

City of Alexandria, Virginia

Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities

September 13, 2018



Why natural areas are important



- Cleans the air, water
- Biodiversity
- Water bio-retention
- Pollinator food and habitat
- Primary food chain food source
- Social and health benefits
- Wildlife habitat



Natural Areas



Kirsten Werner, communications director at Natural Lands Trust, recently shared the following statistics:

Americans spend approximately \$40 billion a year to maintain more than 32 million acres of lawn – an area roughly the size of Pennsylvania. We pour 270 billion gallons of water per week on our lawns. We apply 10 times more fertilizer, herbicides and pesticides than farmers do to their crops. And a typical gas lawn mower emits about the same quantity of volatile organic compounds in one hour as a car driven 350 miles.

Connections



- Environmental Action Plan
- Eco-City Charter
- Chesapeake Bay Protection Act
- Natural Resource Mgmt. Plan
- RPCA Strategic Plan
- Open Space Plan
- Landscape Guidelines



Examples



- Four Mile Run Park
- African American Heritage Park
- Beatley Library Meadow
- Duke/Telegraph Interchange
- Windmill Hill Park
- Hammond School Meadow
- George Mason Park
- Fort Ward

Examples



Four Mile Run



Examples



Hammond School Meadow



Examples



Telegraph & Duke



Site Selection



- Community Needs Assessment Survey
- Historic field
- Site size
- Water bodies
- Biodiversity
- Accessibility/visibility
- Connectivity to greenways/parks/natural areas
- Trail opportunity



Restoration Process



- Evaluation
- Soil & geology
- Plant selection (Right Plant, Right Place)
- Implementation
- Evaluation and adjustment
- Invasive control
- Education and interpretation

Plant Selection



- Spotted Bee Balm
- Butterfly Weed
- Swamp Milkweed
- Narrow-leaved Mountain Mint
- Joe Pye Weed
- Early Goldenrod
- Broadleaf Ironweed

Plant Selection



Wild Bergamot



Plant Selection



Swamp Milkweed, Narrow-leaved Mountain Mint



Plant Selection



Butterfly Weed



Plant Selection



Partridge Pea



Outcomes



- Increase biodiversity
- Increase pollinator food source
- Provide environmental educational opportunities
- Natural surface trail opportunity
- Carbon sequester
- Water bio-retention
- Habitat restoration
- Sustainable landscape

Information/Proposal



- Nov/Dec 2018 – plant native plant plugs; goal of 3-season color and pollinator interest; invasive plant control
- Mar/Apr 2019 – control emergent invasive plants; overseed and supplemental planting of pollinator plants
- May/June 2019 – interpretive signage along trail
- June/July/August 2019 – environmental education programming

Natural Resources



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