

**PUBLIC SPACES MASTER PLAN-
IMPLEMENTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
(PSMP- IAC)
Virtual Meeting
December 14, 2020**

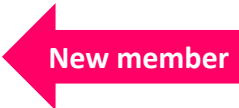
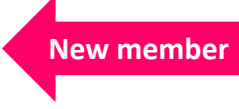
AGENDA

- Introduction:
 - PSMP-IAC Co-Chairs Updates
 - Virtual Meeting Ground Rules
- Public Comment
- PSMP Implementation Progress
 - County Board Guidance Brief Updates
 - Forestry & Natural Resources Plan
 - Deeper Dive - Casual Use Spaces
- Wrap Up/Next Steps

PSMP-IAC UPDATES

- The PSMP-IAC was appointed by the County Manager in Fall 2019
- The meetings held so far:
 - **October 1, 2019** - Kickoff Meeting
 - **December 9, 2019**: Field Availability & Utilization Intro
 - **February 10, 2020**:
 - Biophilic Cities Network
 - Field Availability & Utilization (1st Engagement Prep)
 - **March 9, 2020**
 - Annual PSMP Update
 - Casual Use Spaces
 - **September 29, 2020**
 - PSMP Updates
 - **December 14, 2020**
 - Casual Use Inventory

Membership:

- Co-Chairs:
 - **Bill Ross**, Park and Recreation Commission
 - **Jane Rudolph**, Department of Parks and Recreation
- Arlington Public Schools: **Bill Gillen**
- Bicycle Advisory Committee: **Elizabeth Kiker**
- Economic Development Commission: **Daron Coates** 
- Environment and Energy Conservation Commission (E2C2): **Teresa Leonardo**
- Fiscal Affairs Advisory Commission (FAAC): **Peter Robertson** 
- Park and Recreation Commission: **Sergio Enriquez**
- Pedestrian Advisory Committee: **Andrea Walker**
- Planning Commission: **Jane Siegel**
- Sports Commission: **Nancy Sharkey**
- Urban Forestry Commission: **Caroline Haynes**
- Department of Parks and Recreation designee: **Erik Beach**

MEETING GROUND RULES

- Thank you for being here!
- Public comments go first!
- **For this meeting, please:**
 - Mute your microphone unless you are speaking
 - Raise your hand using the “raise hand” feature to ask questions
 - If you’re on a phone, dial “*6” to mute and unmute yourself
 - Use the “Chat” option for technical issues
 - Do not interrupt Committee’s discussion
 - Presentation and meeting summary will be posted on the PSMP-IAC website



PUBLIC COMMENT

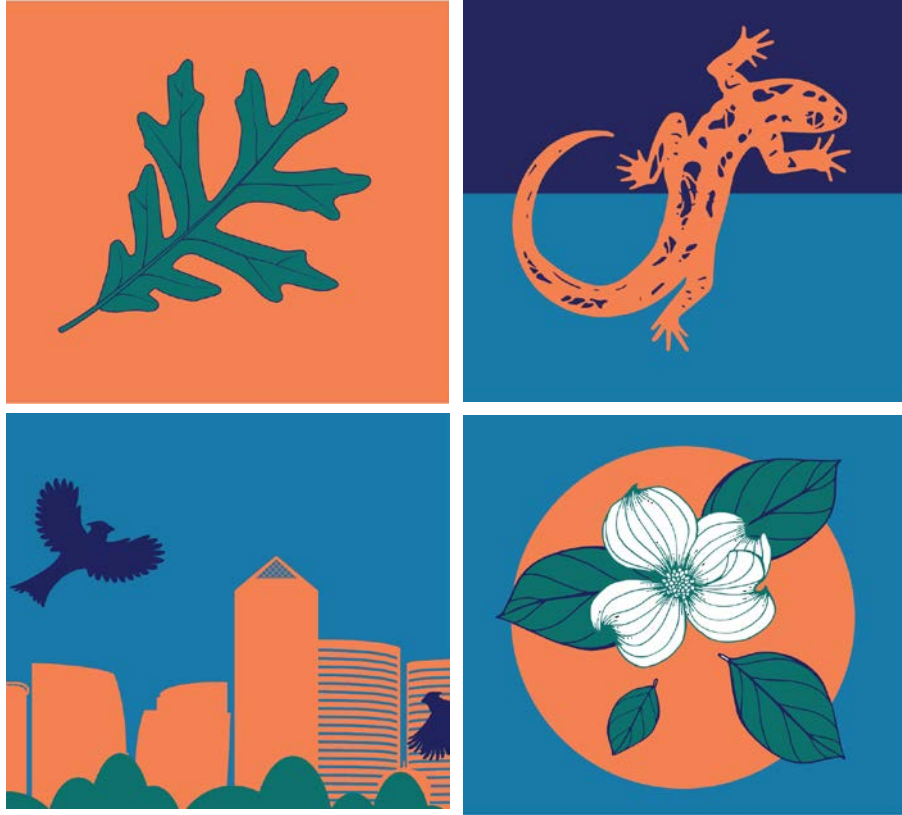
COUNTY BOARD GUIDANCE – QUICK UPDATES

| TASKS | ANTICIPATED SCHEDULE |
|---|--|
| Appoint the PSMP Implementation Advisory Committee (PSMP-IAC) | Kick-off meeting- October 1, 2019, 6 meetings so far |
| Refine the Casual Use Space concept (Action Steps 1.3.1, 1.3.2 page 61) | Initiated in Spring 2020, anticipated completion Summer 2021 |
| Update the Natural Resources Management & Urban Forest Master Plans (Priority Action 10, Action 3.1., page 96) | Virtual feedback until Dec. 23, 2020 |
| Field availability & utilization (Priority Action 4, Action Step 1.2.5., page 60) | Virtual engagement early 2021 |
| Update the County's zoning regulations as they relate to parks and public spaces (Action Step 1.5.10., page 68) | Kickoff with the PSMP-IAC early 2021 |
| Review options and identify a preferred formal process for adding lights to athletic fields (Action Step 1.5.5., page 67) | TBD |

FORESTRY AND NATURAL RESOURCES PLAN

COUNTY BOARD GUIDANCE - PROGRESS

FORESTRY AND NATURAL RESOURCES PLAN



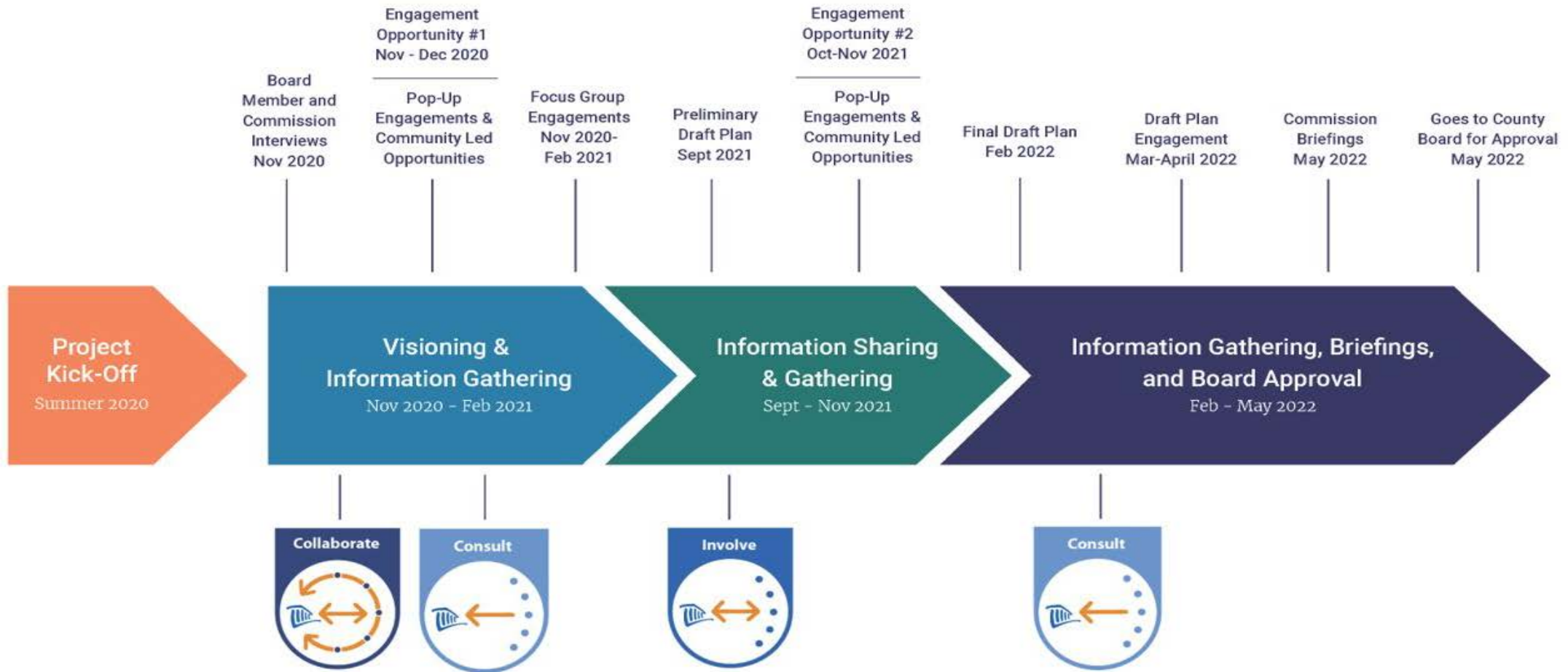
FORESTRY AND NATURAL RESOURCES PLAN

NATURALLY ARLINGTON

- Public Engagement began on 11/10, survey deadline extended to 12/23
- Presented to the LRPC on 11/10
- Board Briefings concluded on 12/10
- Stakeholder interviews began 12/7
- DPR staff currently reviewing draft benchmarking report

COUNTY BOARD GUIDANCE - PROGRESS

FORESTRY AND NATURAL RESOURCES PLAN



FNRP Timeline



**DEEPER DIVE
CASUAL USE SPACES**

CASUAL USE SPACES & PSMP

PSMP Recommendations:

Priority Action 5: 1.3. Ensure access to spaces that are intentionally designed to support casual, impromptu use and connection with nature.

1.3.1. Undertake an **inventory of casual use spaces to better understand their distribution and gaps.**

Casual use space is a new concept, and as such, has not been inventoried. Further refining this concept should enable an inventory to be completed.

1.3.2. Explore opportunities to develop **standards for casual use spaces.**

As this concept is new and there is no inventory or benchmarking data available, the County should explore ways to develop standards for casual use spaces.

1.3.3. When developing plans for public spaces, **include intentionally designed casual use spaces where appropriate.**



CASUAL USE SPACES- APPROACH PRESENTED IN MARCH

Step 1 (Summer/Fall 2020): Complete an inventory based on the current PSMP concept

Step 2 (Winter 2021):

- Possible concept & inventory refinement
- PSMP-IAC & Public engagement

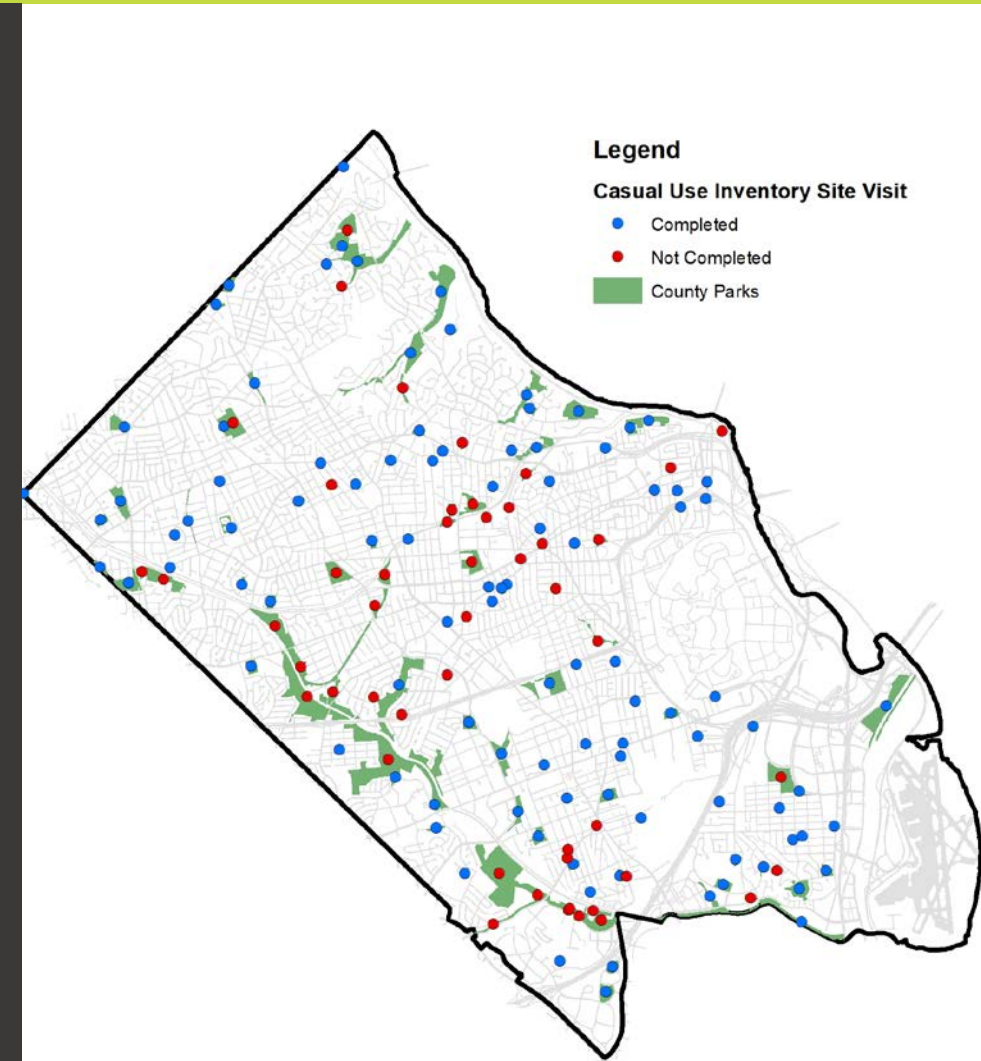
Step 3: (Spring/Summer 2021):

- Explore standard development
- PSMP-IAC & Public engagement



CASUAL USE SPACES- PROGRESS & NEXT STEPS

- Inventory is nearing completion (**over 100 parks visited**)
- Anticipated 2 additional PSMP-IAC meetings to discuss any remaining inventory issues, concept refinement & present final inventory - **Spring 2021**
- Present inventory & concepts refinement to the public (virtual feedback) - **Spring 2021**
- PSMP-IAC Meetings (estimated 2 meetings) to discuss standard options - **Late Spring/Early Summer 2021**
- Present standards to the public (online feedback) - **Summer 2021**



CASUAL USE SPACES INVENTORY

PSMP Recommendations:

Priority Action 5: 1.3. Ensure access to spaces that are intentionally designed to support casual, impromptu use and connection with nature.

1.3.1. Undertake an **inventory** of casual use spaces to better understand their distribution and gaps.

Casual use space is a new concept, and as such, has not been inventoried. Further refining this concept should enable an inventory to be completed.

Inventory Goals:

- Include spaces that meet the current PSMP guidance
- Identify issues/questions
- Create a GIS layer
- Refine concept if needed
- Not a critique of the design or how well spaces are maintained

CASUAL USE SPACES & DESIGN CHARACTERISTICS- PSMP GUIDANCE

What Types of Spaces Support Casual Use?

CASUAL USE SPACES INCLUDE

some available always, some at times

- accessible forested areas
- accessible landscaped areas
- esplanades
- fields with community use
- grill/picnic areas (including shelters)
- open lawn with/without seating
- plazas
- school grounds

CASUAL USE SPACES DO NOT INCLUDE

- batting cages, dugouts
- community gardens
- disc golf
- indoor or outdoor pools
- multi-use, paved courts
- outdoor tracks
- parking lots
- permit only fields
- playgrounds
- skateparks
- spraygrounds

CASUAL USE EXAMPLES

- Bird watching
- Relaxing on a lawn
- People watching
- Picnicking
- Playing catch or throwing a frisbee
- Reading a book
- Sitting on a bench
- Social interaction
- Strolling through a wooded area

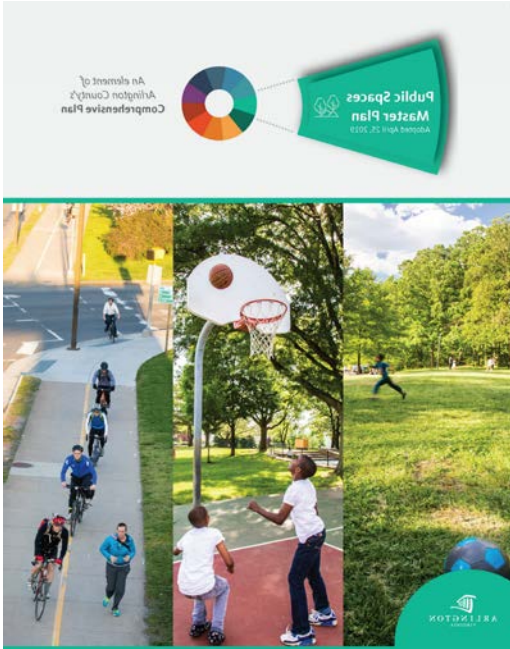
Casual Use Space Design Characteristics

Casual use spaces should be designed to include many of the following characteristics:

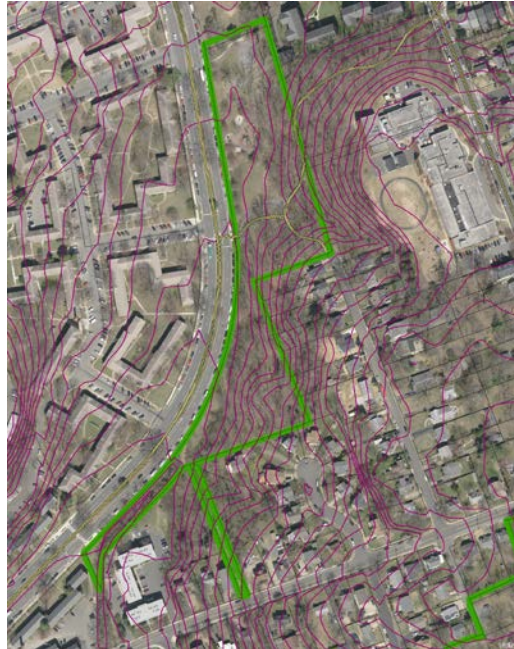
| | |
|-----------------|--|
| Open | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Unobstructed or minimally obstructed (e.g., minimal fencing)• Usable and occupiable• Available to the public, at least at specified times• Visible from surrounding areas |
| Natural | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Host to substantial natural features, trees, vegetation, landscaping and/or grass• Incorporate biophilic design principles• Integrate natural spaces in plazas and other hardscape designs |
| Flexible | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Designed to promote multiple types of casual use to attract diverse populations and support inclusivity in the County• Equipped with features that encourage use (e.g., benches, picnic tables and walking paths) |
| Visible | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Intentionally designed, rather than leftover, spaces• Marked by visible signage that welcomes the entire Arlington community• Located to avoid dead-ends and areas that are not highly visible |

CASUAL USE SPACES – MAPPING & INVENTORY

PSMP Guidance



Existing GIS Data



Aerial Photos & Street Views



Site Visits Clarify



Map



Donaldson Run Park (example)

CASUAL USE SPACES- SEPTEMBER 29, 2020 MEETING DISCUSSION

Summary of the PSMP-IAC Feedback:

- Importance of **accessibility** of casual use spaces
- **Plazas**, although primarily hardscaped spaces, function as casual use spaces
- Include a **subcategorization** (e.g., urban plazas)?
- **Landscape** is part of the design of casual use spaces
- **Rain gardens** and similar **stormwater amenities** should be included if people can walk by and enjoy these amenities; huge wetland areas should be reconsidered.
- **Trails with no shoulders** should not be included in the inventory; only trails with casual uses surrounding them
- **Temporary uses** should be counted only if they are truly temporary (e.g., temporary dog parks)



CASUAL USE SPACES - PSMP-IAC IN ACTION

The PSMP-IAC members were asked to:

- Select 2 sites from the list
- Identify casual use spaces & take photos
- Send suggestions, issues, questions, photos

Suggested parks to visit:

- [Barcroft Park](#)
- [Quincy Park](#)
- [Towers Park](#)
- [Rocky Run Park](#)

PSMP-IAC SITE VISITS - FEEDBACK SUMMARY

TOWERS PARK

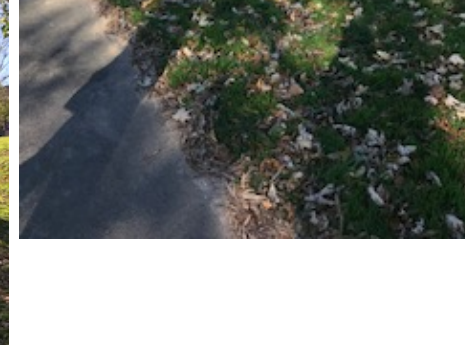
- Rain garden in the middle of the lawn down from the tennis courts should be included.
- Fairly inaccessible forested area should not be included.
- Concrete, circular area with seating near the courts should not be included.
- Should not include the area near the community gardens or around the dog park as they don't meet the design criteria.



PSMP-IAC SITE VISITS - FEEDBACK SUMMARY

TOWERS PARK – ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

- Add an event/amenity sign similar to Quincy's - it's a place to gather to see what's cooking/builds community.
- Add grills? Whatever builds community.
- Really like circular benches adjoining tennis courts.



PSMP-IAC SITE VISITS - FEEDBACK SUMMARY

ROCKY RUN PARK

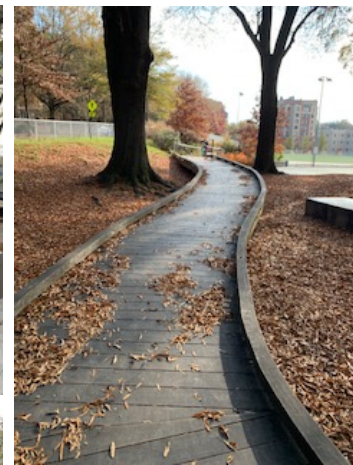
- Concrete paths surrounding the field? If the field counts, then the supporting paths probably need to count.
- In-between areas of paths, grass, and plantings?
- Wooded section at Barton and Fairfax. Normally, it would be slated to be non-used, but it is walked on. Maybe we should declare it non-casual use as a matter of preferred use by the county?



PSMP-IAC SITE VISITS - FEEDBACK SUMMARY

ROCKY RUN PARK – ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

- So much is included in a fairly small space.
- Two playgrounds, bathrooms, a natural feeling accessible path to use instead of steps, a community field (used for a little kid lax lesson, people kicking around soccer balls, and a family just chasing each other around while I was there), a running/walking path around the field, fitness trail, basketball courts, picnic tables, and even what looked like a desire path that might be use by kids on bikes.
- Kept the sledding hill in the design.
- The park also has some more natural spaces in the southwest corner of the park (Barton and 11th) that continues into Barton park, across 11th street.



PSMP-IAC SITE VISITS - FEEDBACK SUMMARY

QUINCY PARK

- The section near Washington Blvd. might feel more like casual use space if there were more benches and picnic tables scattered under the trees.
- Field area is used as casual use when W&L baseball fence is down and soccer field is not being used.
- Small area between baseball fence and library parking could also be categorized as casual use space (informal volleyball games being played there).
- Ruled out including rain garden between volleyball area and picnic benches since it is not really accessible (though it provides a nice visual).
- Park has a few picnic tables (along field edges) but much less casual use than anticipated.



PSMP-IAC SITE VISITS - FEEDBACK SUMMARY

QUINCY PARK – ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

- Taking down the fences at the baseball field at Quincy creates a fantastic casual use space -- people playing soccer, adult flag football, and volleyball in the space. People were also walking dogs and just walking through the field.
- The park does a great job of having spaces that feel natural (trees, no extra amenities, no paths), space for picnics, more clearly specified space (playground, courts, batting cages), and the field/casual use space.
- We need to come up with another category of space that represents fields when the fences are down/fields without fences/unlocked fields. It is quite clear that the community perceives these spaces as casual use, so designating them as fields solely seems to miss a lot of the multiple uses of these spaces. I think that there are probably maintenance costs that are different for these open fields/open spaces than for either just casual space or designated fields.



PSMP-IAC SITE VISITS - FEEDBACK SUMMARY

QUINCY PARK – ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

- Have a landscape architect do a cohesive design.
- The park is wonderful and so well used, but so disparate in activities provided. A holistic design would be swell.
- An exercise regimen at park entrance similar to that on Crystal Drive at bottom of walkway/road to National Airport.
- A conservation garden similar to that at the library.
- Unobtrusive fencing similar to that at Mosaic park.
- Trash/recycling cans on raised beds.
- Artwork (liked the mosaic at the playground)
- Bleachers at ball field- what a good use of space. Add something similar?
- Add picnic tables/garden
- Add path - area along Quincy St.



PSMP-IAC SITE VISITS - FEEDBACK SUMMARY

BARCROFT PARK

- Southern side of the trail across the bridge from the fields and batting cages lends itself toward casual use, but given the sensitivity of the Natural Resource Conservation Area, we should probably discourage use in that way.
- Maybe including just the unpaved patch down from Claremont.
- Include only the rectangular field, since the diamond fields are permit-only (partnership with GWU).
- Open area with picnic pavilion between the Four Mile Run and NRCAs is casual use (not including the sand volleyball court & playground)
- Observed families picnicking by the field, but they are really watching the games, is this a casual use?



PSMP-IAC SITE VISITS - FEEDBACK SUMMARY

OTHER COMMENTS

- What to do with narrower areas of e.g. grass, that lie between a non-casual amenity, such as between a tennis court and a walking path or between a street sidewalk and a walking path? These strips themselves may be amenable to casual use, but practically may never be used as such because they are so small or steep and would not provide a comfortable or private space to undertake casual uses.
- Smaller inaccessible planted areas that are surrounded by casual use space and that add beauty to the space, e.g. a planted rain garden that lies within a larger grassy area.
- Generally, paved multi-use paths probably should not be included.
- Other Recommendations for Quincy & Towers Parks:
 - Add bathrooms, stacked fountains and more benches; wi-fi hot spots; signs similar to Oakland's that include phone numbers to call; whatever builds community (i.e., makes the park as a gathering place for the neighborhood.)

ADDITIONAL STAFF EXAMPLES

INVENTORY EXAMPLE: LYON VILLAGE PARK

Include or not: In-between spaces (spaces between amenities, not specifically designed for casual use)?

- **Could be used for some limited casual activities**
- **Do these areas meet the design characteristics?**



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| | |
|-----------------|---|
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| Natural | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host to substantial natural features, trees, vegetation, landscaping and/or grass • Incorporate biophilic design principles • Integrate natural spaces in plazas and other hardscape designs |
| Flexible | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designed to promote multiple types of casual use to attract diverse populations and support inclusivity in the County • Equipped with features that encourage use (e.g., benches, picnic tables and walking paths) |
| Visible | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intentionally designed, rather than leftover, spaces • Marked by visible signage that welcomes the entire Arlington community • Located to avoid dead-ends and areas that are not highly visible |

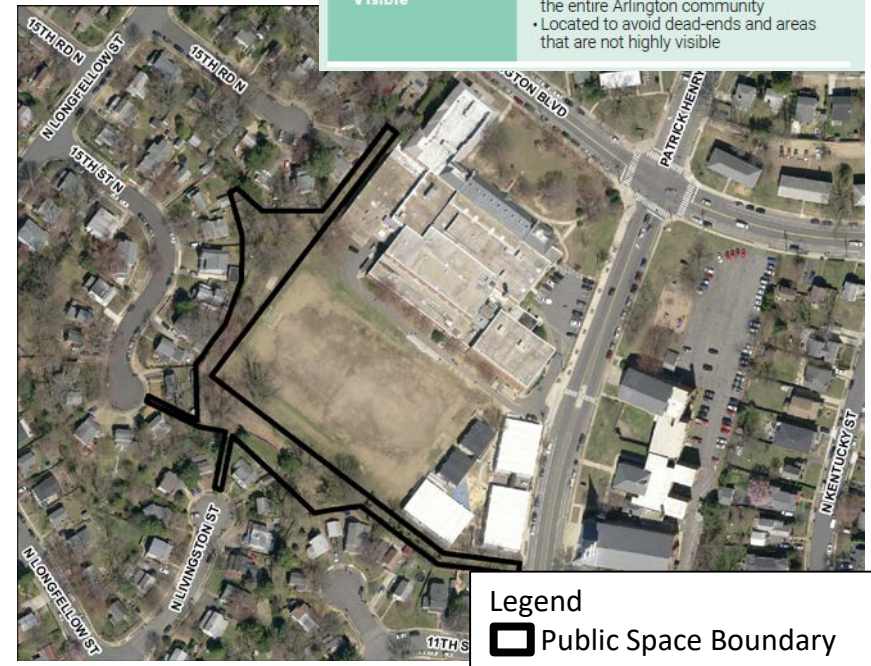
INVENTORY EXAMPLE: SWANSON MIDDLE SCHOOL (PARK)

Not included: overgrown areas with limited access around the field & School.

Casual Use Space Design Characteristics

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Legend
 Public Space Boundary

INVENTORY EXAMPLE: 21ST ST. N. AND N. STAFFORD ST. PARK

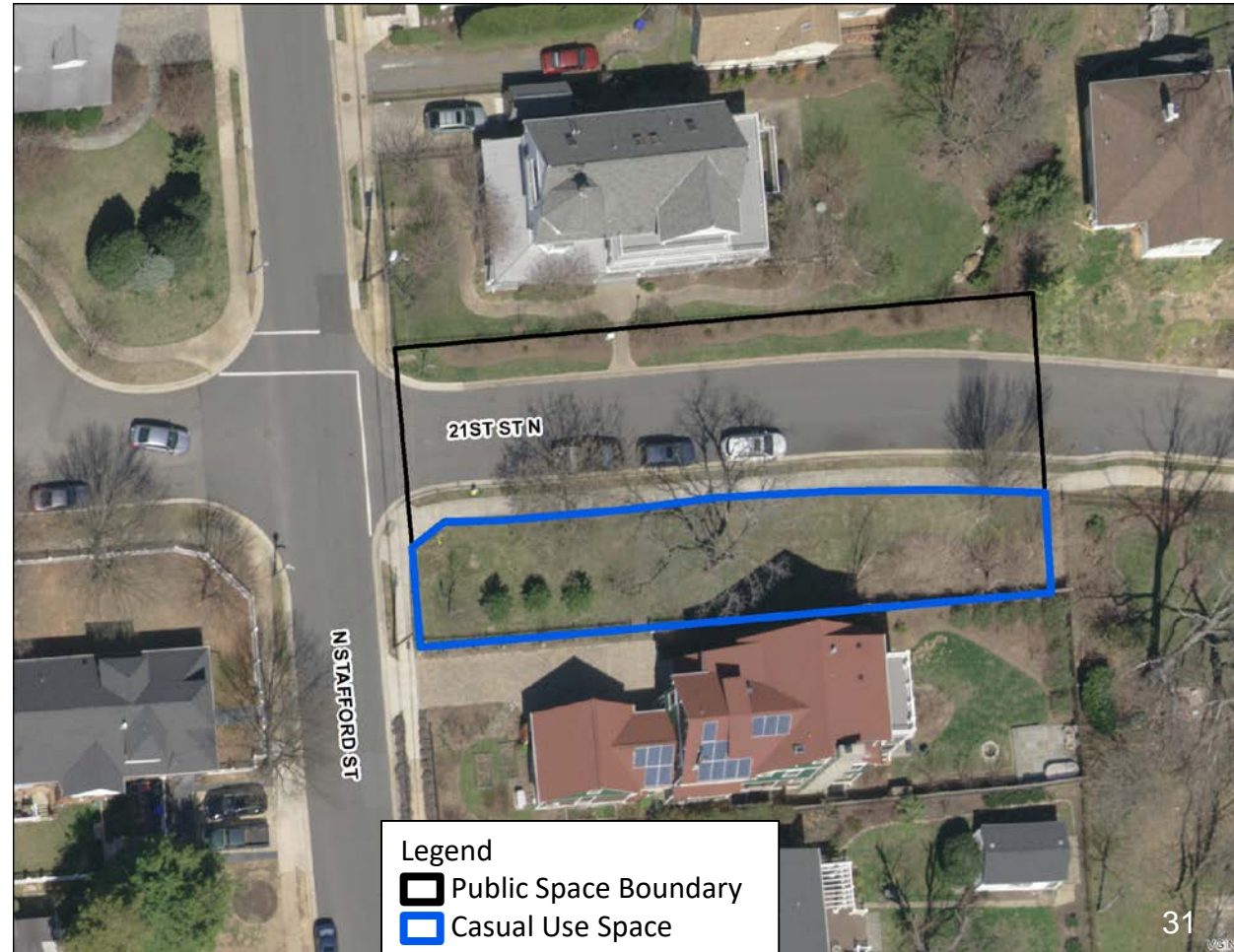
Include or not: spaces abutting residential properties?

- Do these spaces meet the design criteria?
- Do they feel welcoming?
- Do they support casual use activities?



CASUAL USE EXAMPLES

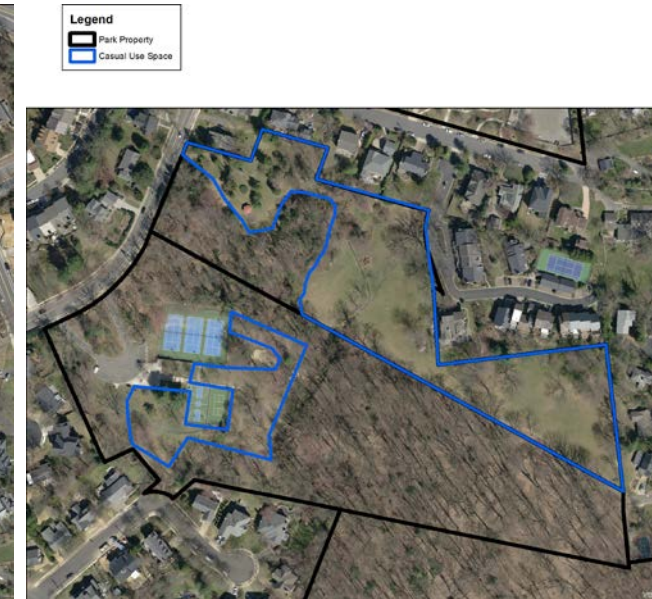
- Bird watching
- Relaxing on a lawn
- People watching
- Picnicking
- Playing catch or throwing a frisbee
- Reading a book
- Sitting on a bench
- Social interaction
- Strolling through a wooded area



INVENTORY EXAMPLE: FORT ETHAN ALLEN PARK

Include or not: areas with cultural or natural resources?

- Lots of grassy casual use space suitable for a variety of activities.
- However, significant cultural resources (Civil War earthworks) also present.
- Interpretation of these resources can complement casual use, but should active play on these resources be discouraged?



INVENTORY EXAMPLE: WINDY RUN & DONALDSON RUN

Include or not: Trails surrounded by natural lands?

- Could be used for casual use activities
- However, these trails are surrounded with mostly natural land
- Similar to cultural resource sites, should forested parks be considered casual use space, or a different category?

CASUAL USE EXAMPLES

- Bird watching
- Relaxing on a lawn
- People watching
- Picnicking
- Playing catch or throwing a frisbee
- Reading a book
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- Strolling through a wooded area



INVENTORY EXAMPLE: FORT BENNETT PARK AND PALISADE TRAIL

Include: Open grassy areas within wooded parts of parks, if designed for casual use purpose?



CASUAL USE EXAMPLES

- Bird watching
- Relaxing on a lawn
- People watching
- Picnicking
- Playing catch or throwing a frisbee
- Reading a book
- Sitting on a bench
- Social interaction
- Strolling through a wooded area

Legend

-  Public Space Boundary
-  Casual Use Space



What Types of Spaces Support Casual Use?

CASUAL USE SPACES INCLUDE

some available always, some at times

- accessible forested areas
- accessible landscaped areas
- esplanades
- fields with community use
- grill/picnic areas (including shelters)
- open lawn with/without seating
- plazas
- school grounds



CASUAL USE INVENTORY WRAP-UP

Feedback received from the PSMP-IAC will be used to:

- Revise & finalize inventory
- Refine concept/definition if needed
- Inform future discussions on standard development

NEXT STEPS

PSMP IMPLEMENTATION NEXT STEPS

- PSMP-IAC: next meeting on February 8, 2021
- Winter/Spring 2021:
 - Virtual public engagements on field availability & utilization
 - Finalizing Casual Use Space inventory with the PSMP-IAC
 - Virtual engagements on casual use inventory & concept refinements
 - Zoning Study kickoff with the PSMP-IAC
 - Annual PSMP Update to the County Board

**PUBLIC SPACES MASTER PLAN-
IMPLEMENTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
(PSMP- IAC)
Virtual Meeting
December 14, 2020**