children to use to navigate the City

F. ROLE OF THE CITY

- Build on public lands only in cases where a very high need can be demonstrated
- Preserve existing public land to greatest extent possible
- Make better use of school properties
  - Habitat / nature center
  - Gardens/educational and community opportunities (Arlington Co. provides good example, e.g. Tuckahoe Elementary School program)
- Swap City lands for more desirable lots
- For new trails and parks, provide planning for access, funding and maintenance, as well as appropriate safety features such as lighting

G. DEVELOPERS AND DEVELOPMENT

- Regulate / limit trees removed by utilities or developers
- Ensure green, usable and beautiful open space for Carlyle
- Make developers accountable for their park maintenance
- Developers should provide open space for employees
- Open space should be tied to proffers

H. MAINTENANCE

- Upgrade existing parks
- Regulate/limit trees removed by utilities or developers
- Plant 'in-fill' street trees in older areas, such as Rosemont, etc.

- Underground utilities
- Provide irrigation for new trees and shrubs
- Provide watering trucks for all three planning areas
- Improve the maintenance standards of existing trees
    - Do not mow or weed whack too closely
- Emphasize use of native plants
- Linear park on railroad right-of-way needs nice trees
- Design BMP's to prevent mosquitoes and improve aesthetics
- Sidewalks are in need of repair throughout the City
- Park maintenance stinks – the City needs to commit more resources and manpower

I. ADDITIONAL DESIRES
- Provide additional multi-use fields
- Upgrade existing parks
    - Provide new equipment
    - Improve grading and drainage
    - Provide erosion control
    - Increase funds for maintenance
- Create parks along remaining waterfront parcels
- New open space opportunities
    - Warehouse on Eisenhower
    - Police station on Eisenhower
    - PEPCO site
    - New developments must provide open space
    - Accept CAP property on Slaters Lane as open space
- New open space should be of many types and sizes – not all pocket parks
- Meet with Eisenhower Valley Partnership to see their plans
- Organize volunteer activities
    - Create a more active adopt-a-park program
    - Foster stewardship programs
- Provide more tot lots
- Parks should be beautiful as well as functional
- There are problems and conflicts between age groups
    - Parks should be used by all age groups and at all times of the year
    - Create age specific parks

J. FAVORITE OPEN SPACES (When asked Q.)
- Dora Kelley Park
    - Beautiful and natural
- Waterfront
    - Entire length
- Fort Ward
    - History and variety of uses
- Winkler
    - Well-maintained
- Jones Point
    - Underdeveloped
- Wood lot on Chinquapin to Mac Arthur School

CITY OF ALEXANDRIA OPEN SPACE PLAN
Meeting for Planning District #3 (May 2, 2001)

Public Comments

A. OPEN SPACE DEFINITIONS AND PARAMETERS
- Create interconnected parks system
- Harness opportunities
- New zoning classification
    - Horticultural zone
    - Land trusts
- Protect existing wildlife preserve habitats (fox, deer)
- Capture open space which has potential for intensive development
- Don't count balconies
- Need publicly accessible wild spaces
- Traffic calming (Jordan St.)
- Refine what open space means. It should be greenspace on the ground. Not rooftops.

B. SPECIFIC PARCELS, AREAS AND PARKS
- *I-395*—improve exit at Landmark, needs tree preservation and beautification
- *West End*—
    - Playscaped areas
    - Off leash dog parks
- *Yoakum Parkway*—
    - Median could be fenced dog park
    - More trees
    - Acquire the two lots with trees (one on either side of cascade)
    - Playground
- *Theological Seminary and Episcopal High School*—
    - Encourage them to allow trail easements
    - Create benefits of greenspace
- *Edsall Road*—
    - Playground

C. RIVERFRONTS, STREAMS, WETLANDS AND NATURAL AREAS
- Cameron Run needs revitalization
- Maintain natural stream edges—no concrete, remove existing concrete (Four Mile and Taylor Runs)
- More care in drainage and storm water management for those downhill
- Stream channel damage
    - Stabilize erosion and run-off
    - Control evasive species
    - Clean-up
    - Restoration
- Educate homeowners about what they can do on their own properties (trees, contiguous open spaces)
- Clean up toxic areas

D. STREETSCAPES AND PARKING
- Traffic calming (Jordan St.)
- Underground utilities

E. BIKE USE
- Backlick Run connection to Fairfax County. It needs a plan/study for a bike/pedestrian trail

F. ROLE OF THE CITY
- Special use permits undermine open space and are easy to obtain
- The City does not listen to neighbors over special use permits
- District 3 underrepresented
    - Change boundaries
    - or Make a fourth district
    - Redistrict
    - Another Representative on Parks and Rec. Commission
- Correct City tax maps with correct park labels
- Solicit appropriate public input
    - Bridge at Holmes Run – not good example of open space
    - South end of Duke Street – no public input
- Advertise fund for acquisition of parkland
- Find small home/large lots to acquire and/or preserve
- Respect parks in areas of long-term residents, not only new developments
- Don't use open space in Eisenhower Valley for fire station—build a bridge over Cameron Run
- Don't build in existing parkland—for example Ben Brenman Park (revisit this decision)
- Identify properties not currently protected by easements and which are developable—create easements on more of these (tax incentives, donation or purchase)
- Identify all properties with current easements
    - Pedestrian trails
    - Bike trails
    - Greenways
    - Small parks
    - ROW easements (utility and road)
- City doesn't capture opportunities as lands become available
- City needs ability to purchase land and hold for future use
- Too much on-lot infill
- Identify special needs areas that shouldn't be built upon
    - Areas of marine clay
    - Areas of steep topography
    - Significant tree cover
- Encourage scenic easements (Hospital, ravines, St. Stephen's hillside)
- High density development degrades the quality of life
    - Too many cars
    - Fewer trees
    - Degraded aesthetic quality
    - Traffic gridlock
- Monitor overbuilding on Theological Seminary and Episcopal High School lands

G. DEVELOPERS AND DEVELOPMENT
- Preserve open space over development
- Developments are too intense
- Special use permits undermine open space
- Set design standards
- Focus future development in high density areas, major corridors and metros
- Protect open space in areas of density
- Too large of house allowed on too little land
- Not all development is bad

H. MAINTENANCE
- Improve maintenance standards (e.g. end of Latham Street on Holmes Run)
- Better park signage

- Clean up stream channels (tires behind Foxchase)
- West fork of Strawberry Run is polluted—needs cleaned
- Don't ruin existing parkland
- Plant hard to find native plants
    - Favorites: weeping willow, osage orange, persimmon, paw paw, chinquapin
- Protect I-395 exit at Landmark
- Improve paths
- Utilize a variety of tree species, not just ornamentals
- Place the correct tree in the correct space for its requirements

I. ADDITIONAL DESIRES
- Keep area on waterfront at Cameron Run open—connect to Holmes Run and Columbia Pike (through Fairfax County)—all of the way to Jones Point
- More active recreation fields—softball
- Connect Strawberry Run with Old Mill Run
- Protect open spaces between hospital and St. Stephens School
- Better attention, maintenance and amenities for Forest Park and Chinquapin Park
- Grass, trees, benches, passive space and improved entrance access
- Enhanced natural atmosphere
- Multi-age play equipment (with shade)
- More tree planting
- Allow organized youth associations to use parks for camping (in designated areas)
- Keep Stevenson Park as a park—not more school lands
- Don't let the land behind Hammond High School become a parking lot
- Newton Asphalt site could be the nucleus for a development that has open space
- Don't put Eisenhower connector near the Holmes Run Greenway

J. FAVORITE OPEN SPACES (When asked Q.)
- Holmes Run
    - Pretty
    - Water
    - Ducks and beaver
    - Incredible to explore
- Fort Ward
- Dora Kelly
- Waterfront
    - Great, but must walk there

OPEN SPACE SUMMIT: SUMMARY OF PUBLIC COMMENTS
June 23, 2002

1. Beautify Interchanges
- Interchange areas: not so much planting, more natural landscaping, disguise, and hide roads, sound barriers for traffic noise.
- Consider places where deck parks can be created over I-495 or 395.
- Highway & interchanges issues important but lower priority.
- Add deck park over 95/495 behind Carlyle, and over 395 where Holmes Run intersects.
- Opportunities for public open space along highway corridors– more need for linkages across corridors.

2. Pedestrian & Bike Linkage
- Continuous space connecting trails & parks.
- Open space development w/ walking access at Landmark
- Connectivity of parks for safer pedestrian & bike access between east and west end of town.
- Places to walk – connecting through cul-de-sacs, etc. (easements) to parks.
- Connecting corridors for people and wildlife.
- Tie into existing/proposed parks in Arlington and Fairfax.
- Bike & walkways not always compatible, wider is better.
- Need pedestrian walkways and connectors between parks & neighborhoods, linking old neighborhoods and parks with development areas.
- In general - take into account more bicycle and pedestrian linkages to transit in plan.
- Bike trail connecting city E to W then N to S (continuous) with pedestrian linkage/multi-use trail
- More bike trails.
- Create better bike and pedestrian linkages at Telegraph Road/495 gateway.
- Recreate "Dora Kelly" bike development along Cameron Run & Four-Mile Run.
- Increase east-west bike and pedestrian linkages between Old Town and the West End.
- It is faster for Eisenhower Valley residents to shop in Maryland than to get to Alexandria's shops.
- Mt. Jefferson Park and Greenway - support for increased pedestrian and bike linkages.
- Connecting parks: Federal property @ AMC as opportunity, Wilson Bridge staging area, Clermont area behind Cameron Station.
- Create connections between Duncan Branch Library, Warwick Pool, and Hillside Park.
- Connectivity increases value of park.

3. Gateways
- Define the City's entrances & exits, with revitalization of old commercial areas and respect for history.
- Gateways do not need to be elaborate but require beautification

4. Metro Civic Parks
- Open space that is accessible along the railroad right-of-way.
- Linking open space and trails along rail corridors.
- Metro integration with other forms of transportation and open space.
- Connections for Metro stations; Metro is an opportunity.
- Lack of transportation taking its toll in Old town.
- Improve areas around Metros to make them more truly "civic parks."
- Increase public transportation to recreation centers.
- Use Metros as a tool for open space linkages.
- Create new Metro stop at Potomac Yards.
- Improve underpass at King Street Metro (already a plan).

- Add Rail to new Woodrow Wilson Bridge.
- Add rail connections to Jones Point Park and the Wilson Bridge.
- Add connection across railroad from Ben Brenman Park.
- Metrorail/Monorail connections from Alexandria to the west (Dulles/Tysons).
- Monorail connection to Fairfax County & South
- Limit any rights–of–way that would limit future expansion of transportation to DC (any open space plan that chokes expansion.)

5. Vacant Land – Private
- Plan city budget to have funds available to purchase private land immediately as it becomes available.
- Active acquisition of land in central Alexandria and the west end: under served. areas
- Acquire private parcels along Hooff's Run. Connect all of the parcels & convert all vacant & poorly utilized parcels into landscaped passive open space.
- Investigate acquisition of private vacant land for public open space. (Identify key parcels now, so that they can be purchased later).
- Urgency to acquire available land
- Acquire the Washington Post property.
- Consider creation of a Conservancy to procure and manage gifts of land for protection within the City.
- Get private owners involved in planning process.
- Retain private landowner's rights for best use and development within zoning laws.
- Preserve private institutional land as open space(e.g., Episcopal Seminary, Masonic Temple), using easements, open space guarantees, and/or acquisition.
- Possibility of allowing public access to Episcopal High School, some is available presently.
- Work with private landowners/developers to provide quality new open space and improve existing spaces.
- Increase the amount of open space available within private developments through zoning and/or easements.
- Target vacant land near schools for new open space.
- Make existing vacant private spaces available for use, i.e. community gardens, open space trust, easements, and pocket parks.

6. Vacant Lands – Public
- Inventory underutilized properties and locate vacant buildings to acquire.
- Potomac Yard: Bring Metro to the Yard; needs funding for redevelopment of retail center or possible redevelopment at higher level.
- Reinvigorate adopt-a-park and community gardens.
- City should promote land gift giving wills, etc. or houses that can be used or sold to raise money for open space.
- Bond issue or tax to provide money for open space land acquisition.

7. Tree Cover Protection
- Tree ordinance plan, apply to city as a whole.
- Need to look more closely at tree preservation areas.
- New tree cover protection zone for additional areas.
- Tree preservation.
- Need more trees. Give trees to homeowners.
- Preserve and plant more trees (even ones in parking lots).
- More trees good for environment (e.g. heat)
- Tree ordinance.
- Tree protection, extending to areas without as many trees. Ex. Del Ray losing large shade trees due to power lines
- Tree protection and enhancement is important - in areas shown on plan as well as in Del Ray/Rosemont.
- Consider instituting a site specific or citywide tree ordinance.
- Better maintenance of street trees.
- Plant more trees and preserve existing mature trees.
- Tree protection area in Rosemont and Del Ray needed.

8. Open Space Preservation / New Parks

- City needs to adopt a clear definition of Open Space.
- Add more vest pocket parks citywide.
- More open space that is passive in neighborhoods.
- Encourage multi use of parks & open space.
- Need more dog parks.
- Build a parking garage (below ground) in Old Town and put a park on top of it.
- More parking opportunities under open spaces (especially at Landmark Mall and Old Town)
- Below ground parking garages
- Make more connected open spaces for wildlife corridors (remove fences, add habitat, etc.).
- Consider wetland preservation when determining open space areas (esp. Jones Point).
- Old Town– convert as much existing surface parking to underground and replace with surface park above.
- More parks in affordable housing areas & better maintenance.
- Many small parks – even ½ acre.
- Concentrate on small area neighborhood parks.
- Activate space within neighborhoods through ideas such as pocket parks
- Give as much importance to passive as active use, all interests must be considered (passive aspects of active parks).
- New parks should include multi-use: passive, active, dog run, etc.
- Create additional parks along Four-Mile Run.
- More community gardens and open spaces in west part of Alexandria.
- 16-acre opportunity for open space at AMC Building and parking lot (in Eisenhower Valley); also at VDOT Clermont site.
- Power Plant - explore opportunities for use as open space.
- Add more small pocket parks in Del Ray/Rosemont Area.
- Consider acquisition of land for a destination park in the West End - none currently exist.
- Passive open space desired in neighborhood behind Minnie Howard School.
- Dulaney Gardens should be public open space.
- Create open space linkages ---"natural connectivity"
- Be watchful of VDOT expansion into open spaces along roadway corridors.
- Create spaces for open land and wildlife.
- Habitat/redevelopment zones – identify, preserve, expand natural habitat areas.
- Identify on map wildlife, bird zones. Identify existing wildlife, & habitat that supports them.
- Encourage open space that provides natural "sound proofing"/ environmentally preferable options, such as trees or ivy covered walls.
- Green beltway around city
- Develop green infrastructure
- Plant native species of plants.
- Look into creative approaches to parking - potential for multi-use with open space.
- Consider closing sewage treatment plant and reservoir and replacing with open space.
- Consider a bond issue to provide financing for more open space.
- Encourage creation of easements and their use as open space.
- Publicize parks better - both locations and programming.
- Use all native plants in City planting programs.
- Interagency collaboration is important - not just Parks & Rec, but also Transportation & Environmental Services, Planning, Housing, and Human Services.
- Need someone to regulate and monitor park maintenance.
- Management of existing parks is critical.
- Maintain and enhance existing open space. (Increase quality/value).
- Keep eye out for "hobo camps"
- Use the Pepco Plant as park space.
- Improve the level of safety around parks.

9. Slaters Lane Plan
- Implement the Slaters Lane Plan -- more open space is needed in the Northeast quadrant.

10. Trails
- Maximize the connectivity of the Potomac Heritage Trail.
- Create multi-use trails.
- For multi-use trails, walking and biking should be separated for safety.
- More trail connectivity needed from northeast to southwest across King/Braddock/Seminary/Duke corridors.
- Create continuous trail (both bike and pedestrian) along the waterfront.
- Lock in trail plan for Eisenhower Valley before it is developed.
- Create more connections (walkways, paths, trails, and bike paths) through neighborhoods to provide more access to parks (possibly through easements, cul-de-sacs, or access to private land.
- Emphasize connectivity between parks.
- Trails on former and soon-to-be-former rail beds and power plant etc.
- Sufficient width of trails & sidewalks and hard-pack/gravel alongside paved trail.

11. Stream Valley Protection & Enhancement
- Aggressively approach converting Four-Mile Run and Cameron Run into stream valley parks.
- Four Mile Run – not utilized or accessible; sewage discharged.
- Four Mile Run stream restoration.
- Development of Four Mile Run re-naturalization plan and Cameron Run.
- Improve and preserve stream valleys (ESP. Four Mile Run and Cameron Run)
- Create a holding pond or provide a way to have a natural creek bed at Four Mile Run, Holmes Run, Cameron Run.
- Day-light streams to a natural state with habitat restoration.
- Differentiation between storm drainage channels & streambeds is important consideration.
- Consideration of FEMA issues.
- Get rid of invasive plants, enhance quality of open spaces
- Stream valley system watershed protection very important (Chesapeake Bay Protection Act)
- Linkage for wildlife habitat, continuity of habitat, expand
- Increase public access to river both linearly (north to south) and from Old Town (east to west).
- Focus efforts on water bodies and making them into parklands. Make these a priority for easements and trail development.
- Storm drain day-lighting to increase environmental quality.
- Visualize the streambeds as open space.

12. Streetscapes
- Create more successful urban plazas.
- Underground telephone poles throughout the City.
- Put utilities underground as much as possible to improve existing open space.
- Traffic calming citywide - enhancement of streetscapes and safety.
- Landscape traffic islands and medians.
- Better street tree choices along curbs
- Enhance streetscape with trees.
- Add sidewalks where there are not any to aid pedestrian flow.
- Need accessible open space (sidewalks)
- Make use of open space linkages – rerouting roads, etc.
- Need to go beyond protecting pedestrians when considering linkages. Remove fear elements (cars, bikes, etc.); improve personal safety.
- Linkages to traffic calming

- Provide for the psychological wellbeing of pedestrians.
- Enhance streetscape as it relates to pedestrian experience.
- Turn Commonwealth Ave. into a real "Greenway" - enhance the median! Replace trees as they die and add additional trees. Have double row of trees encouraging a canopy over both sides of the street. Walkways down the middle of the median. Extend the medians & reduce the size of the intersections (reduce asphalt). Ramp each end of each median strip. Selectively place benches. Perhaps site specific monuments along the median.
- Develop Commonwealth Avenue as a historical connector -- important street with missing pieces.
- Commonwealth Avenue as a connector to Arlington.
- On Beauregard Street, King Street and Seminary Road - keep an eye on VDOT plans – don't destroy our streetscape opportunities.
- Underground Route 1, or another solution.
- Increase street tree planting programs to enhance connectivity between areas.
- Think of sidewalks as connecting fabric between open spaces.
- Incorporate transportation issues when looking at streetscapes.
- Consider implementing a Route 1 Streetscape Plan.
- Better timing of lights/improving traffic movement.
- Safety – lighting, police patrols, increasing connectivity in pocket parks.
- Reinvigorate the "Adopt a Park" program and consider establishing a similar "Adopt a Median" program to improve look of medians, strips of land by roads and intersections.
- Use Eisenhower Avenue corridor to tie City together.
- Plan for the development along Mt. Vernon Avenue in Del Ray.
- View sidewalks as open space.

13. Highway Corridors
- Improve 395/Shirley Highway interchanges – make them pedestrian friendly.

14. New Development Areas
- Connectivity through the Green Crescent.
- Development in Eisenhower corridor is too dense.
- Address in-fill development effects and cumulative impact.
- Eisenhower Corridor as a connector for the east and west parts of City.
- Connected crescent is great idea, but how would it be implemented.? Come up with implementation plans/strategies.
- The Crescent - take integrated approach: combination of development, parks, trails, etc.
- Need to enforce proffers and keep records of them.
- Eisenhower Valley needs pedestrian/bicycle friendly path to shopping & other functions.
- Look at proffers for Ford's Landing.
- Public access at Ford's Landing is unclear. It needs signage.
- Acquire developable land in Cameron Run as public open space park.
- Potomac Yards development -- create 'central' park
- More parkland / open space in Potomac yards, Braddock area.
- Landmark Mall - open space opportunities: consider converting some area to public open space by creative approaches to parking (underground or "green").
- Need to make sure to provide large amount of accessible open space and tree cover in Potomac Yard. Take advantage of this opportunity before it is too late! Consider creating a large central park here.
- Do not allow Crescent to encroach too close to Cameron Run - must make sure these areas are kept open as parkland and not developed.
- Make sure there are north-south connections through Eisenhower Valley. Currently access is only east-west at ends.
- It should not be solely up to developers where money is spent.
- The "Crescent" is a good idea in concept. It needs to be put into action.
- Sewer system has to be improved. All new development should provide compatible infrastructure that can just be hooked up.

- Keep crescent concept, including integrated parks, trails to the commercial and residential developments.
- Add affordable housing as part of the crescent concept.
- Minimize building on open space, such as subdivision development, by tightening up zoning.
- City must follow S.U.P.s – e.g., Delaney Gardens park (if leave dead spaces, no vitality at night)
- Noise pollution control.
- Green print development.
- Opportunity now to designate open space in Eisenhower Valley before developments are in.
- Pay attention to neighborhood opportunity area. Build the open space connectivity piece by piece.
- Should be more open space requirements for new developments (like Braddock or Carlyle)
- Sewage treatment plants – close them in the future. They discourage riverfront parks.
- Create bike and pedestrian linkages (multi-use) through crescent (esp. Carlyle, Eisenhower Ave. area)

15. Potomac River Waterfront Program
- Connect open spaces along Potomac, need for "historic' parkland along Riverfront.
- Provide connectivity to waterfront throughout Old Town for both commuters and. leisure biking/walking.
- Minimize riverfront development; keep pristine as possible at Waterfront Park, seaport, keep available to public consider all users/uses.
- Make sure there is public access to water at Ford's Landing.
- Improve active city access to Potomac waterfront esp. Potomac yacht basin.
- Linear parks not the best for wildlife habitat.
- Open public waterfront. The waterfront has high value. Connect waterfront with the "crescent."
- Fix up waterfront; take down concrete blocks.
- Connect Potomac waterfront
- Waterfront as public land
- Warehouse district as a connector – to be connected to waterfront.
- Water parks / water front
- Connect waterfront along the Potomac River - integrate with history.
- Increase access to Potomac River, esp. for non-motorized boat usage.
- Potomac development should not be part of open space plan if it will interfere with/limit public access to waterfront; caution esp. with Robinson Terminal if it ever is sold.
- Connector district from Braddock metro area to river.
- Need a public boat launch in City
- Maximize access to Potomac River; deal with National Park Service resistance to concept; promote non-motorized activities.

16. Cemeteries
- Cemeteries – maintain, but clarify as "limited use."
- Cemeteries should not be included in open space calculations.

17. Schools
- Use open space for schools; additions needed and planned
- Make better us of school property.
- Target vacant land around schools for potential open space opportunities.
- Remove schools from open space definition.
- Include schools as shared open space facilities.
- Balance the need for open space preservation and school growth (compromise).
- School grounds should be shared open space with opportunities for community gardens.
- Develop George Washington Middle School into a higher quality open space.
- School property at Hammond for local uses – lease as parking.
- School areas should be more available for community use after hours.

18. Public Open Space
- Need a definition of true open space -- include parks streetscape, tree friendly, buffers; do not include public schools.
- Do not count balconies and rooftops as open space.
- Do not define rooftops as green space.
- City needs to establish a percentage goal for open space and work toward that goal.
- Take unified approach to open space priorities - include all areas of city and all user groups.
- Preserve existing open space.
- More community gardens.
- Emphasis on "Greening" of public rooftops (not to be included in inventory or in definitions.)
- Consider instituting a dog tax to pay for dog parks.
- Need additional parking @ parks, rec. areas, and destination open space areas.
- Provide adequate parking at both existing and new parks.
- Better inter-city coordination.
- Regionalism – work w/ Arlington and Fairfax Counties.
- Public properties/open space not to be sold to developers.
- Beautification of existing parks – native plantings.
- Make sure open space plan is integrated with existing feasibility studies, pedestrian plans, upper Potomac plan, etc. with input from other agencies.
- Look into a connected linear park along stream valley leading to Winkler Botanical Preserve.
- Need to have a separate master plan for dog park development - needs to be examined neighborhood by neighborhood.
- Cameron Run -- clean up neighborhood.
- Maintain existing natural resource areas such as Dora Kelley Nature Park and Monticello Park.
- Rework design of existing Four Mile Run Park - Arlington side is much better and more effective.
- Surround city with a green band.
- Maintain open vistas/natural estuary at Four-Mile Run.
- Increase view sheds through conservation easements (e.g. Monticello Park); makes park more viable for wildlife.
- Cameron Run– preserve and restore, but with public use.
- Add wetland boardwalk at Four Mile Run.
- Extend Four Mile Run Park west into Arlington to create a more continuous linear park.

19. Institutional Land
- For institutional land, gain public use and rights through easements/ leases.
- Preserve and enhance the Masonic Memorial site to serve as a civic anchor for the crescent and the City as a whole.
- Army (Tauber) site - recapture parking lots as open space (there may be HAZMAT issues).
- Explore possibility for public access to institutional sites such as Episcopal Seminary and School.