

# WELCOME & CONTEXT

## PUBLIC SPACES MASTER PLAN

Arlington's Public Spaces Master Plan (PSMP) is a plan for our places and spaces. As an element of the County's Comprehensive Plan, the PSMP sets policy that will guide County actions around public space. The plan, when adopted by the County Board, will be the culmination of a process shaped by the public and County organizations and stewarded by an appointed Advisory Committee and County staff.

## WHAT ARE PUBLIC SPACES?

Public spaces are spaces that support recreation and leisure, natural resources, and casual use. Together, these public spaces form a network of spaces where Arlingtonians can relax, recreate, learn, gather, and celebrate.

## WHY ARE WE HERE TODAY?

The purpose of today's public meeting is to give you an overview of the contents of the draft plan, which is available for you to review in full online at [parks.arlingtonva.us](http://parks.arlingtonva.us). We will be asking for your input on specific topics, as well as offering opportunities for constructive conversations and general feedback on the plan.



Arlington has 142 County-owned parks that represent the heart of the public space system.

## PUBLIC SPACES VISION

Arlington County envisions a network of publicly- and privately-owned public spaces that connect the County's established neighborhoods and growing corridors to natural areas, protect valuable natural resources, provide opportunities for structured and casual recreation, and ensure access to the Potomac River, Four Mile Run, and their tributaries.

PARKS AND RECREATION AT A GLANCE

3 

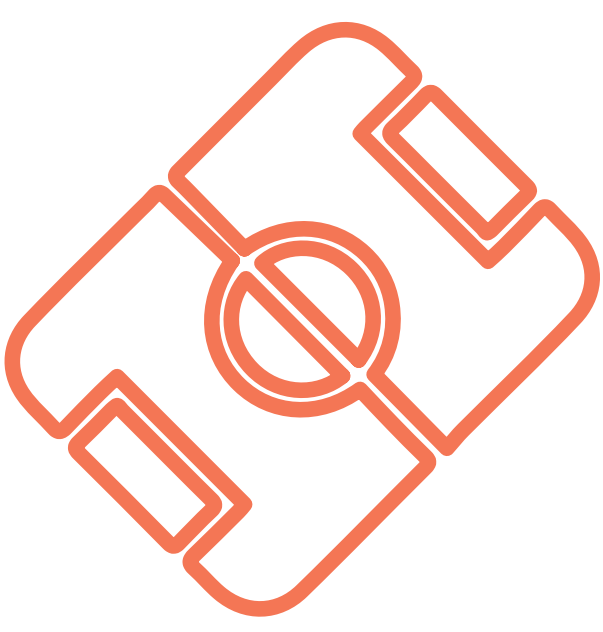
**NATURE CENTERS**  
(1 REGIONAL)

4 

**PUBLIC POOLS**  
(1 REGIONAL)

7 

**COMMUNITY GARDENS**

42 

**RECTANGULAR FIELDS**  
(14 SYNTHETIC)

19 

**COMBINATION FIELDS**

126 

**PLAYGROUNDS**

90K 


**PROGRAM REGISTRATIONS**

14 

**COMMUNITY CENTERS**

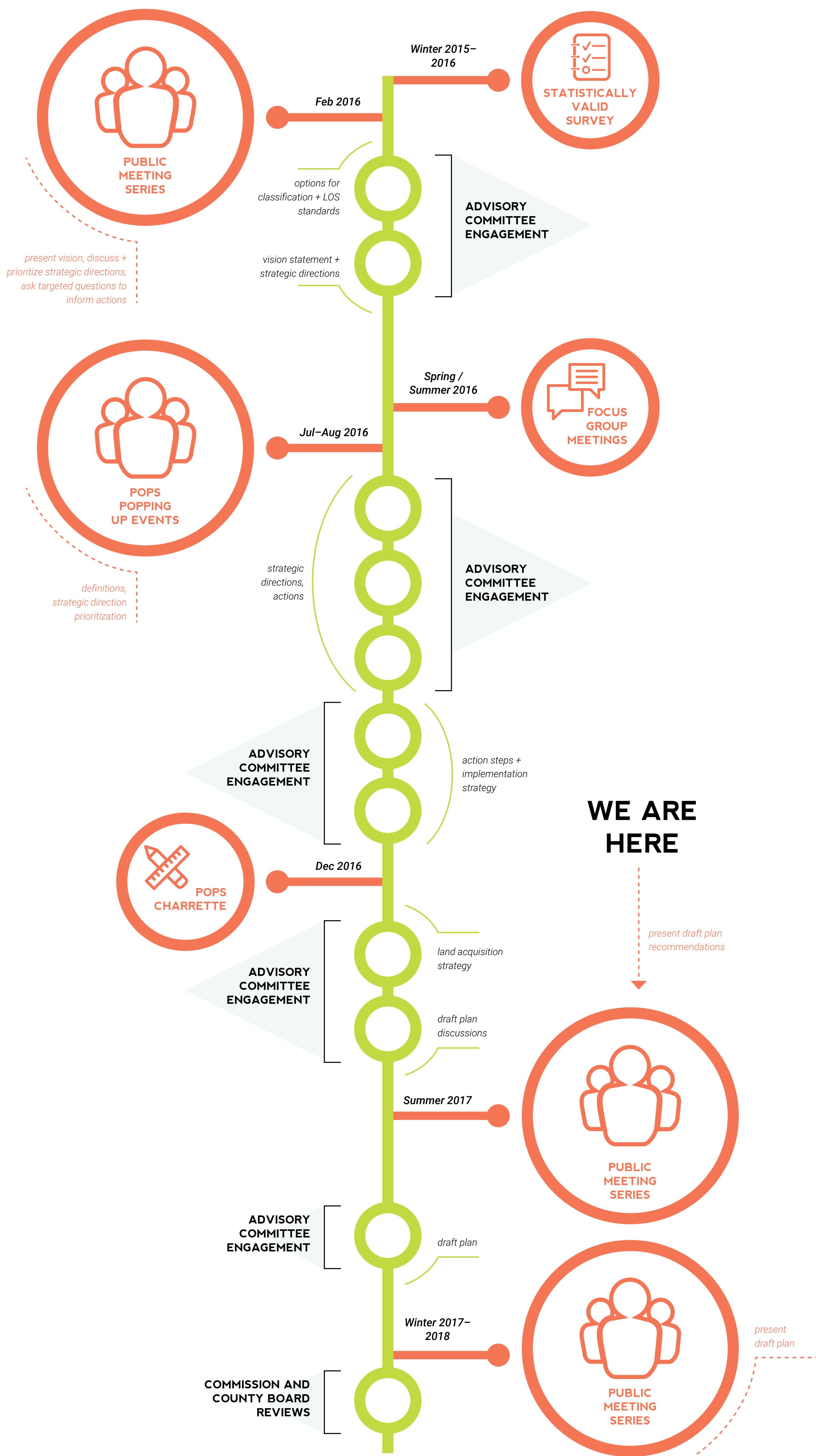
35 

**DIAMOND FIELDS**  
(2 SYNTHETIC)

40% 

**TREE CANOPY**

# WELCOME & CONTEXT



POPS "Popping Up" at Arlington Farmers Market



Public Meeting Series 1 at Arlington Mill Community Center



Millennials Focus Group

## WHERE PEOPLE CAME FROM

- » residents from all over the County participated in the first public meeting series

## TRAVEL TIME & MODE

- » participants are more willing to walk to playgrounds and community gardens
- » they are more willing to drive to athletic fields
- » participants at Courthouse Plaza (a transit-accessible location) generally showed a greater willingness to travel by transit or bicycle to all facilities
- » participants are willing to travel about 10–15 minutes to a playground or community garden
- » they are willing to travel longer to community centers (15–20 minutes) and athletic fields or nature areas (20–25 minutes)

## AMENITIES

- » natural areas and wildlife habitats, athletic fields, and walk/bike trails were among the most important amenities

## PROGRAMS

- » environmental stewardship and nature programs were among the most important programs

## FOOD & ALCOHOL

- » more than 50% of participants support having both food and alcohol in certain designated parks and plazas at least on a temporary basis

## SPENDING PRIORITIES

- » top spending priorities were maintaining and preserving trees and natural areas and acquiring land for new unprogrammed spaces

4 PUBLIC MEETINGS

MINUTES TRAVEL

participants are willing to travel longer distances / time to athletic fields or nature areas compared to playgrounds or community gardens.

NATURAL AREAS + WILDLIFE HABITATS, ATHLETIC FIELDS & WALK/BIKE TRAILS

across all meetings these amenities were considered most important

SPORTS LEAGUES, ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP, NATURE PROGRAMS

across all meetings these programs were considered most important

# PRIORITY ACTIONS

- » **1.1.** Add at least 30 acres of new public space over the next 10 years. *(Find it in the draft plan on p. 70)*



In public meetings, the most common phrase used to describe Arlington's public spaces was "need more." Over half of public survey respondents indicated that they would support acquisition to develop passive facilities. New public space should include a combination of additional land acquired by the County, public space developed by other public entities, privately developed spaces with public easements, and the addition of vertical space.

- » **1.1.2.** Secure or expand the public spaces envisioned by sector, corridor, and other plans adopted by the County Board — including the Clarendon Sector Plan, Virginia Square Plan, Courthouse Sector Plan, Rosslyn Sector Plan, Crystal City Sector Plan, and Columbia Pike Form Based Codes — and ensure they provide amenities that meet County needs. *(Find it in the draft plan on p. 70)*

Adopted County plans provide direction at an urban design scale about where new public spaces will be located. While the size and general function of these spaces may be defined in such plans, the level of service standards set in this plan will guide and complement the selection of amenities to be built in these spaces. As an example, the Courthouse Sector Plan envisions a new Courthouse Square as the premier place for Arlingtonians to gather for conversation, recreation, relaxation, and to celebrate important events. It will provide a centralized civic center and public open space that will engage Arlington's residents, workers, and visitors, and better represent the goals, values, and ideals of the County. As these plans are updated, the PSMP should be used to guide future recommendations.

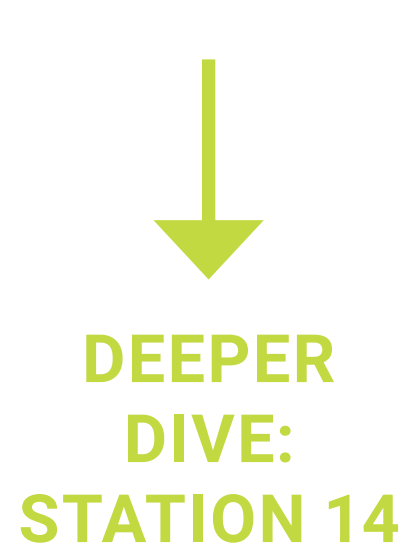
- » **1.2.2.** Complete the implementation of adopted park master plans. *(Find it in the draft plan on p. 75)*

The County Board has adopted a number of park-specific master plans that show the location and type of park elements as well as design guidelines. The County should continue to implement the adopted park master plans for Mosaic Park, Penrose Square, Four Mile Run, Rosslyn Highlands Park, and Jennie Dean Park.

- » **1.2.7.** Develop park master plans, to be adopted by the County Board, for approximately 10 parks that are of high importance to the park system. *(Find it in the draft plan on p. 78)*

A park master plan provides the County with a roadmap for the layout of park facilities and accompanying design guidelines for the future of a particular park. The ten parks identified in this plan focus on the creation of new parks or the complete overhaul of major existing parks.

- » **1.3.** Ensure access to spaces that are intentionally designed to support casual, impromptu use and connection with nature. *(Find it in the draft plan on p. 85)*



Throughout the 2017 POPS process, the community expressed a strong need to preserve and create spaces that can be used for relaxation, reflection, and informal activities — what this plan refers to as "casual use" spaces. These spaces are essential to a public space system that supports the whole community.

- » **1.4.3.** Based on level of service, determine where to reduce duplication of services without reducing the overall quality of service provided to the community. *(Find it in the draft plan on p. 93)*



There are locations where there is a duplication or clustering of one type of amenity, resulting in low usage rates for each. At the same time, these areas may be lacking another type of amenity. This represents an opportunity to better balance the system. By replacing a duplicate with a different amenity, the County can offer a full array of recreation amenities.

- » **1.6.** Ensure high-quality visual and physical access to the Potomac River, Four Mile Run, and their tributaries. *(Find it in the draft plan on p. 97)*

The 2005 Public Spaces Master Plan emphasized planning for Four Mile Run. In the 2017 Arlington POPS process, half of survey respondents indicated that natural areas and wildlife habitats are most important to their households — the second highest rated outdoor amenity. In addition, nearly two-thirds (64 percent) of respondents indicated that would support maintaining and preserving existing trees and natural areas—the highest rated improvement to the parks and recreation system. The Potomac River, Four Mile Run, and their tributaries are the heart of the County's natural framework. Planning for better public spaces along these waterways will enhance their ecological value and promote access to nature.

- » **2.1.** Expand Arlington's network of connected multi-use trails. *(Find it in the draft plan on p. 108)*

Arlington has an extensive trail system that connects many of its public spaces. A trail network that is easily accessible and creates connections among different public spaces can result in a more widely used system of public spaces. Cyclists have more opportunities to stop and use public space amenities, and public space users have protected routes that allow them to discover what amenities are available in other public spaces across the County. Protected routes increase safety and encourage more novice users to participate. In this plan, for example, a new circuit trail that connects the north part of the County to the rest of the trail system is proposed. Many of the strategies in this plan tie into recommendations in the Master Transportation Plan.

- » **3.1.** Update the Natural Resources Management Plan. *(Find it in the draft plan on p. 120)*

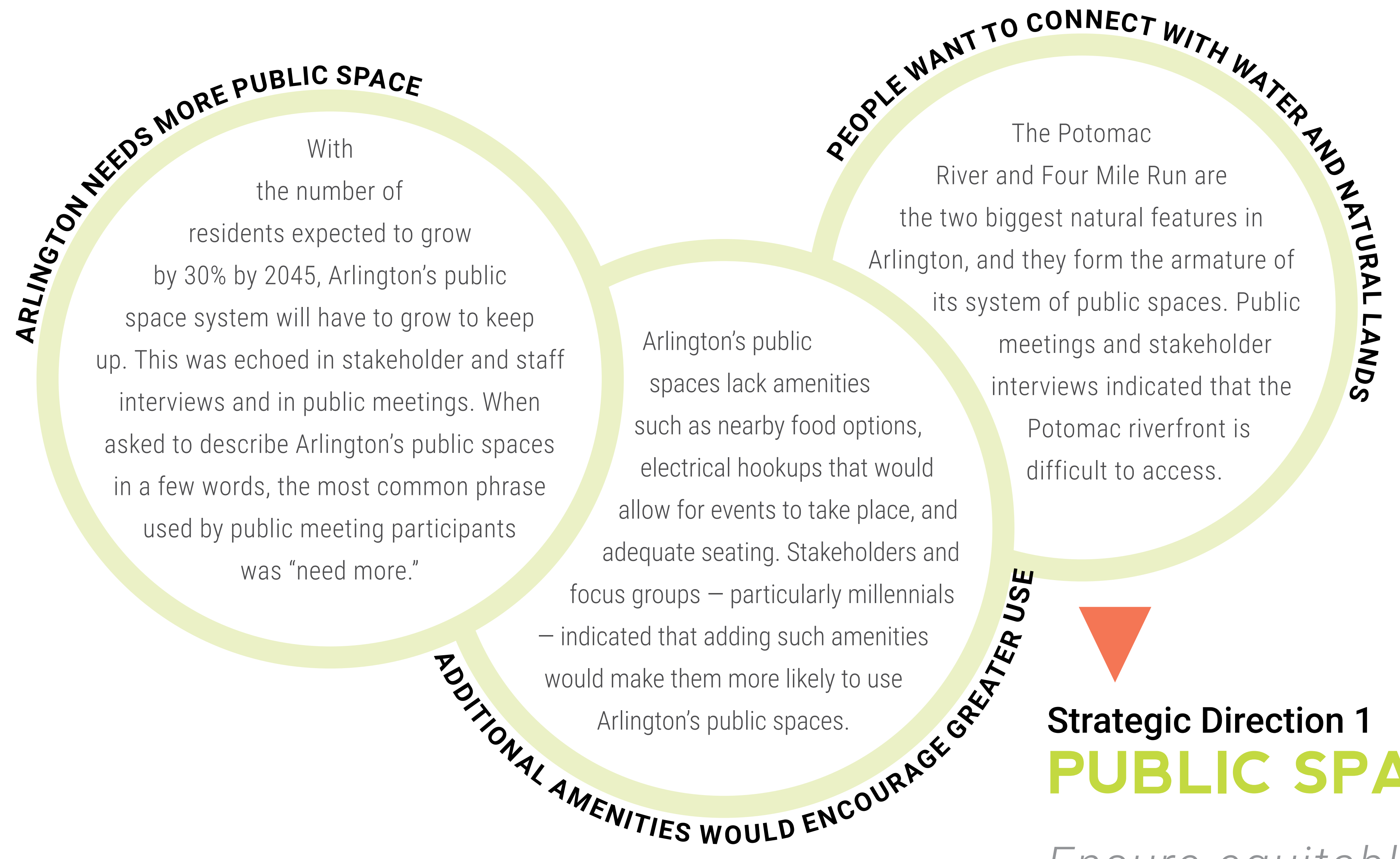
The Natural Resources Management Plan was last updated in 2010. It identifies significant natural resources found in Arlington and provides recommendations and best practices in order to enhance, preserve, and protect the County's natural resources. The process for updating the Natural Resources Management Plan, which is expected to begin following the completion of this plan, shall take into consideration how to move the actions in this plan forward.

- » **3.2.** Update the Urban Forest Master Plan. *(Find it in the draft plan on p. 120)*

The Urban Forest Master Plan was last updated in 2004. The plan includes an inventory of street trees and an analysis of the County's full forest canopy. It provides strategies to preserve and enhance the urban forest in a comprehensive manner. The process for updating the Urban Forest Master Plan, which is expected to begin following the completion of this plan, shall take into consideration how to move the actions in this plan forward.

# STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

The path forward for Arlington's public spaces is captured within the following strategic directions. Each strategic direction is a broad goal that is a reflection of survey results, stakeholder and public input, and analysis, and each is supported by a series of actions that will move Arlington closer to achieving the goal.



## Strategic Direction 1 PUBLIC SPACES

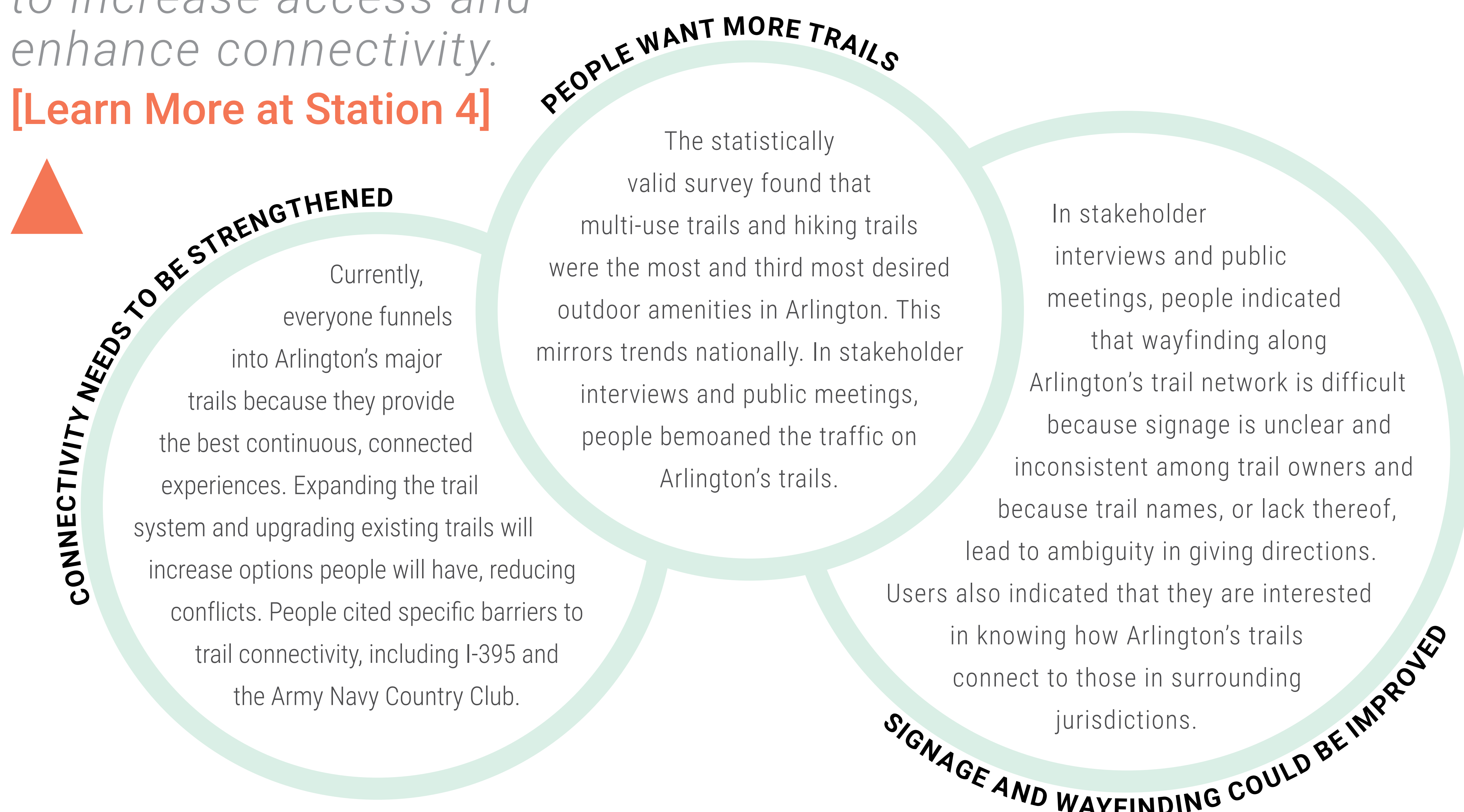
Ensure equitable access to spaces for recreation, play, and enjoying nature by adding and improving public spaces.

[\[Learn More at Station 3\]](#)

## Strategic Direction 2 TRAILS

Improve the network of trails to, within, and between public spaces to increase access and enhance connectivity.

[\[Learn More at Station 4\]](#)



## Strategic Direction 3 RESOURCE STEWARDSHIP

Protect, restore, expand, and enhance natural and historic resources, and increase resource-based activities.

[\[Learn More at Station 5\]](#)



## Strategic Direction 4 PARTNERSHIPS

Expand and clarify partnerships to set mutual expectations and leverage resources creatively and effectively.

[\[Learn More at Station 6\]](#)



# 2

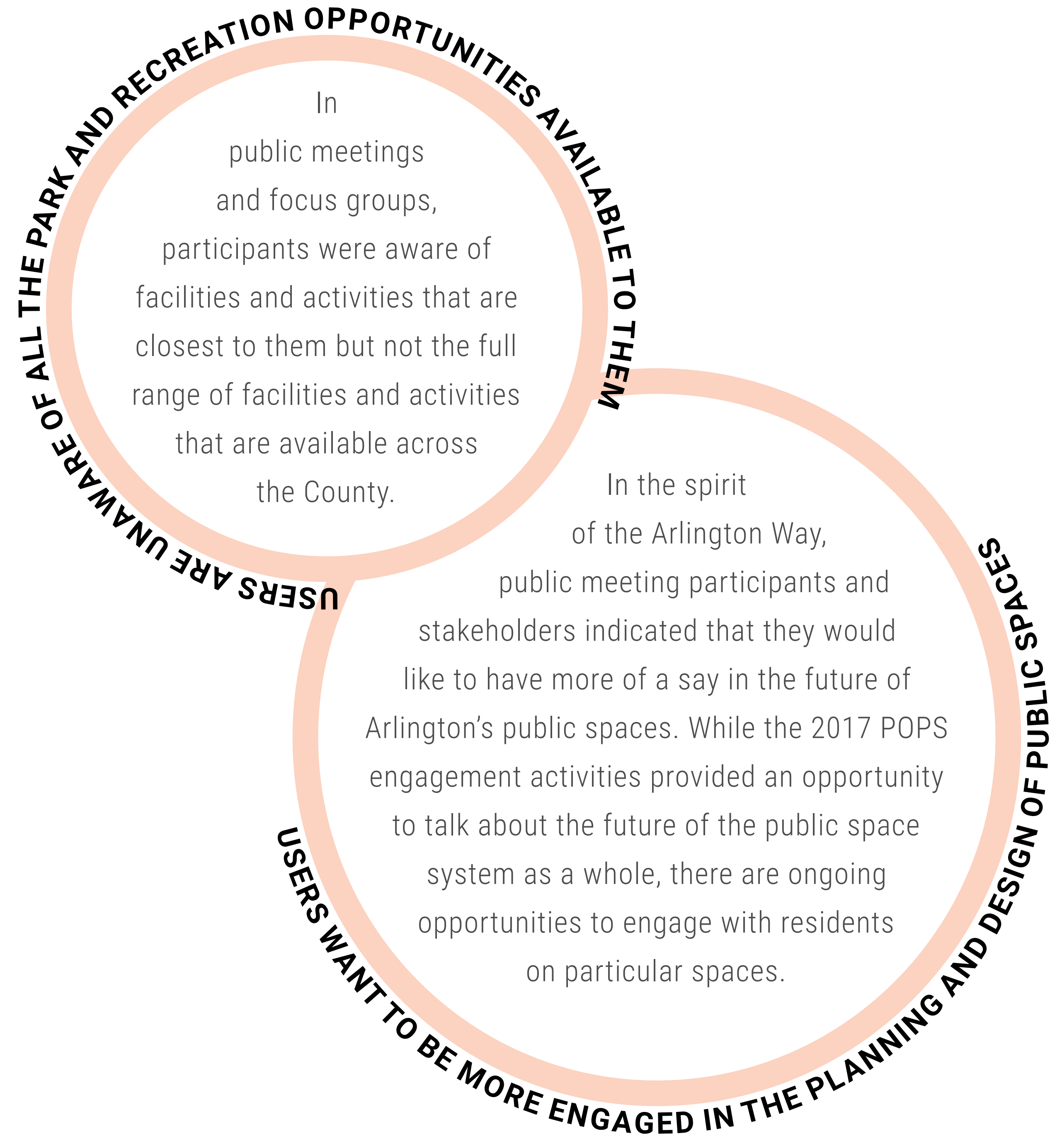
THE DRAFT PLAN

# STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

## Strategic Direction 5 PROGRAMS

Ensure program offerings continue to respond to changing user needs.

[Learn More at Station 7]



## Strategic Direction 6 ENGAGEMENT & COMMUNICATION

Improve community engagement and communication to enhance user satisfaction and foster support for public spaces.

[Learn More at Station 8]

## Strategic Direction 7 OPERATIONS & MAINTENANCE

Ensure County public spaces and facilities are operated and maintained efficiently and to defined standards.

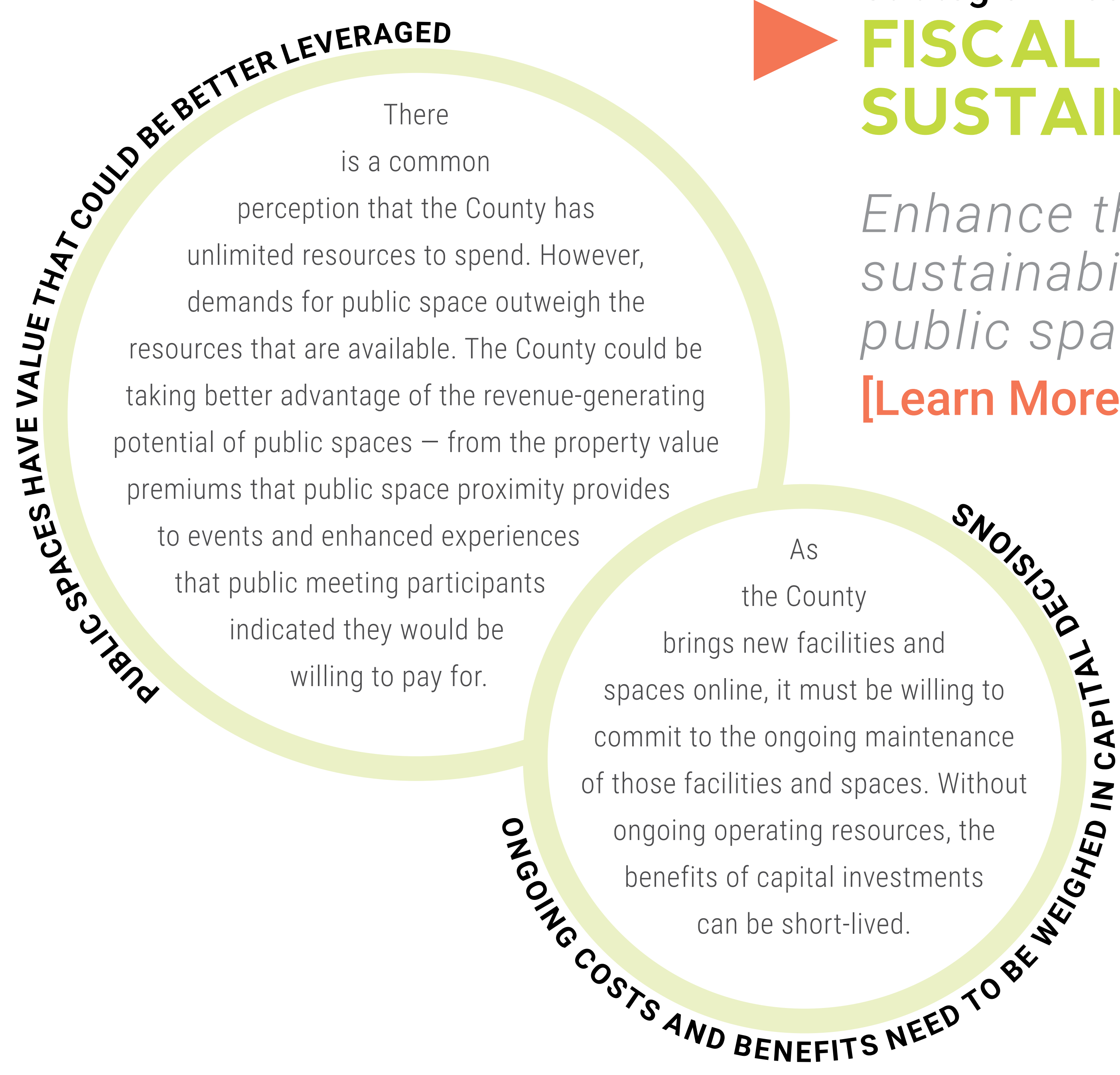
[Learn More at Station 9]



## Strategic Direction 8 FISCAL SUSTAINABILITY

Enhance the financial sustainability of Arlington's public spaces.

[Learn More at Station 10]



## PUBLIC SPACES

ENSURE EQUITABLE ACCESS TO SPACES FOR RECREATION, PLAY, AND ENJOYING NATURE BY ADDING AND IMPROVING PUBLIC SPACES.

(Find it in the draft plan on p. 69–105)



Big Walnut Park

### PRIORITY ACTION

- » 1.1. Add at least 30 acres of new public space over the next 10 years.

↓  
DEEPER DIVE:  
STATION 11

In public meetings, the most common phrase used to describe Arlington's public spaces was "need more." Over half of public survey respondents indicated that they would support acquisition to develop passive facilities. New public space could include additional land acquired by the County, public space developed by other public entities, privately developed spaces with public easements, and the addition of rooftop or similar spaces. Over the past 20 years, the County has acquired approximately 3.25 acres of new parkland per year.

# 30 ACRES

of new public space over the next 10 years is the County's goal.

GIVE US YOUR INPUT!

### PRIORITY ACTION

- » 1.2. Make better use of existing public spaces through system-wide planning and investments in facilities.

In addition to looking for opportunities to grow Arlington's system of public spaces, the County must also make the best use of the space that it currently has through system-wide planning and investments in facilities.

### PRIORITY ACTION

- » 1.3. Ensure access to spaces that are intentionally designed to support casual, impromptu use and connection with nature.

↓  
DEEPER DIVE:  
STATION 14

Throughout the POPS process, the Advisory Committee and stakeholders expressed a strong need to preserve and create spaces that the community can use for relaxation, reflection, and informal activities — what this plan refers to as "casual use" spaces. Sometimes referred to as "unprogrammed" spaces, these spaces are as essential to a functioning public space system as spaces that support organized sports and recreation programs.

- » 1.4. Use a context-sensitive, activity-based approach to providing amenities.

↓  
DEEPER DIVE:  
STATION 12

The 2005 Public Spaces Master Plan recommended that Arlington develop a "clustering philosophy" for providing amenities. Clustering was intended to move the County away from thinking of individual parks or facilities as having to provide all of the amenities a community needs and instead move the County in the direction of thinking about groups of sites together providing the appropriate mix of amenities within a defined boundary. The activity-based approach to providing amenities envisioned in this plan takes the clustering idea further by eliminating the idea of defined boundaries for analyzing groups of amenities. Instead, each amenity will be treated individually when defining what level of service is being provided. In addition, this plan recognizes that access to amenities will not necessarily be the same in high-density and low-density areas. High-density and low-density areas have different development patterns and correspondingly different expectations for access to amenities, and the County will be explicit about what level of service can be expected in these contexts.

- » 1.5. Provide more support services and amenities for public space users.

In stakeholder and public meetings, participants indicated that they would use public spaces more often if they had amenities to make their visit more comfortable — including seating, drinking fountains, restrooms, public art, and concessions. Concessions could include permanent or temporary structures that sell food and alcoholic or non-alcoholic beverages, rent equipment such as bicycles, or offer services such as dog washing. The County should also strive for spaces that are multigenerational and multi-use.

place a sticky note with your ideas here:

COMMENTS

*In public meetings, the most common phrase used to describe Arlington's public spaces was "need more."*

STRATEGIC DIRECTION 1 CONTINUES ON NEXT BOARD

### BEST PRACTICE:

## ROOF SPACES

### WORCESTER POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE, WORCESTER, MA

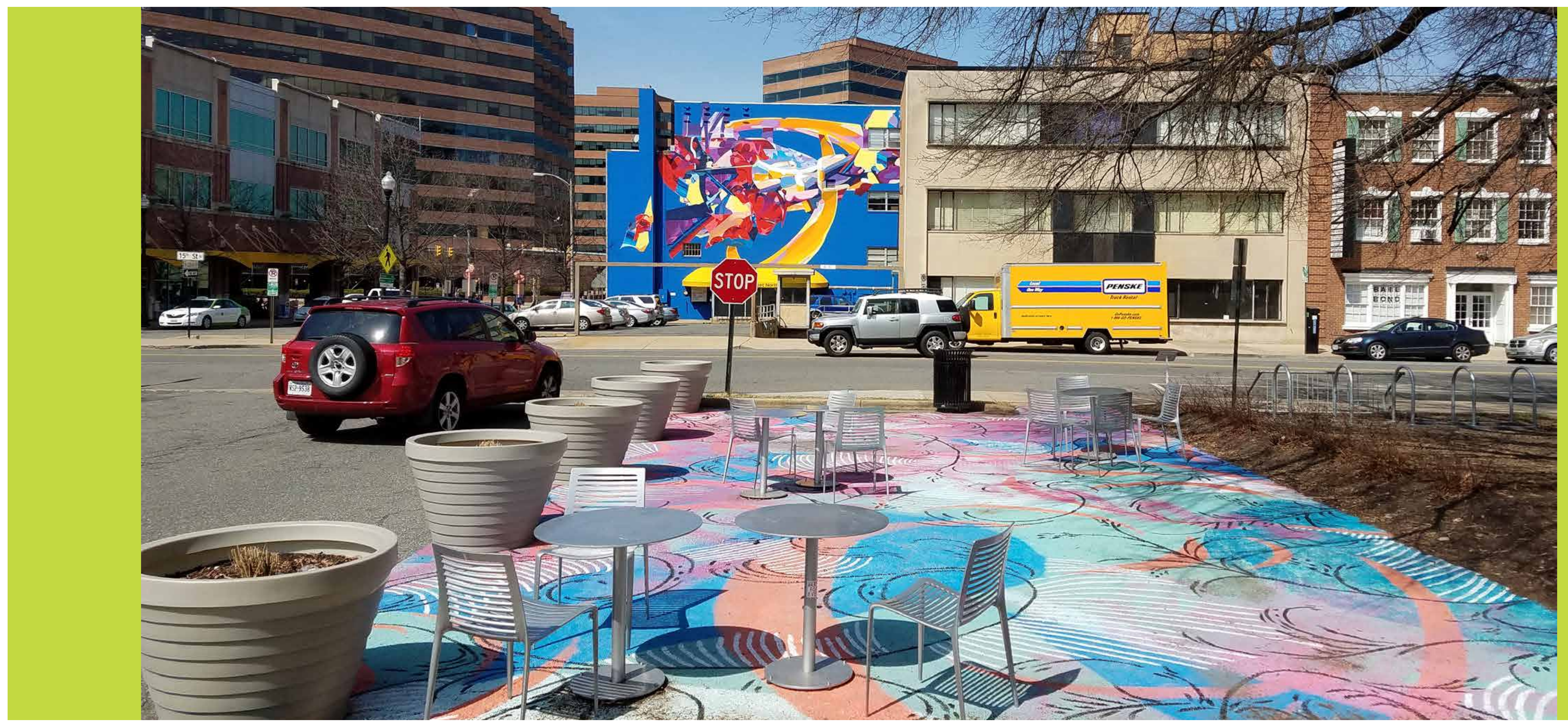
While roofs are sometimes thought of for recreation amenities that require a small footprint, such as basketball or tennis courts, they can also be used for larger amenities. At Worcester Polytechnic Institute, a full-size rectangular field and a full-size diamond field sit atop a parking structure.



## PUBLIC SPACES

ENSURE EQUITABLE ACCESS TO SPACES FOR RECREATION, PLAY, AND ENJOYING NATURE BY ADDING AND IMPROVING PUBLIC SPACES.

(Find it in the draft plan on p. 69–105)



Pop-Up Plaza at the Grove

### PRIORITY ACTION

- » 1.6. Ensure high-quality visual and physical access to the Potomac River, Four Mile Run, and their tributaries.

The 2005 Public Spaces Master Plan emphasized planning for Four Mile Run. In the Arlington POPS process, half of survey respondents indicated that natural areas and wildlife habitats are most important to their households – the second highest rated outdoor amenity. In addition, nearly two-thirds (64 percent) of respondents indicated they would support maintaining and preserving existing trees and natural areas – the highest rated improvement to the parks and recreation system. The Potomac River, Four Mile Run, and their tributaries are the heart of the County’s natural framework. They have been the subject of numerous efforts, including the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Ordinance, Stormwater Management Ordinance, Four Mile Run Restoration Master Plan, Four Mile Run Valley initiative, and Arlington Boathouse Feasibility Study. Building on this work to create better public spaces along Arlington’s waterways will enhance their ecological value and promote access to nature.

- » 1.7. Strive for universal access.

As public spaces are improved, reconfigured, or created, the County will always strive to ensure these spaces are accessible and usable by people of all ages and abilities. This idea goes beyond merely following ADA guidelines to encourage the County to utilize cutting-edge strategies and create spaces that are welcoming and safe for people of varying abilities to interact.

- » 1.8. Strive for a more attractive and sustainable public space system.

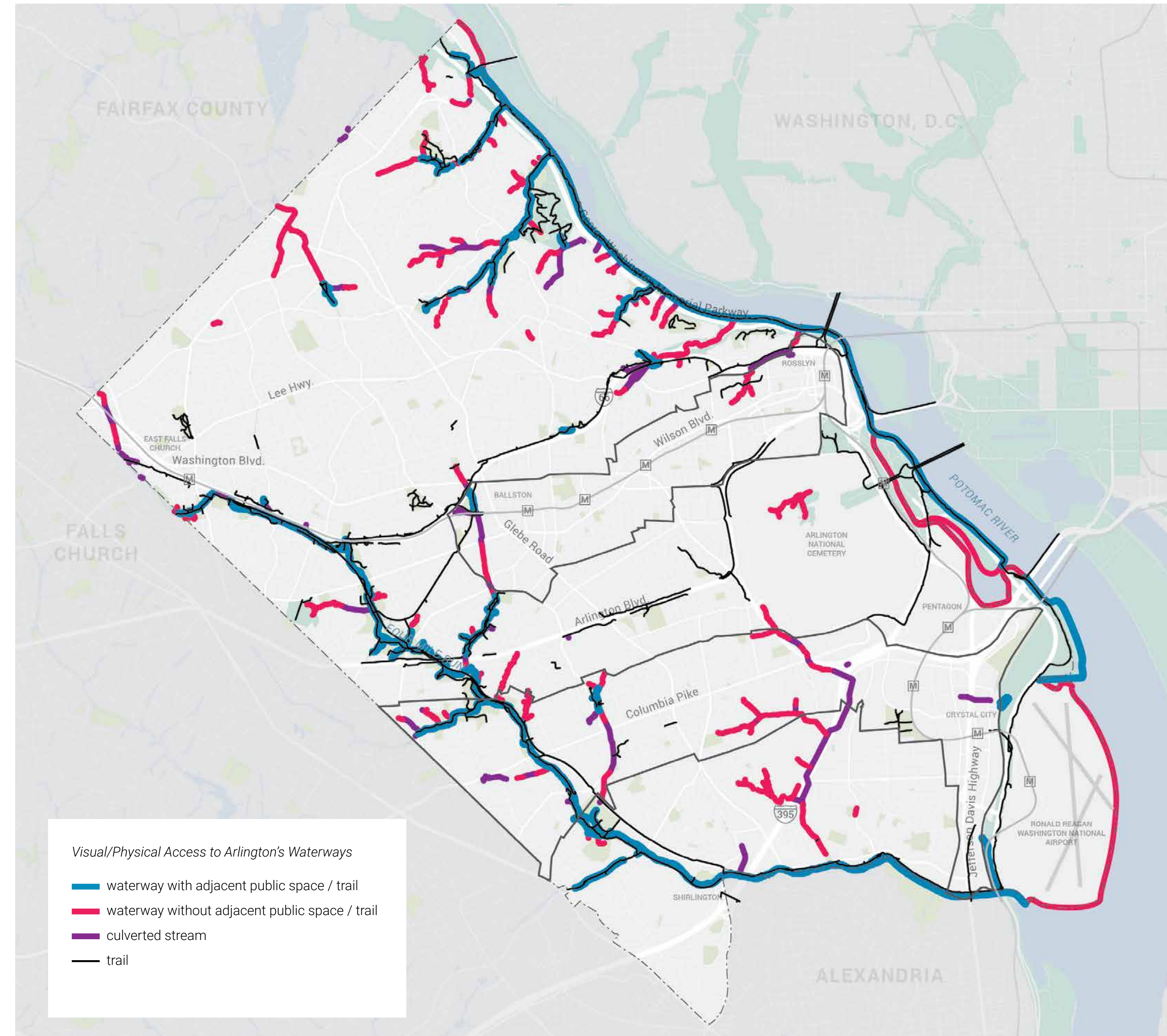
While Arlington County already has many well-designed spaces and sustainability policies guiding its public spaces, continuing to improve in these areas will instill pride in the system and help create a cohesive identity for the County’s public realm.

- » 1.9. Enhance spaces with temporary uses and “pop-up” programming.

Public input during the POPS process revealed a desire for more temporary programming and special events. Temporary uses add an exciting dynamic to public spaces and would enable the County to do more with the space it has. In addition, temporary uses can act as a bridge for areas needing more open space during the time in which those new open spaces are being designed and constructed. The County will explore expanding temporary uses on both public and private land. This idea has already been included in the Rosslyn Sector Plan. While the County does currently allow temporary uses in public spaces, changes may be needed to the zoning code and other County regulations in order to expand and streamline this type of activity.

- » 1.10. Coordinate the construction of new or replacement recreational facilities with the Capital Improvement Plan.

As part of the Comprehensive Plan, this plan sets overarching policy for public spaces in Arlington. All recommendations for new facilities that result from the level of service analysis and other considerations will be considered in future CIP updates.



Tributaries to the Potomac River and Four Mile Run lack continuous access.

place a sticky note with your ideas here:

### COMMENTS

GIVE US YOUR INPUT!

### BEST PRACTICE: DOG RUNS

#### WEST LOOP DOG PARK CHICAGO, IL

Situated in a dense downtown neighborhood, this dog park is just one-tenth of an acre in size. It still includes popular amenities and provides urban dog owners a convenient place to let their pets run around freely. The draft plan includes new standards for smaller dog areas and dog runs.



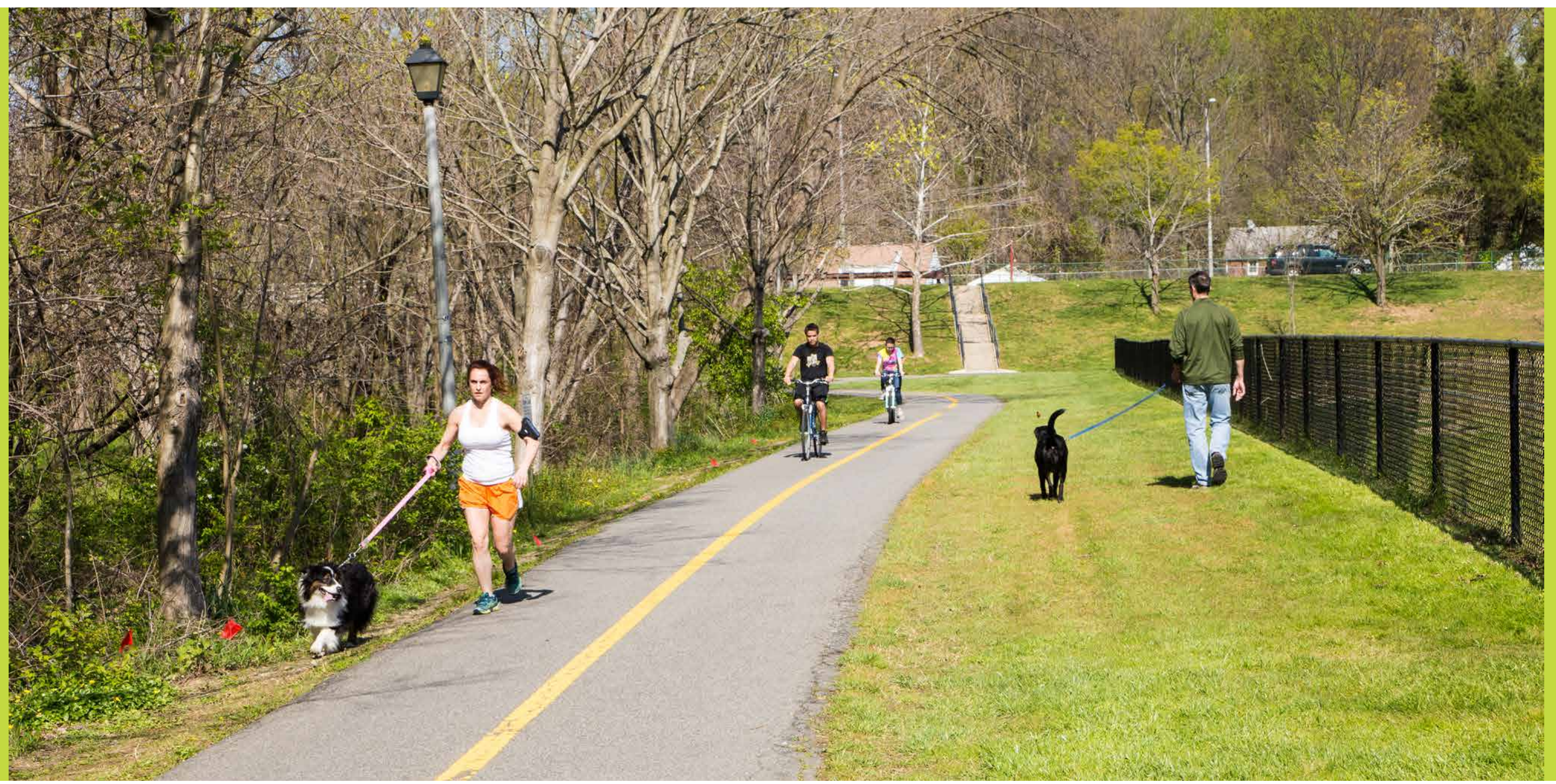
Credit: South Loop Dog Park

# 4 THE DRAFT PLAN TRAILS

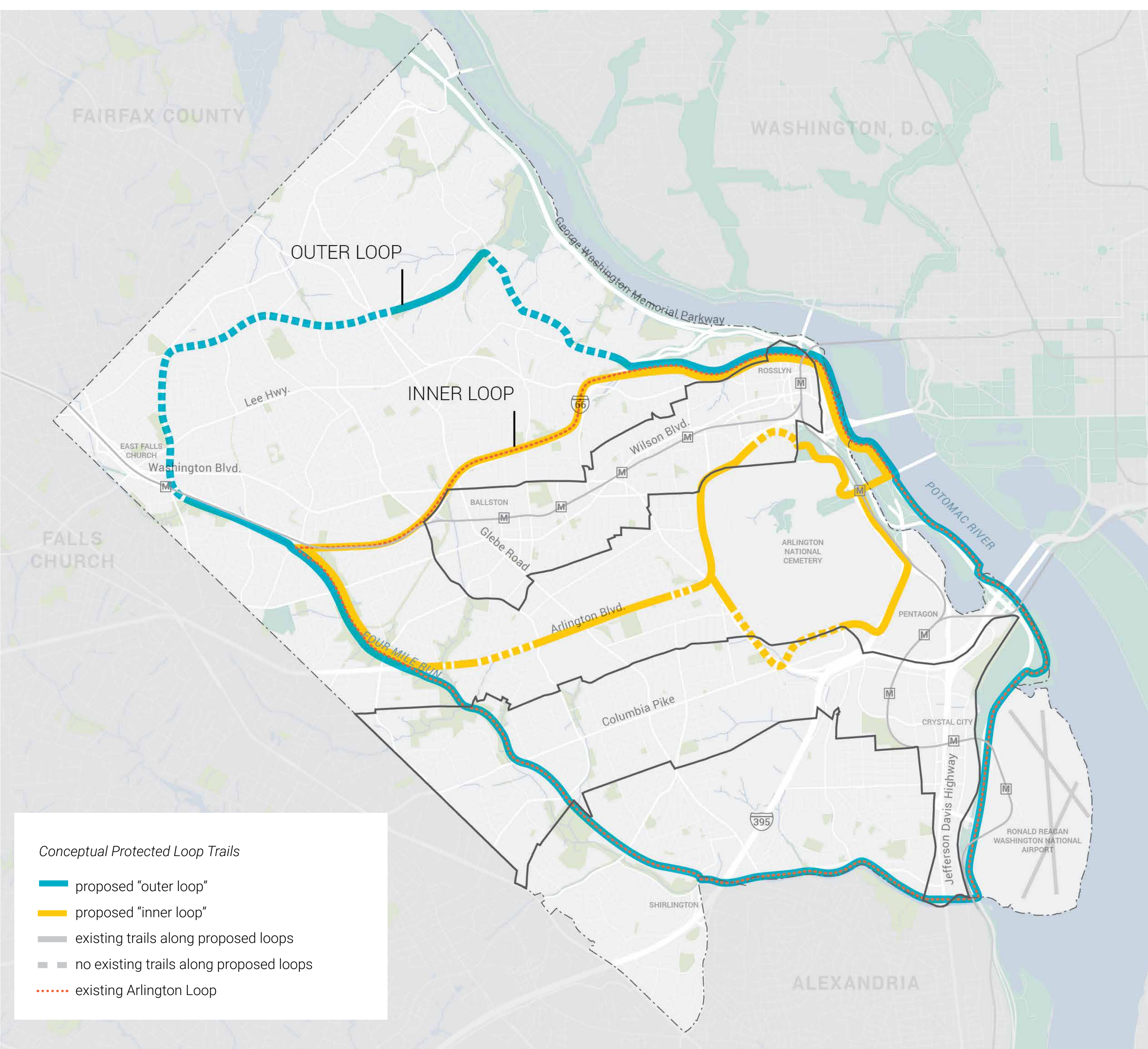
## TRAILS

IMPROVE THE NETWORK OF TRAILS TO, WITHIN, AND BETWEEN PUBLIC SPACES TO INCREASE ACCESS AND ENHANCE CONNECTIVITY.

(Find it in the draft plan on p. 107–117)



Washington & Old Dominion Trail



place a dot on each scale below:

**HOW LIKELY WOULD YOU BE TO USE THE "OUTER LOOP?"**



**HOW LIKELY WOULD YOU BE TO USE THE "INNER LOOP?"**

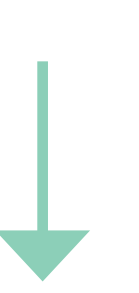


PROPOSED LOOPS

# 16mi OF TRAILS

where users can travel off-street continuously on the Arlington Loop

GIVE US YOUR INPUT!



place a sticky note with your ideas here:  
**WHERE ARE GAPS IN TRAILS? (2.1.5.)**

COMMENTS

GENERAL FEEDBACK:

### PRIORITY ACTION

- » 2.1. Expand Arlington's network of connected multi-use trails.

Arlington has an extensive trail system that connects many of its public spaces. A trail network that is easily accessible and creates connections among different public spaces can result in a more widely used system of public spaces. Cyclists have more opportunities to stop and use public space amenities, and public space users have protected routes that allow them to discover what amenities are available in other public spaces across the County. Protected routes increase safety and encourage more novice users to participate. Many of the strategies listed below tie into recommendations in the Master Transportation Plan.

- » 2.2. Ensure trails function for a range of users.

Some of Arlington's trails are seeing very heavy usage. The more multi-use trails are used, the more potential there is for conflicts between different types of users – including cyclists, skateboarders, pedestrians, and runners of all ages. Through education and trail design, conflicts between different types of users can be minimized.

- » 2.3. Provide or make better connections to hiking trails.

- » 2.4. Develop and implement a consistent signage and wayfinding system.

Consistent signage will instill pride in the trail system and help create a cohesive identity for the variety of trails spread throughout the County. It will also enable users to more confidently and safely navigate the trail system.

- » 2.5. Better coordinate planning for and management of trails.

A variety of County and non-County entities manage trails in Arlington. The best trail user experience can be achieved by ensuring all entities are working in tandem to achieve common planning and management goals.

ACTIONS



The Potomac Heritage Trail, one of Arlington's hiking trail systems, is managed by the National Park Service.

Paved multi-use trails were the most important outdoor facility, while hiking trails were the second most important based on the survey.



# RESOURCE STEWARDSHIP

## RESOURCE STEWARDSHIP

PROTECT, RESTORE, EXPAND, AND ENHANCE NATURAL AND HISTORIC RESOURCES, AND INCREASE RESOURCE-BASED ACTIVITIES.

*(Find it in the draft plan on p. 119–131)*



Four Mile Run

**PRIORITY ACTION**

- » 3.1. Update the Natural Resources Management Plan.

The Natural Resources Management Plan was last updated in 2010. It names significant natural resources found in Arlington and provides recommendations and best practices in order to enhance, preserve and protect the County's natural resources. The process for updating the Natural Resources Management Plan, which is expected to begin following the completion of this plan, shall take into consideration how to move the actions in this plan forward.

**PRIORITY ACTION**

- » 3.2. Update the Urban Forest Master Plan.

The Urban Forest Master Plan was last updated in 2004. The plan includes an inventory of street trees and an analysis of the County's full forest canopy. It provides strategies to preserve and enhance the urban forest in a comprehensive manner. The process for updating the Urban Forest Master Plan, which is expected to begin following the completion of this plan, shall take into consideration how to move the actions in this plan forward.

- » 3.3. Protect, restore, and expand natural resources, particularly in riparian corridors along County waterways.

While natural resources may be located anywhere in the County, the majority of the sites recommended to be included as Natural Resource Conservation Areas (NRCAs) in the 2010 Natural Resources Master Plan are adjacent to waterways. Riparian corridors are important natural and recreational amenities. Therefore, preserving and enhancing natural resources within the County will primarily entail focusing on riparian corridors. Improvements to waterways in Arlington are under the purview of the Chesapeake Bay Protection Ordinance and Arlington County stormwater management policies.

- » 3.4. Integrate natural resources and natural resource interpretation into the design of public spaces.

- » 3.5. Foster, develop, and promote nature-based education, recreation, and training programming across ages and skill levels.

Public input during the Arlington POPS process placed a high priority on nature programs for all ages.

- » 3.6. Promote conservation stewardship volunteerism that enables individuals and organizations to leave a positive legacy in the park system.

Encouraging consistent volunteer participation on behalf of natural resource conservation will provide the County with a steady stream of assistance in managing these resources and will engender ownership and pride in the County's conservation efforts.

- » 3.7. Capitalize on existing historic resources in public spaces, and evaluate the potential of protecting additional historic resources.

A number of Arlington's historic resources are linked with public spaces—for example, Fort C.F. Smith Park and Fort Ethan Allen Park. In accordance with the Historic Preservation Master Plan, the County will preserve historic resources, including those that are public spaces, and allocate funds for their repair and maintenance.

# 64%

## OF PEOPLE

*indicated they would support maintaining and preserving existing trees and natural areas – the highest rated improvement to the public space system*

**GIVE US YOUR INPUT!**



*place a sticky note with your ideas here:*

**COMMENTS**

**ACTIONS**



Fort C. F. Smith Park is a 19-acre park that contains one of the County's historic resources: a Civil War fort.

*A high priority was placed on more hiking trails and nature programming for all ages during public input.*

## PARTNERSHIPS

EXPAND AND CLARIFY PARTNERSHIPS TO SET MUTUAL EXPECTATIONS AND LEVERAGE RESOURCES CREATIVELY AND EFFECTIVELY.

*(Find it in the draft plan on p. 133–141)*



5K Fridays

- » 4.1. Work with Arlington Public Schools (APS) to maximize availability and stewardship of public spaces.

In such a space-constrained County, maximizing the potential for public use of APS spaces is critical to fully utilizing all of the County's assets.

- » 4.2. Work with the National Park Service and other federal, state and regional bodies to elevate the attention paid to their facilities and land in Arlington and ensure consistent experiences.

The County will continue to recognize the benefits, opportunities, and challenges provided by Arlington's prime location in the National Capital region, and promote an appropriately high quality of resource protection, sound design of public spaces and facilities, and cooperative planning.

- » 4.3. Regularly revise or create new agreements with partner organizations to ensure fair and efficient relationships.

As circumstances change, partnership agreements may need to be periodically updated to accurately reflect roles and responsibilities.

- » 4.4. Support and strengthen the County's volunteer programs for public spaces and trails.

The County will continue to seek ways to make it as easy as possible to volunteer to improve public spaces and to increase the number of opportunities that exist. This includes expanding and improving existing volunteer programs – such as the successful Master Naturalists and Master Gardeners programs – and seeking new opportunities for engaging volunteers.

*A high priority was placed on expanding volunteer programs and opportunities during public input.*

**GIVE US YOUR INPUT!**



*place a sticky note with your ideas here:*

COMMENTS

*There is latent desire among business improvement districts, sports groups, and others to pitch in and improve Arlington's public spaces.*

## 17 YEAR FORMAL PARTNERSHIP

*between Arlington County and the Northern Virginia Conservation Trust (NVCT) to preserve resources in Arlington and region-wide*

IN PROGRESS:

## WILSON SCHOOL

Arlington is in the process of redesigning an expanded Wilson School in the Rosslyn neighborhood. The current plan features an innovative design with active rooftops and communal spaces.



## PROGRAMS

ENSURE PROGRAM OFFERINGS CONTINUE TO RESPOND TO CHANGING USER NEEDS.

*(Find it in the draft plan on p. 143–147)*



Barcroft Sports and Fitness Center

- » 5.1. Regularly evaluate program demand and adjust offerings.
 

In order to provide the most up-to-date offerings best suited for residents' needs and interests and population growth trends, program offerings will be periodically adjusted.
- » 5.2. Implement best practices in program life cycles to maintain a culture of quality program delivery.
 

Program life cycles indicate the different stages a program moves through during its lifetime. It is a best practice to have a healthy mix of programs at different stages in order to consistently be bringing new programs into operation while retiring ones that are no longer popular.
- » 5.3. Periodically evaluate each program's participation, finances, and outcomes.
- » 5.4. Periodically evaluate programmed uses of indoor and outdoor spaces to identify needs for additional space and opportunities to reallocate space.
- » 5.5. Continue to strengthen the County's commitment to improving public health and wellness through public space programming.
 

In both the survey and in stakeholder and staff interviews, fitness, wellness and nature programs were high priorities.
- » 5.6. Use programming to activate parks and public spaces.

*place a sticky note with your ideas here:*

COMMENTS

↑  
GIVE US YOUR INPUT!

*A high priority was placed on fitness, wellness, and nature programming during public input.*



55+ fitness classes, like this one at Arlington Mill Community & Senior Center, are increasingly popular.

# 90,000

## PROGRAM REGISTRATIONS

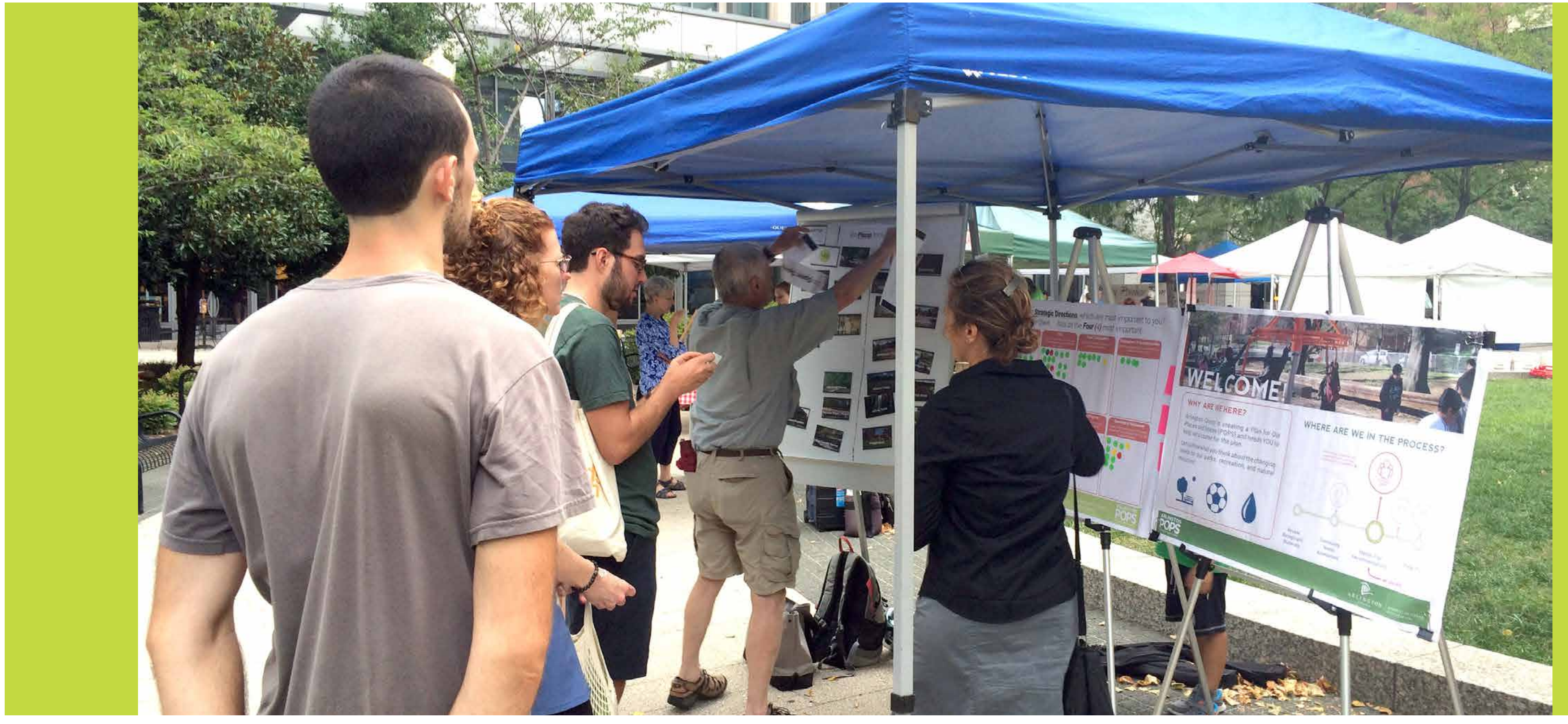
*on an annual basis including over 30,000 for classes, 40,000 for sports, and 12,000 for camps.*

# ENGAGEMENT & COMMUNICATION

## ENGAGEMENT & COMMUNICATION

IMPROVE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION TO ENHANCE USER SATISFACTION AND FOSTER SUPPORT FOR PUBLIC SPACES.

*(Find it in the draft plan on p. 149–155)*



2017 POPS Popping Up at Ballston Farmers Market

- » 6.1. Engage users, partners, and County staff in the planning, development, programming, and maintenance of parks and public spaces.

The POPS public engagement process revealed that residents desire more input into public space planning and program development processes. Maximum involvement and participation by all stakeholders will engender ownership, interest and pride in the public space system.

- » 6.2. Update and develop new marketing and communication materials and programs that increase awareness and highlight the benefits of public spaces, recreation facilities, programs, and services and inspire users to participate more often.

- » 6.3. Annually review and update a marketing plan for public spaces and programs.

While various County, regional, and federal entities already market their respective public spaces, marketing the complete set of public space offerings throughout Arlington would give residents and visitors a seamless and comprehensive view of the public space network.

- » 6.4. Monitor and evaluate trends in communication and engagement tools and platforms that can increase public space users' interaction with the County.

The County will strive to stay at the forefront of communication and public engagement techniques, including technology-based tools

- » 6.5. Include public spaces in economic development and tourism messaging.

Public space is a critical component of placemaking and the physical development of key economic zones. Arlington will champion its wide variety of public spaces when seeking to attract new business and new visitors.

- » 6.6. Evaluate and enhance the County's online and social media presence in relation to public spaces.

- » 6.7. Regularly measure and report on the progress of plan implementation.



*Residents expressed a desire for a more meaningful feedback loop of communication with the County when it comes to public spaces planning.*

place a sticky note with your ideas here:

COMMENTS

↑  
**GIVE US YOUR INPUT!**

*Residents want more opportunities to be engaged in planning and program development for public spaces.*



Lubber Run Community Center Project

# 1470 SURVEYS

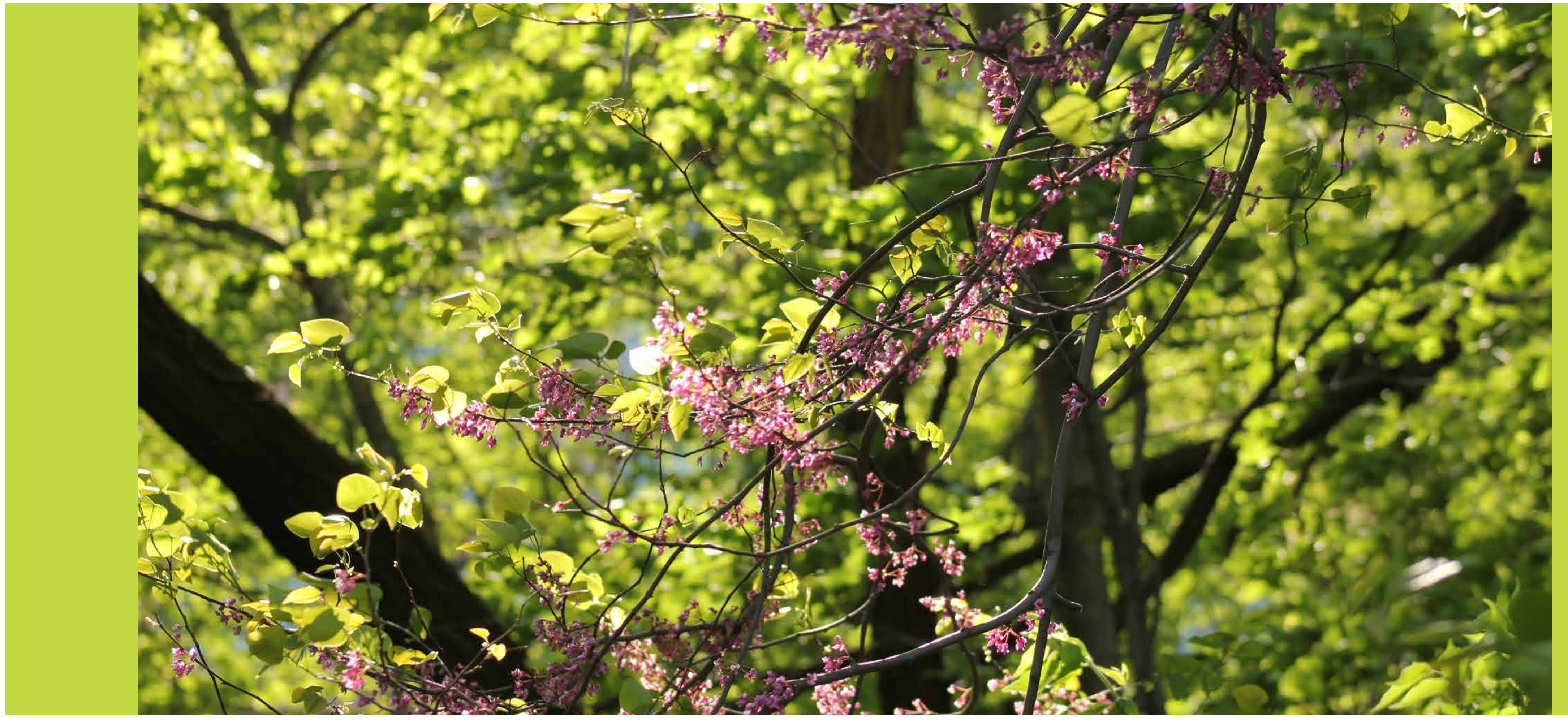
*were completed during the POPS process to collect information about County needs and priorities for public space.*

# OPERATIONS & MAINTENANCE

## OPERATIONS & MAINTENANCE

ENSURE COUNTY PUBLIC SPACES AND FACILITIES ARE OPERATED AND MAINTAINED EFFICIENTLY AND TO DEFINED STANDARDS.

(Find it in the draft plan on p. 157–161)



Crystal City Connector

- » 7.1. Ensure maintenance standards are clear, consistently implemented, and being met.

Through site analysis, the public survey, and stakeholder interviews, it was reported that similar public spaces are maintained to different standards. Clarifying and regularizing maintenance standards will ensure high-quality spaces across the entire system.

**7.1.1. Define and regularly update levels of maintenance standards for each type of indoor and outdoor facility to revise existing maintenance policies and guidelines.**

Different types of facilities see different levels of utilization and require different maintenance strategies and schedules, which may need to be updated if a facility begins to see a change in utilization.

**7.1.4. Review and revise trail maintenance standards to address trimming, repaving, snow removal, and safety.**

- » 7.2. Strengthen sustainability policies.

Resource consumption has a direct impact on natural resources within Arlington and beyond. By elevating the environmental profile of public spaces, the County has an opportunity to lead by example and preserve and conserve natural resources. Incorporating best sustainability practices into park and recreational facility maintenance can decrease the County's environmental footprint, reduce costs, and serve as a model to other organizations and citizens for how to change their own practices.

**7.2.4. Continue to utilize native plant species and water-wise plant materials as recommended in the Natural Resources Management Plan.**

Native plant species are adapted to the local climate of Arlington and provide better wildlife habitat while generally requiring less watering and maintenance to thrive, as is the case with most water-wise plants.

**7.2.5. Continue and enhance non-native invasive species management as recommended in the Natural Resources Management Plan. (See also 3.4.3.)**

Non-native invasive species are detrimental to the local ecology by competing with native species for resources and disrupting established ecological cycles

*Employing sustainable practices can decrease the County's environmental footprint and also reduce the overall cost of maintenance.*

**GIVE US YOUR INPUT!**



place a sticky note with your ideas here:

COMMENTS

ACTIONS



Clearing snow at T.J.

## MAINTAIN SPACES ACROSS THE SYSTEM

*Residents and stakeholders want similar public spaces maintained to the same set of standards.*

# 10 THE DRAFT PLAN FISCAL SUSTAINABILITY

## FISCAL SUSTAINABILITY

ENHANCE THE FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY OF ARLINGTON'S PUBLIC SPACES.

*(Find it in the draft plan on p. 163–169)*



Fort C.F. Smith Trail

- » 8.1. Secure funding to support development and maintenance of public spaces and that those public funds are efficiently and wisely spent.

First and foremost, the public space system needs to be adequately funded and efficiently managed by the County so that residents, workers, and visitors continue to have access to high-quality spaces and programs. A park and open space system that is responsive to the County's growing needs will require sufficient and consistent County funding, including annual maintenance and programming budget support and long-term capital investments.

- » 8.2. Identify and pursue non-County funding sources to supplement County funds in order to support capital improvements and programs.

Traditionally, the County has relied almost exclusively on bond programs to fund capital improvements and programs. As with other park and recreation service providers across the country, the County is trying to stretch and leverage public funding. Increasingly, cities and parks agencies are exploring outside funding sources to supplement their budgets, for example through partnerships with corporations and foundations and local fundraising.

- » 8.3. Increase consideration of up-front and ongoing costs and benefits in maintenance and capital decisions.

Arlington County's Policy for Integrated Facility Sustainability not only requires environmental sustainability of County buildings but encourages budget planning and life cycle cost analysis. This will extend to decisions surrounding public space investments. The County should be sure to only move forward with capital projects that it can afford to maintain.

- » 8.4. Permit revenue generating uses in public spaces.

The County's public spaces have untapped potential as a source of revenue. Leasing rights of way or permitting concessions (including food, alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages) can generate revenue while at the same time providing amenities for users.

- » 8.5. Leverage the value of public spaces.

Public spaces are increasingly valuable for surrounding property values, providing a boost to both residential and commercial areas. Particularly in high density areas, public space is essential to attracting businesses and talent. The added value provided by public spaces will be harnessed effectively to provide additional investment and public benefits.

- » 8.6. Regularly update a recreational fees and charges policy based on a defined pricing philosophy.

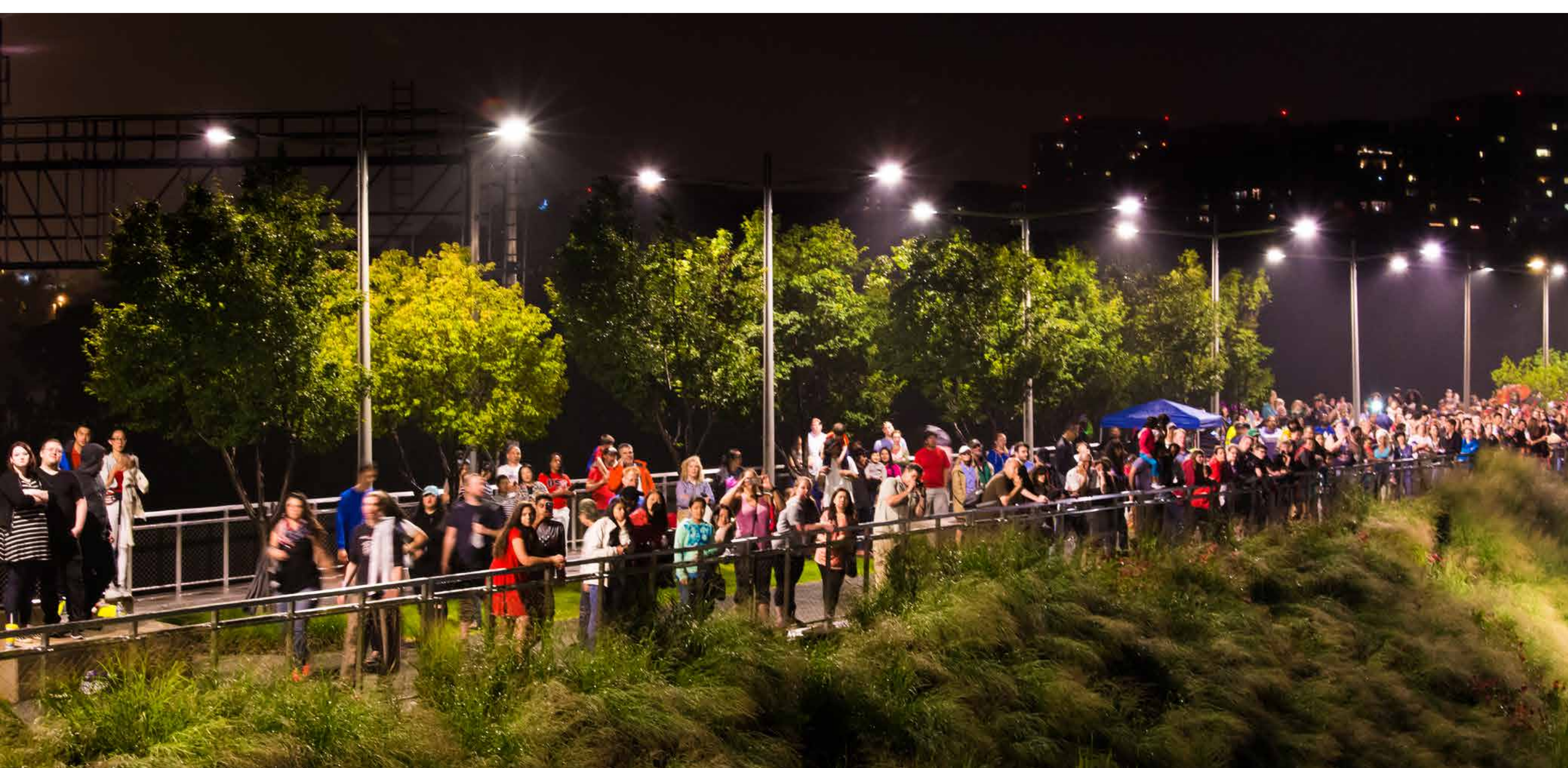
As the County grows and changes, the relationship of fees and charges to funding levels fluctuates and creates inconsistencies across the public space system. A defined pricing philosophy will provide predictability and consistency across the department, enabling staff to objectively evaluate fee structures periodically.

- » 8.7. Ensure that maintenance techniques and standards are consistent between APS, DPR, and DES for landscaping and other natural features on school grounds as well as structures like benches and lighting.

## LEVERAGING PUBLIC SPACES

*Added value from public spaces can stimulate investment and attract new businesses and residents.*

ACTIONS



Residents and visitors crowd the Esplanade at Long Bridge Park.

# 54%

## SUPPORT SALE OF FOOD & ALCOHOL

*in designated parks and plazas (from the statistically valid PSMP survey)*

place a sticky note with your ideas here:

COMMENTS

↑  
GIVE US YOUR INPUT!

POLICY

## 1.1. ADD AT LEAST 30 ACRES OF NEW PUBLIC SPACE OVER THE NEXT 10 YEARS.

(Find it in the draft plan on p. 70)



### ACQUIRED SINCE 1995

total from FY 1995 to FY 2016

WAYS TO MEET THE TARGET

- » **acquiring land (1.1.);**
- » securing the spaces in adopted sector, corridor, and other plans (1.1.2.);
- » incorporating these recommendations into sector, corridor, and other plans based on level of service analyses (1.1.3.);
- » acquiring ownership or easements from willing sellers along County waterways (1.1.5.);
- » strengthening and expanding transfer of development rights (1.1.6.);
- » decking over highways (1.1.7.);
- » reducing parking and maximizing roof space (1.1.8.);
- » reusing surplus properties (1.1.9.);
- » acquiring defunct private indoor and outdoor recreation facilities (1.1.10.)

OPPORTUNITIES

- » **sites identified in adopted County plans**
- » **sites strategically identified by the County to meet a particular need that supports the actions in the PSMP**
- » **opportunities identified by the public**

*Having clear guidelines for public space land acquisition, used in coordination with the County's level of service analysis for public space amenities, provides the County with a way to objectively evaluate potential acquisition opportunities against the broader public space goals of this plan.*

ACQUISITION CRITERIA FRAMEWORK

### HOW STAFF WILL RECOMMEND POTENTIAL ACQUISITIONS TO THE COUNTY BOARD:

In order to weigh these opportunities, acquisition criteria have been developed to guide the County's evaluation and decision making process. The criteria are divided into 3 parts:

- » Part I assesses alignment with other County priorities. All the criteria in Part I apply to every potential acquisition.
- » Part II assesses alignment with the strategic directions of this plan. All the criteria outlined for Part II apply to every potential acquisition.
- » Part III assesses alignment with level of service analysis and goals particular to the intended eventual use of the site. There are three subsections of criteria for Part III based on the highest resource value for the proposed site: recreational resource value, natural resource value, or historic resource value. Each site will be evaluated using whichever of the three resource values is being considered.

(Find it in the draft plan on p. 207–212)

#### PART I

**Alignment with Other County Priorities**  
gauges alignment with other County priorities

#### PART II

**Alignment with PSMP Priorities**  
gauges alignment with the strategic directions of this plan

#### PART III

**Resource Value**  
gauges alignment with goals particular to the intended use of the site

- » recreational resource value
- » natural resource value
- » historic resource value

COMMENTS

*place a sticky note with your input on the acquisition criteria framework:*

# 12 DEEPER DIVES LEVEL OF SERVICE

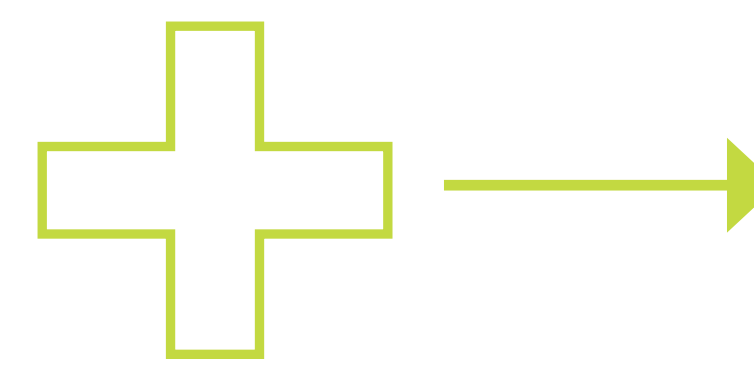
CONTEXT

## POPULATION BASED STANDARDS

- » how many of a facility does Arlington have per resident?
- » how many would we like to have?

## ACCESS STANDARDS

- » how close should residents be to a type of facility?
- » how does that compare with where the facilities are?



The population-based and access standards together provide a snapshot of the level of service currently provided and a roadmap to providing additional amenities.

- » where should we add / remove / repurpose facilities?
- » where should we work with partners?
- » where should we advocate for private development of particular facilities?

(Find it in the draft plan on p. 89–92)

POPULATION-BASED

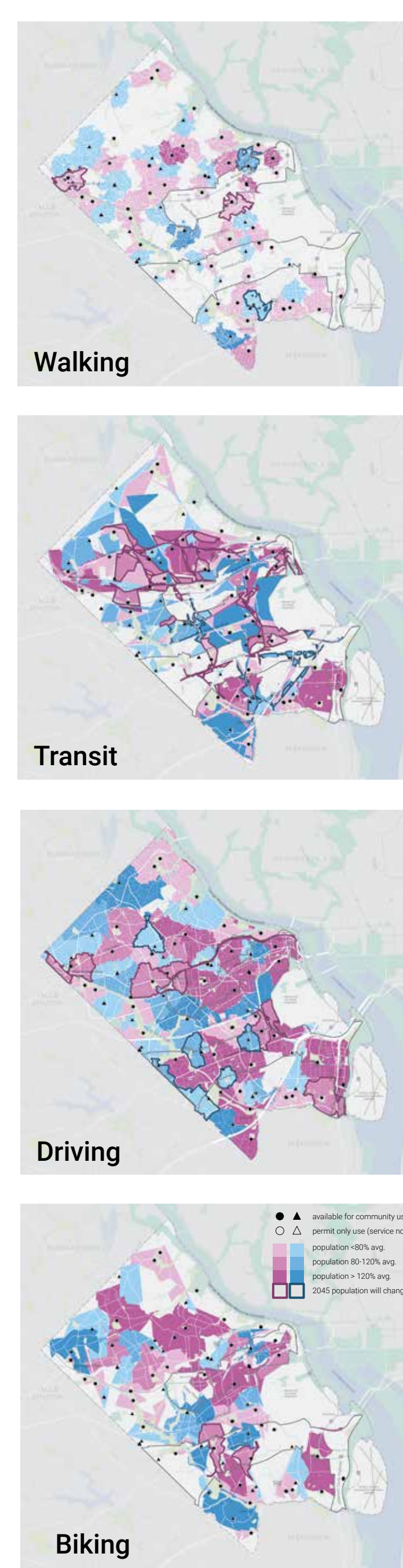
	Population-Based Standards										Incremental Units Needed					
	Units	Inven-tory	Current LOS	Peer Median	Typical	Survey Priority	Recomm-ended LOS	2016	2025	2035	2045	Total				
Basketball Courts	each	87	1/	2,547	1/	2,132	1/	6,000	Medium	1/	3,000	0	0	2	8	10
Community Gardens	each	7	1/	31,651	1/	37,205	1/	30,000	Medium	1/	30,000	1	1	0	1	3
Multi-Use Trails	miles	48.4	1/	4,577	1/	N/A	1/	2,500	High	1/	3,300	19	7	7	7	40
Off-Leash Dog Parks	each	8	1/	27,695	1/	59,426	1/	40,000	Medium	1/	25,000	1	1	1	1	4
Playgrounds	each	126	1/	1,758	1/	3,101	1/	3,500	Medium	1/	3,000	0	0	0	0	0
Casual Use Spaces																
Diamond Fields	each	43	1/	5,153	1/	4,107	1/	6,000	Low	1/	6,000	0	0	2	4	6
Tennis Courts	each	92	1/	2,408	1/	3,768	1/	4,000	Medium	1/	3,000	0	0	0	5	5
Picnic Areas	each	45	1/	4,924	1/	N/A	1/	6,000	Medium	1/	5,000	0	4	5	4	13
Rectangular Fields	each	53	1/	4,180	1/	3,643	1/	6,000	Medium	1/	4,200	0	6	5	5	16
Volleyball Courts	each	10	1/	22,156	1/	N/A	1/	12,000	Low	1/	20,000	2	1	1	1	5
Comm. Rec. and Sports Centers	sq. ft.	386,223	1/	0.57	1/	N/A	1/	0.74	Medium	1/	0.57	0	39,333	37,443	40,356	117,132
Hiking Trails	miles	14.5	1/	15,242	1/	N/A	1/	10,000	High	1/	10,000	8	2	3	2	15
Indoor and Outdoor Pools	each	4	1/	55,390	1/	N/A	1/	40,000	High	1/	40,000	2	1	0	1	4
Natural Areas	acres	1,127	1/	197	1/	N/A	1/	333	High	1/	200	0	96	108	116	320
Nature Centers	each	3	1/	73,853	1/	110,900	1/	50,000	Medium	1/	75,000	0	1	0	0	1
Skate Parks	each	1	1/	221,560	1/	118,851	1/	40,000	Low	1/	120,000	1	1	0	0	2
Small Game Courts	each	14	1/	15,826	1/	N/A	1/	6,000	Low	1/	8,000	14	3	3	3	23
Spraygrounds	each	5	1/	44,312	1/	N/A	1/	45,000	Medium	1/	45,000	0	1	0	1	2
Tracks	each	3	1/	44,312	1/	N/A	1/	45,000	N/A	1/	35,000	4	0	1	1	6

- » **population-based standards** are expressed as a ratio of amenities to people, which indicates whether more or fewer parks or amenities are needed.
- » **access standards** are based on times rather than distances - they incorporate different times for high density areas and low density areas for each amenity.
- » amenities with access standards are grouped into two categories:
  - » reachable within 5 of minutes of travel in a high density area and 10 minutes of travel in a low density area
  - » those that should be reachable within 10 minutes of travel in a high density area and 20 minutes of travel in a low density area.

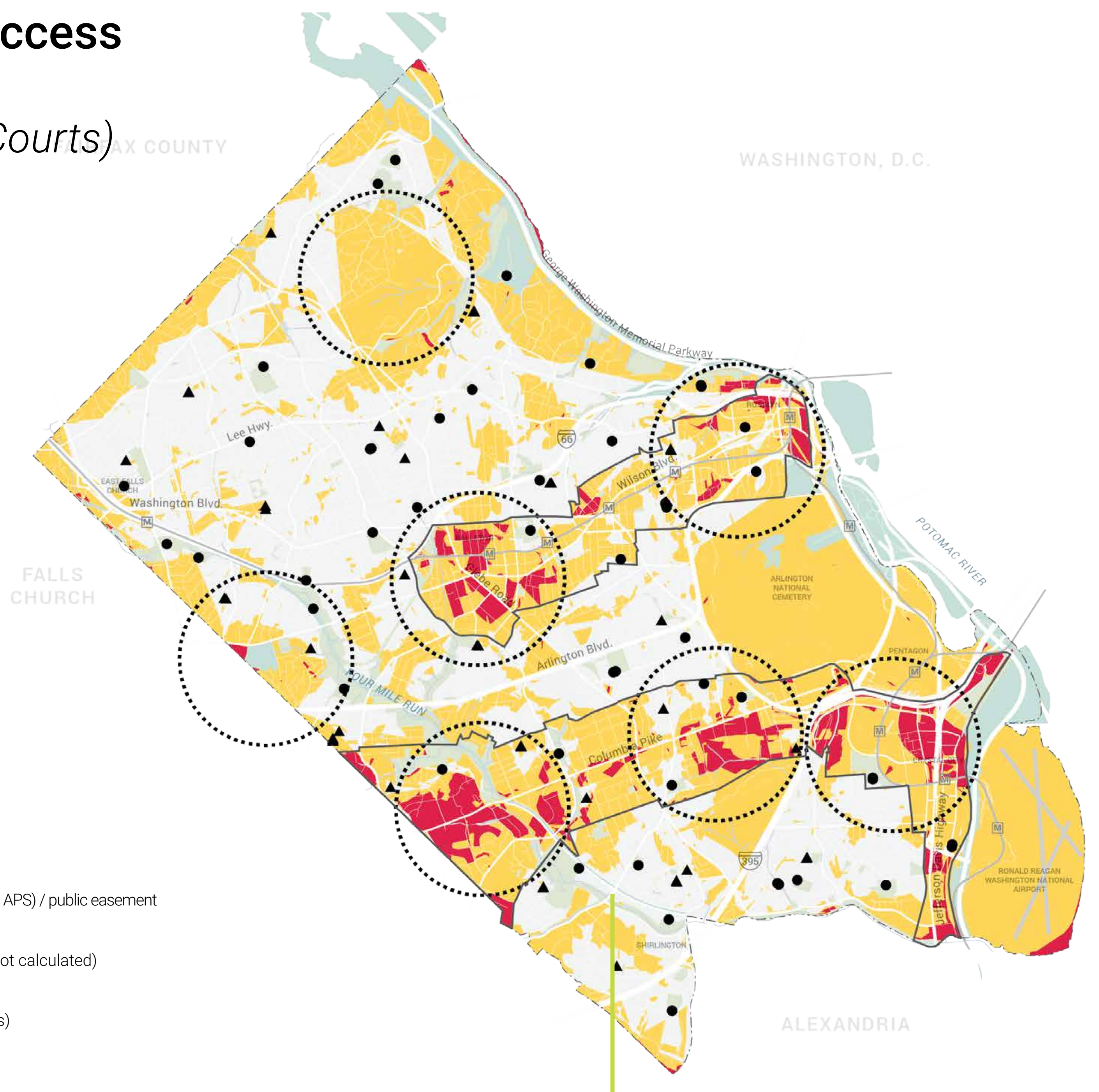
ACCESS STANDARDS

	Access Standards	
	High Density Areas	Low Density Areas
Basketball Courts	5 min	10 min
Community Gardens	5 min	10 min
Multi-Use Trails	5 min	10 min
Off-Leash Dog Parks	5 min	10 min
Playgrounds	5 min	10 min
Casual Use Spaces		
Diamond Fields	10 min	20 min
Tennis Courts	10 min	20 min
Picnic Areas	10 min	20 min
Rectangular Fields	10 min	20 min
Volleyball Courts	10 min	20 min
Comm. Rec. and Sports Centers		
Hiking Trails		
Indoor and Outdoor Pools		
Natural Areas		
Nature Centers		
Skate Parks		
Small Game Courts		
Spraygrounds		
Tracks		

Access standards do not apply



### Example Access Analysis (Basketball Courts)

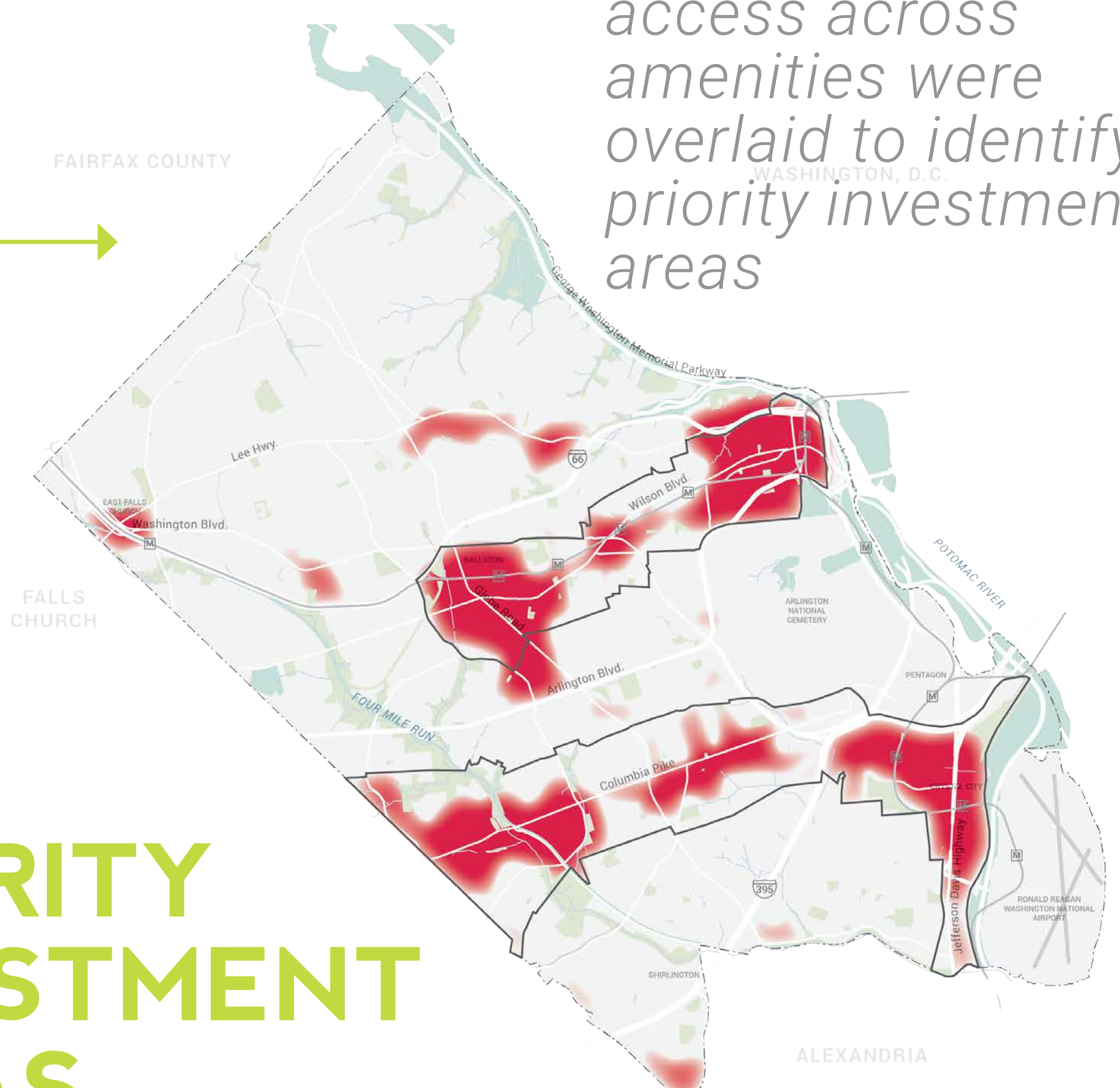


Areas with limited access across amenities were overlaid to identify priority investment areas

COMMENTS

place a sticky note with your input:

## PRIORITY INVESTMENT AREAS



GIVE US YOUR INPUT!



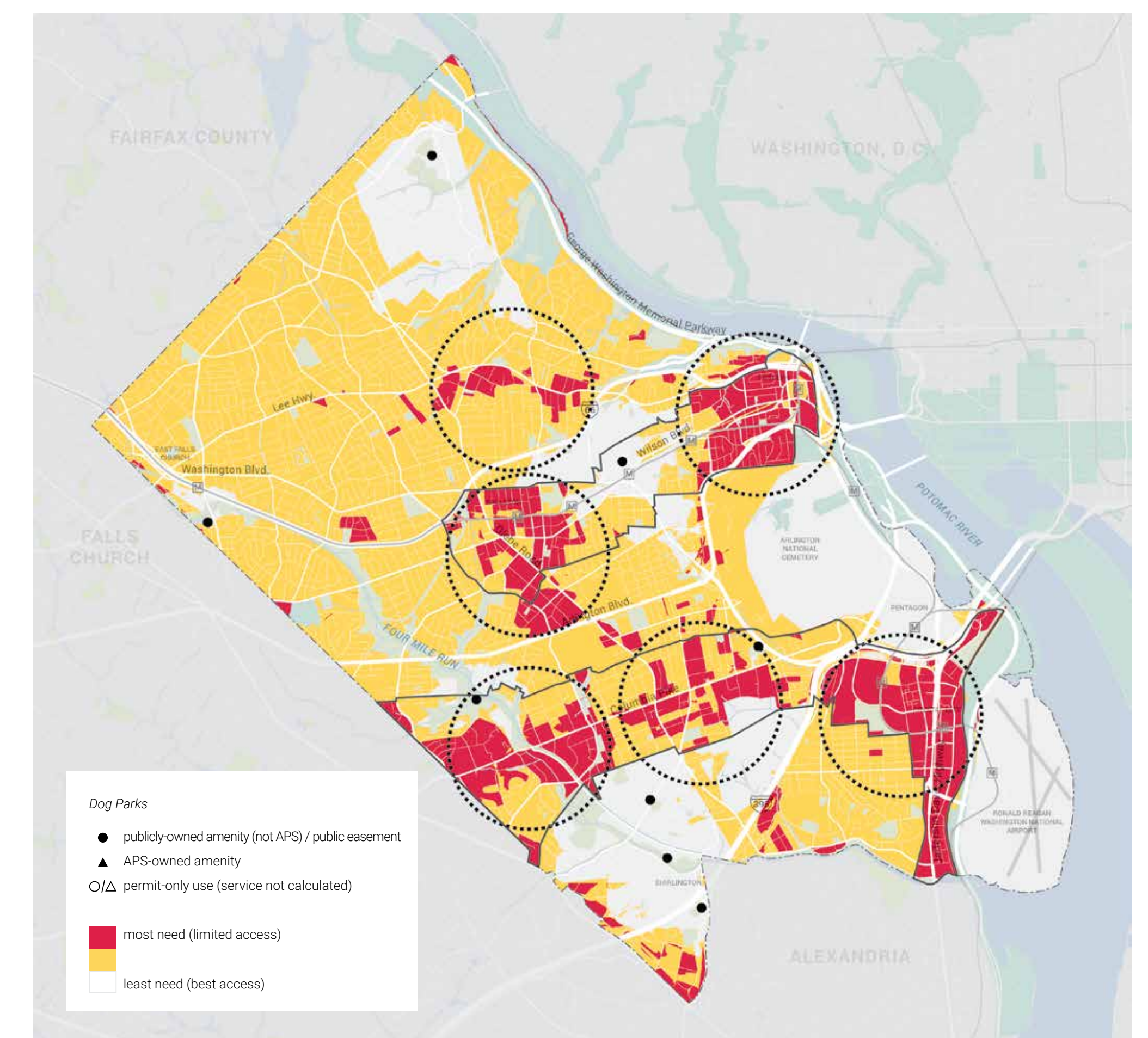
# 12 DEEPER DIVES LEVEL OF SERVICE

## ACCESS ANALYSIS MAPS

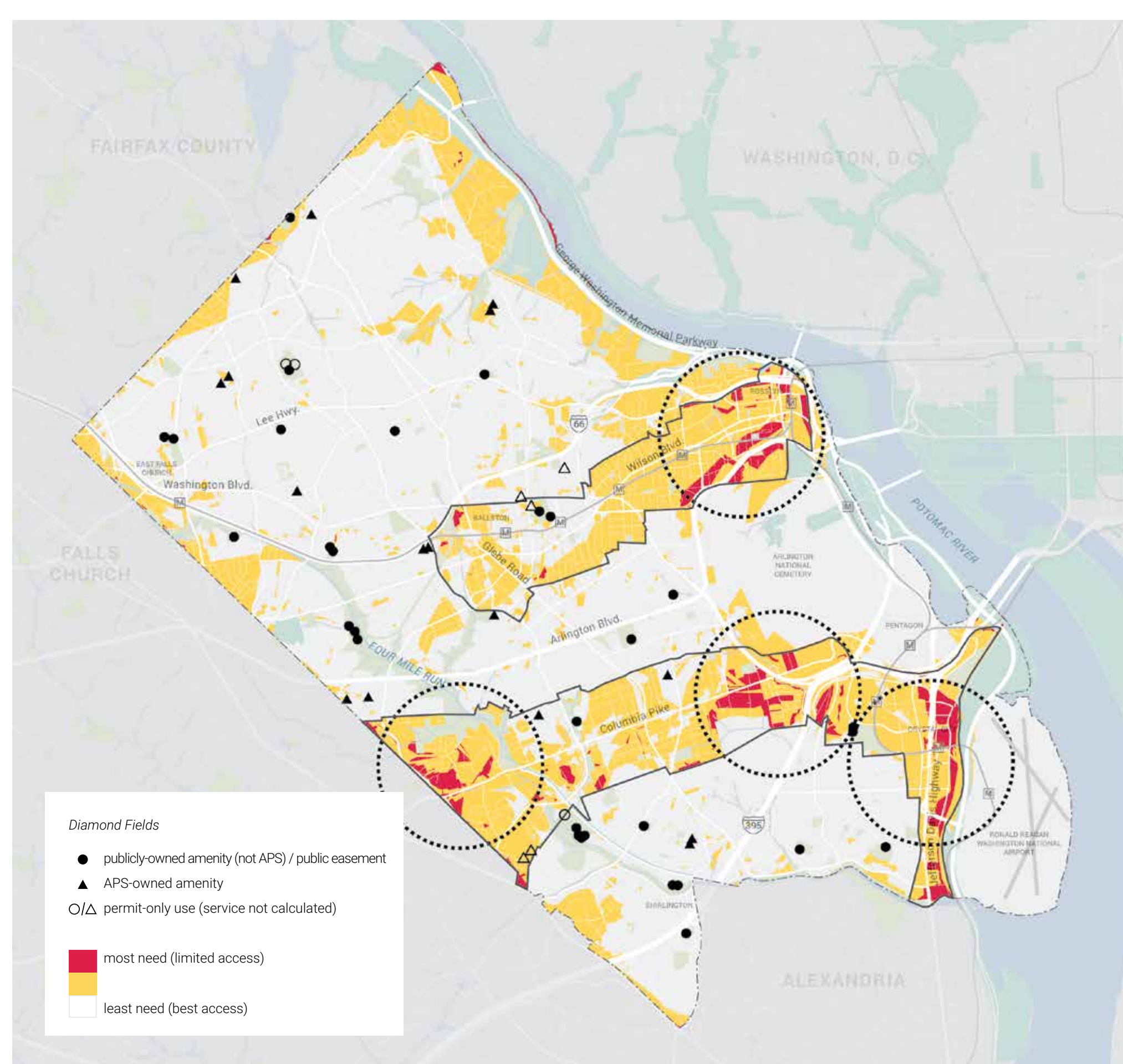
- » depict areas with the best access and limited access to amenities
- » includes walking, biking, transit, and driving access

(Find it in the draft plan on p. 229–239)

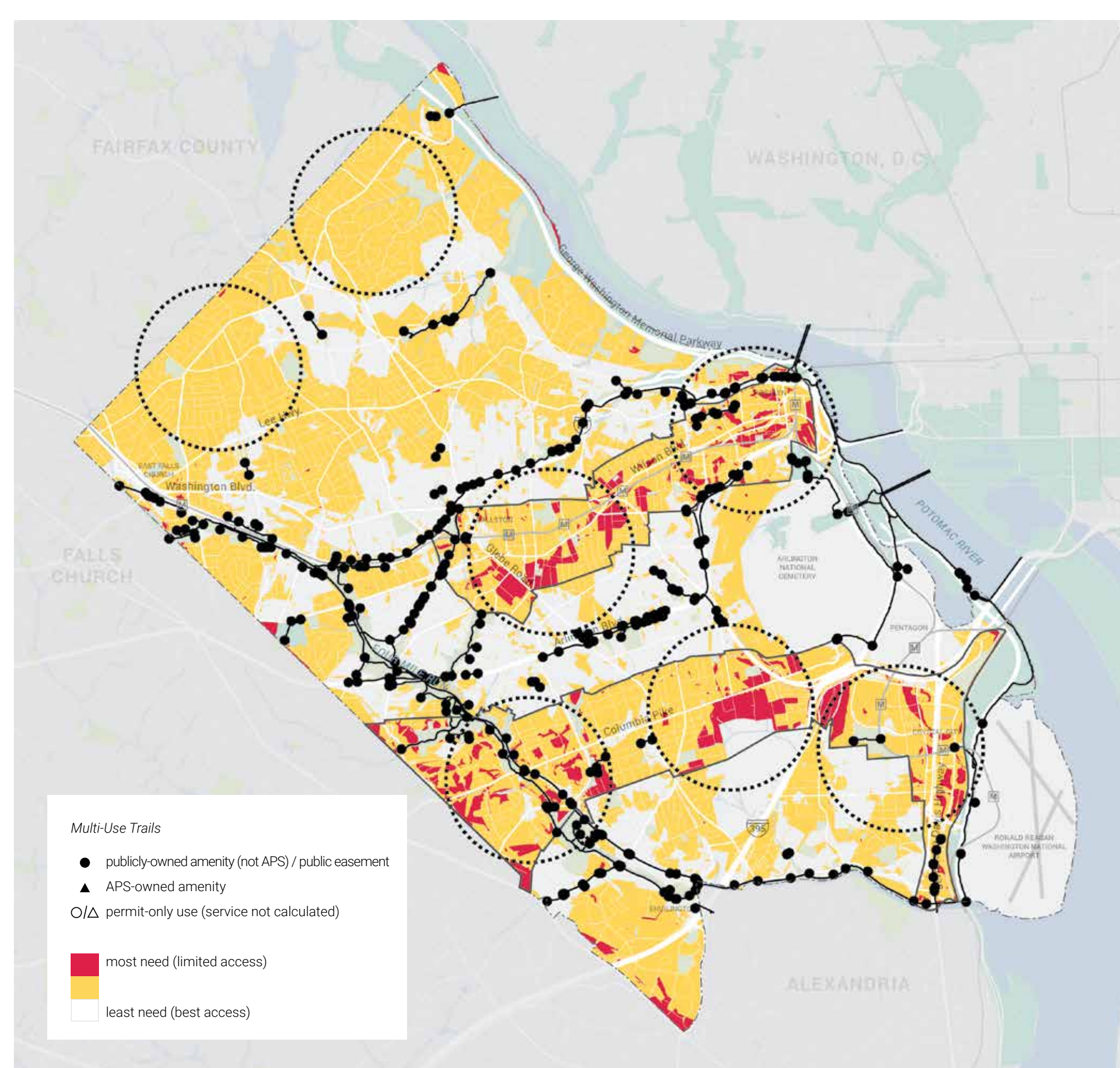
### Dog Parks



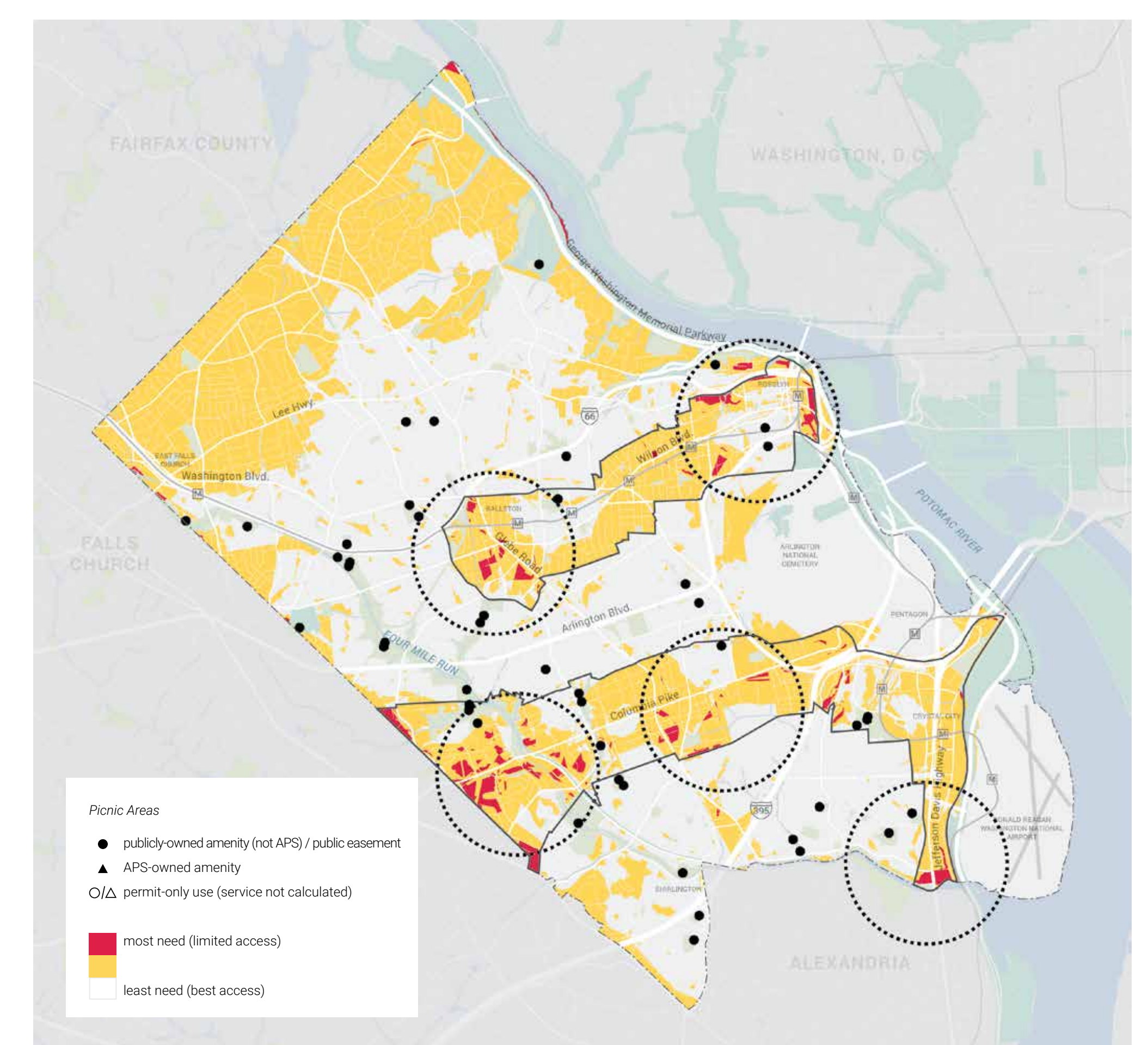
### Diamond Fields



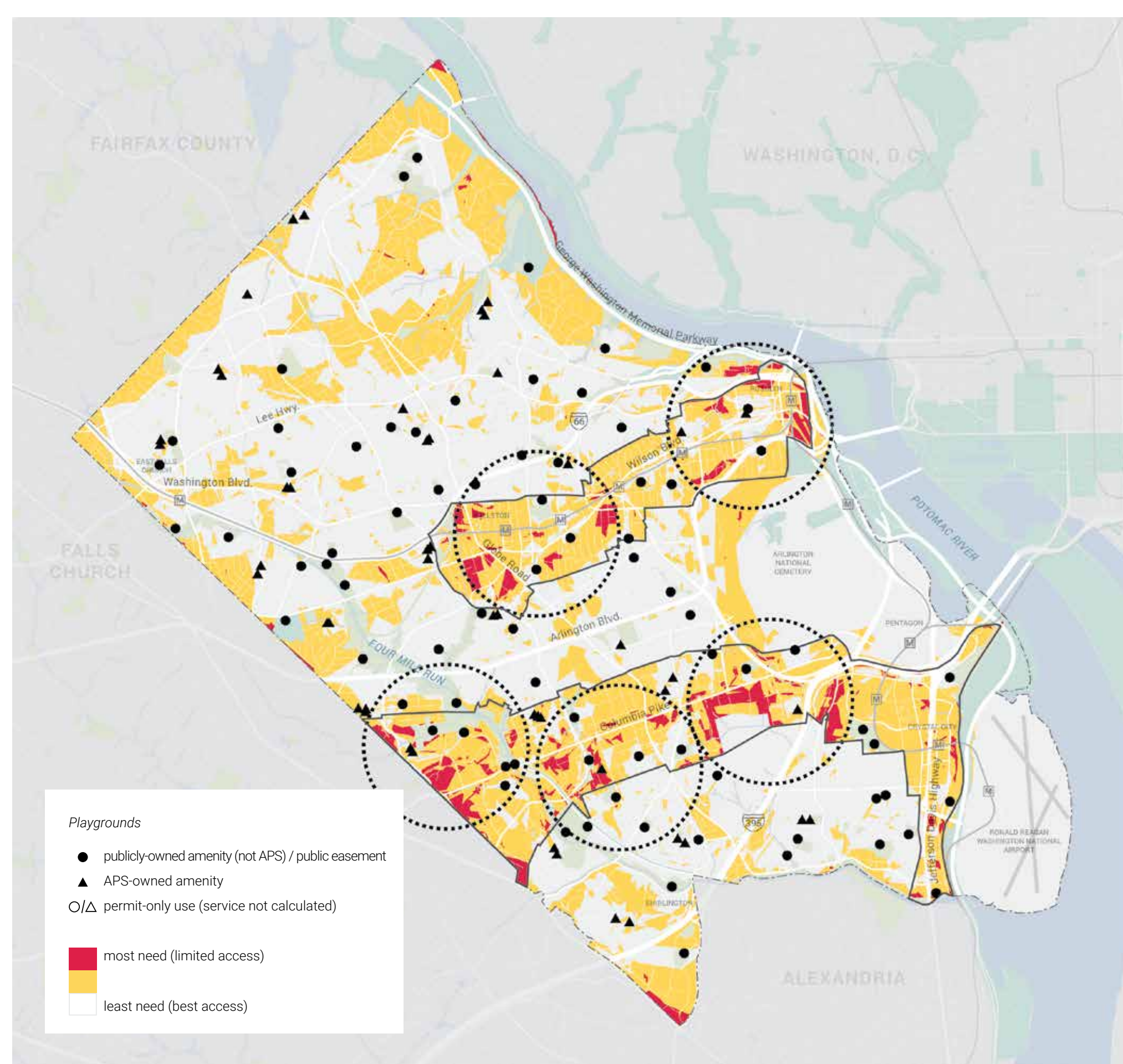
### Multi-Use Trails



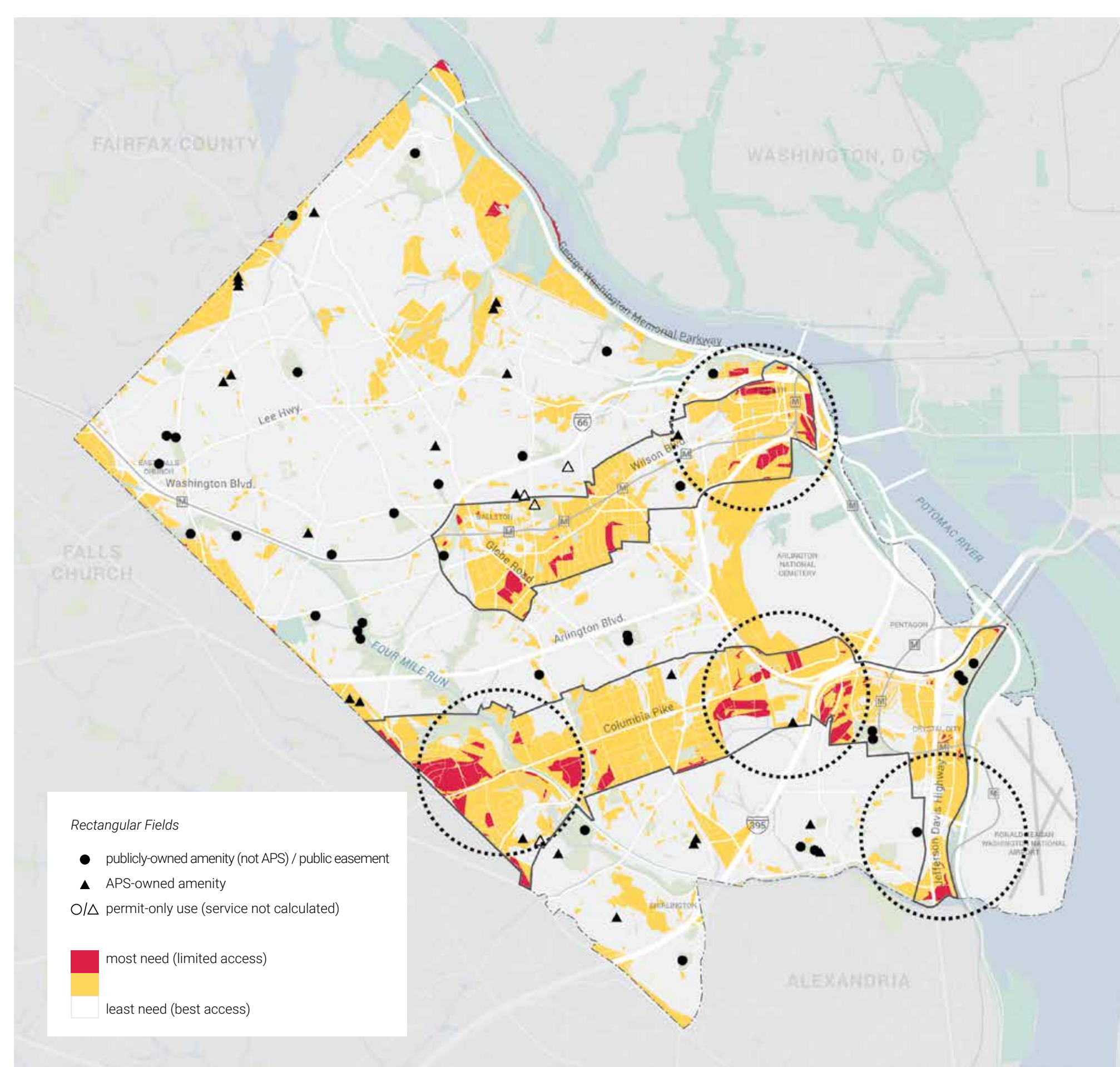
### Picnic Areas



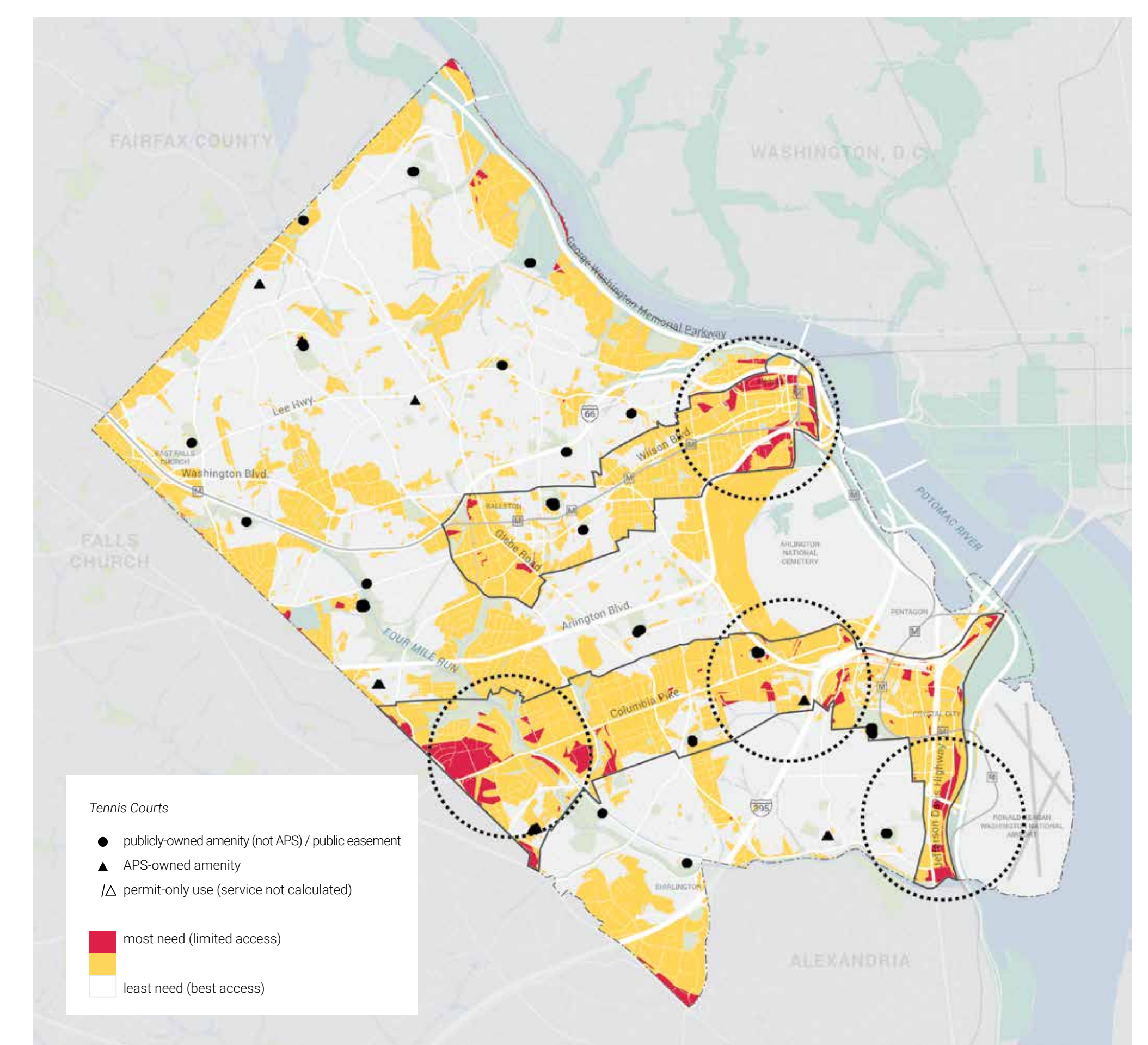
### Playgrounds



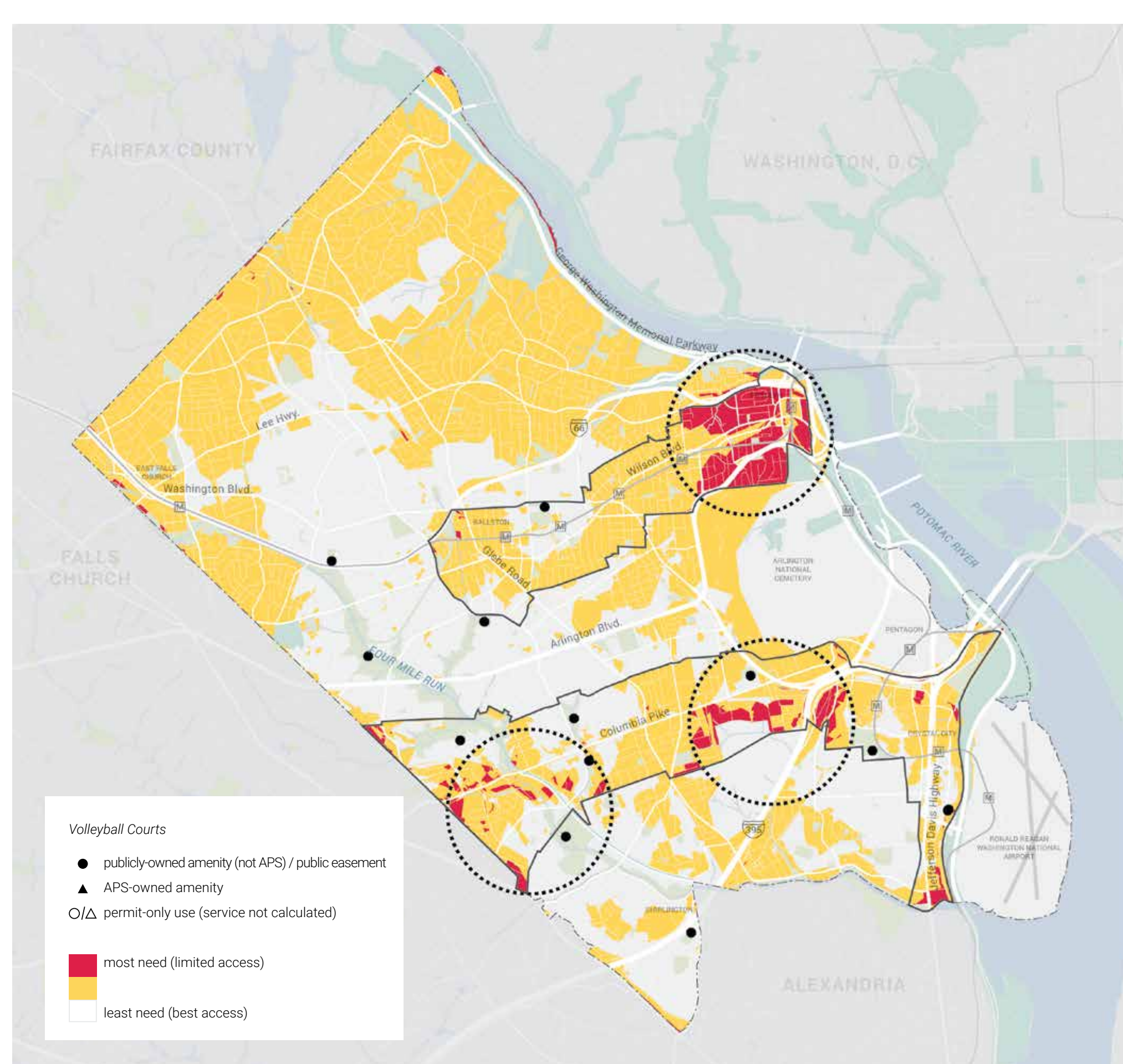
### Rectangular Fields



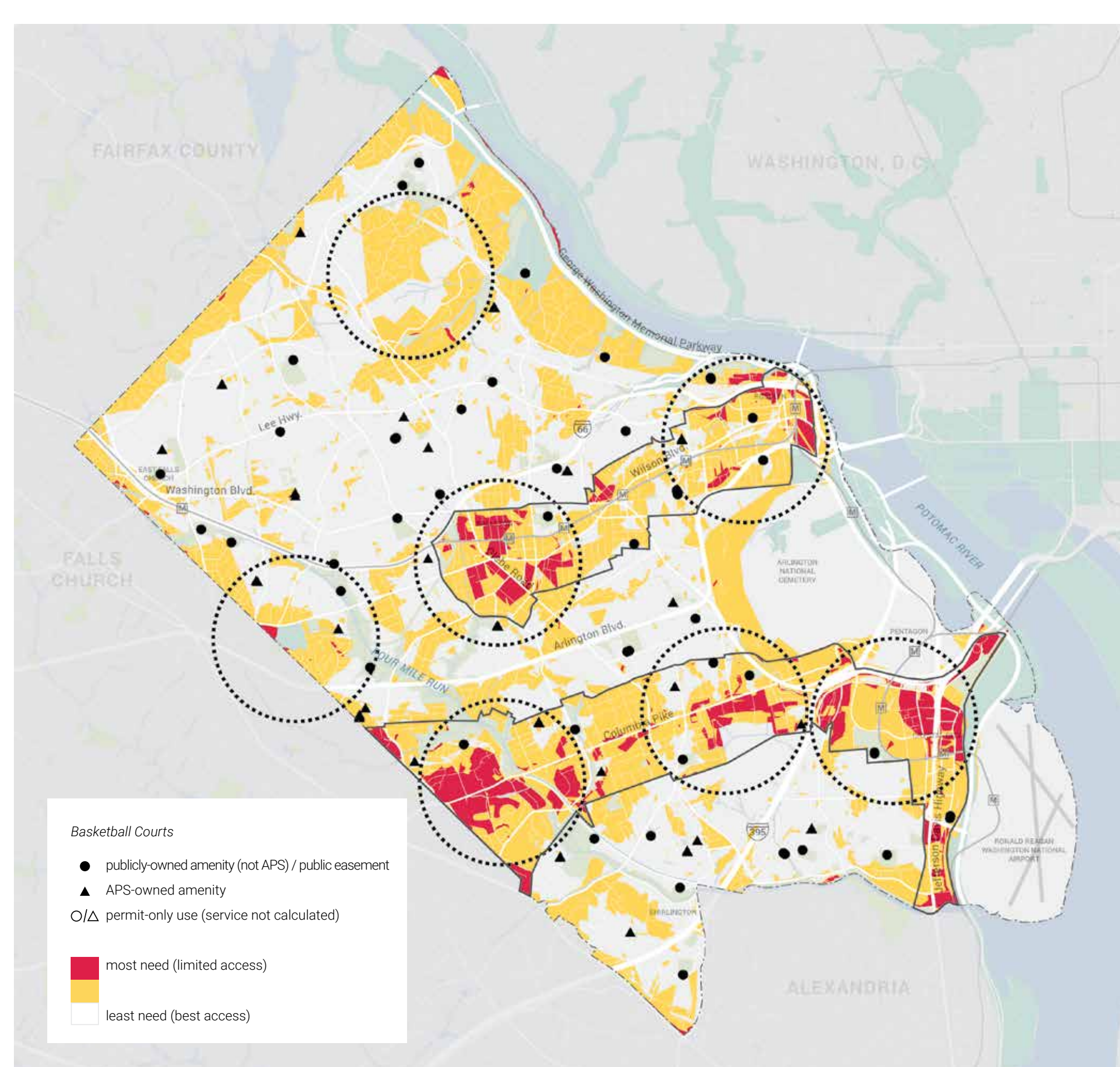
### Tennis Courts



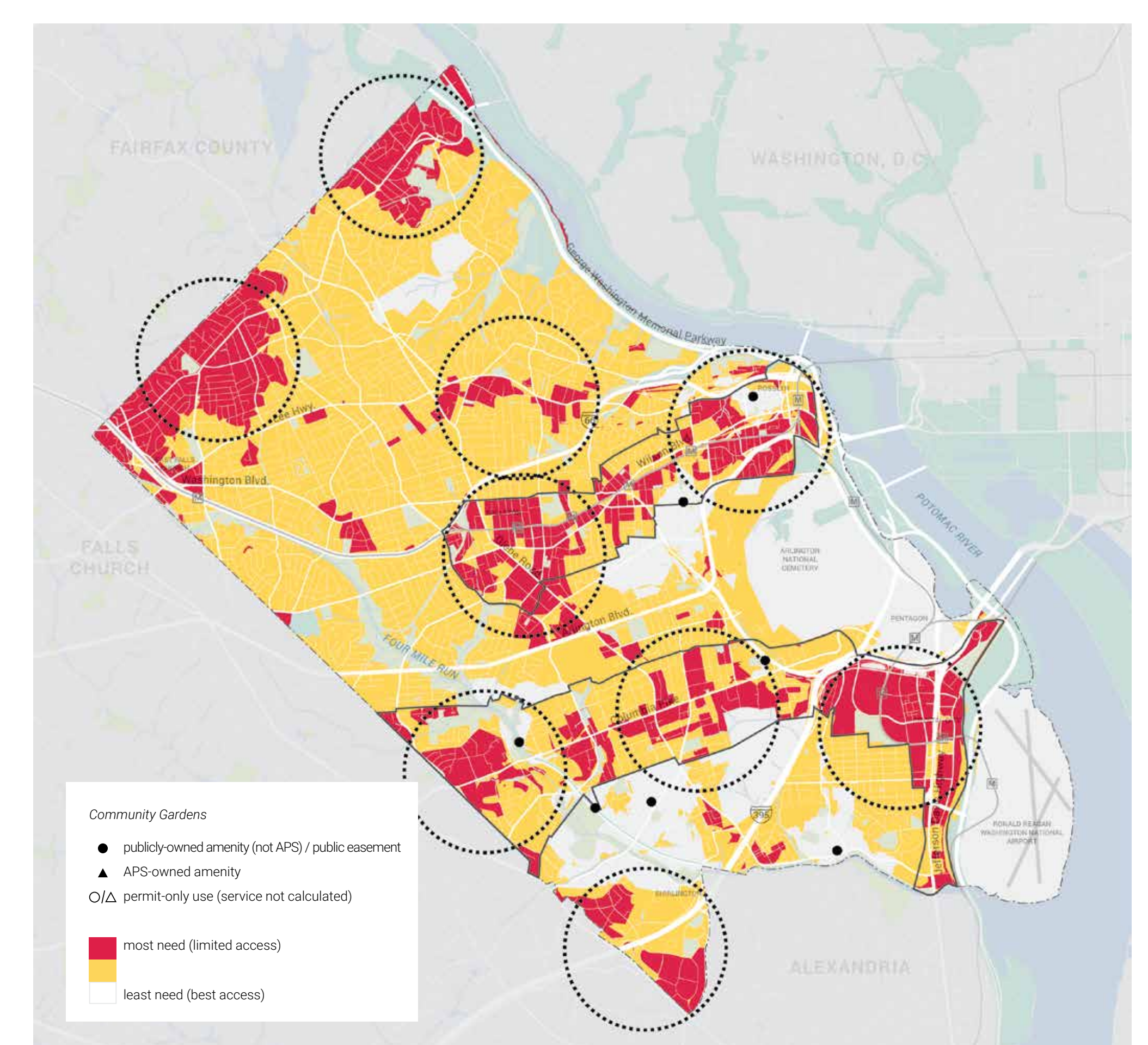
### Volleyball Courts



### Basketball Courts



### Community Gardens



# 13 DEEPER DIVES SYNTHETIC FIELDS & LIGHTING

## POLICY

**1.2.8. CONVERT AN ADDITIONAL 12 EXISTING RECTANGULAR FIELDS AND 4 EXISTING DIAMOND FIELDS TO SYNTHETIC TURF AS FUNDING IS AVAILABLE.** *(Find it in the draft plan on p. 78, 215–218)*

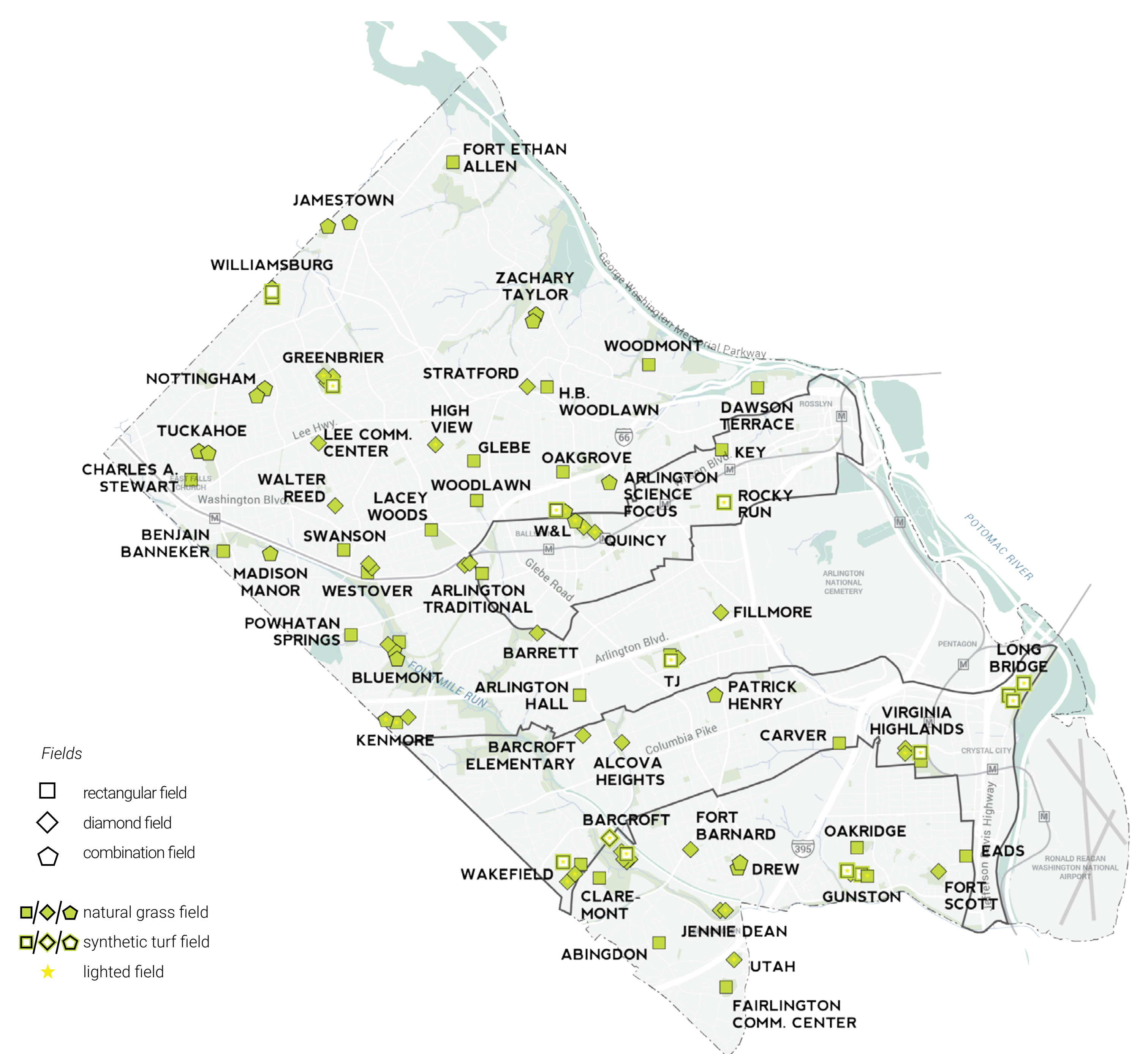
## CONTEXT

### EXISTING FIELDS

- » 1<sup>ST</sup> synthetic field built in 2002 – Gunston
- » 15 synthetic fields, 13 with lighting

### LEVEL OF SERVICE

- » Rectangular: 1 field per 4,180 residents  
**Need: 1 field per 4,200 (16 additional)**
- » Diamond: 1 field per 5,153 residents  
**Need: 1 field per 6,000 (6 additional)**



## THE NEED

**How do we plan for future needs with a growing population & limited land available?**

- » High demand for new fields
- » **16 new rectangular and 6 diamond fields by 2045**
- » **Limited space to create new fields**

**22 NEW FIELDS** needed in Arlington by 2045 based on population-based level of service standards.

## WHY SYNTHETIC?

- » Extends usable hours
- » Number of usable hours increases when lighting is added
- » Converting a natural grass field without lights to a synthetic turf field with lights gets additional usable time equal to that of adding another two grass fields without lights
- » If 12 rectangular and 4 diamond existing natural grass fields are converted to synthetic with lights, **the increase in usable time will allow the County to meet its future needs with only 1 new rectangular field**

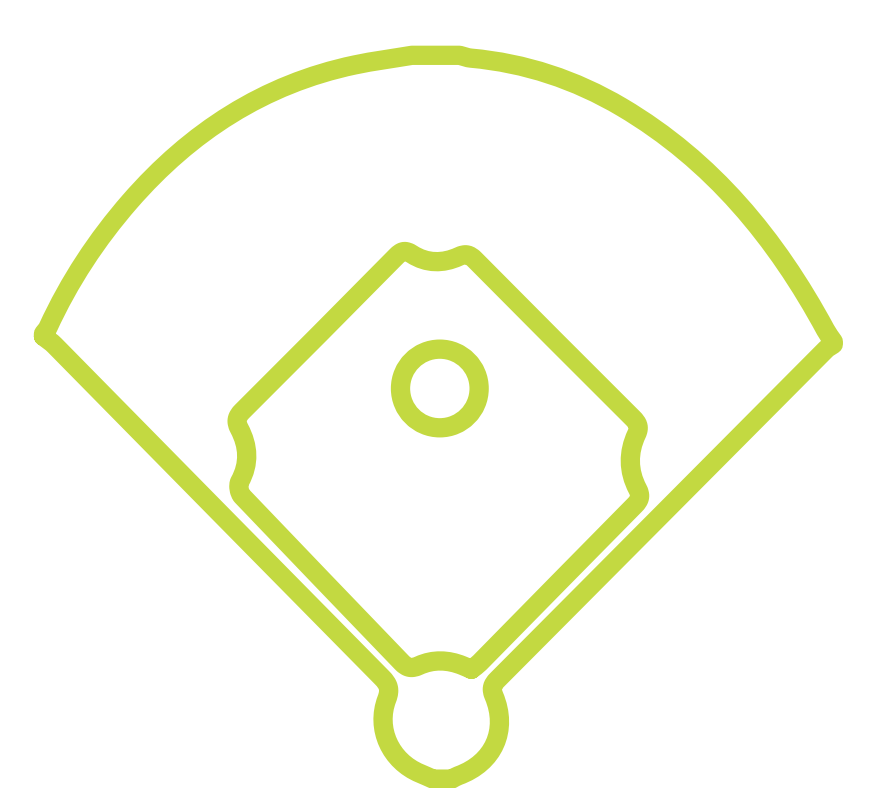
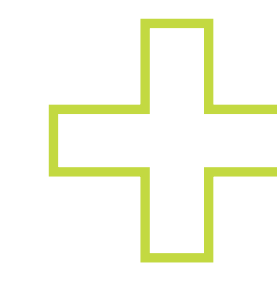
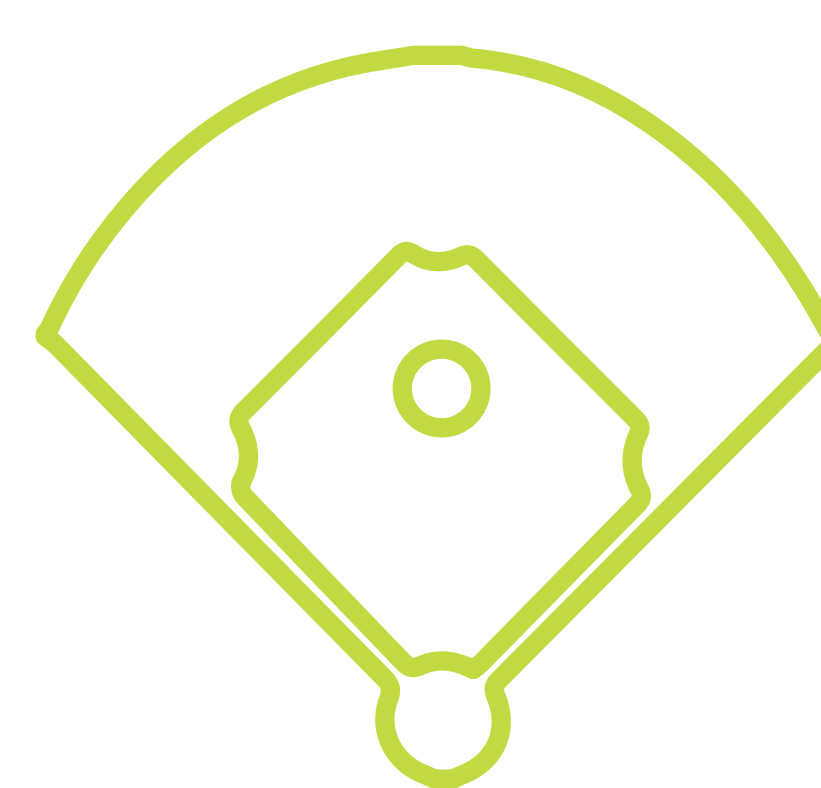
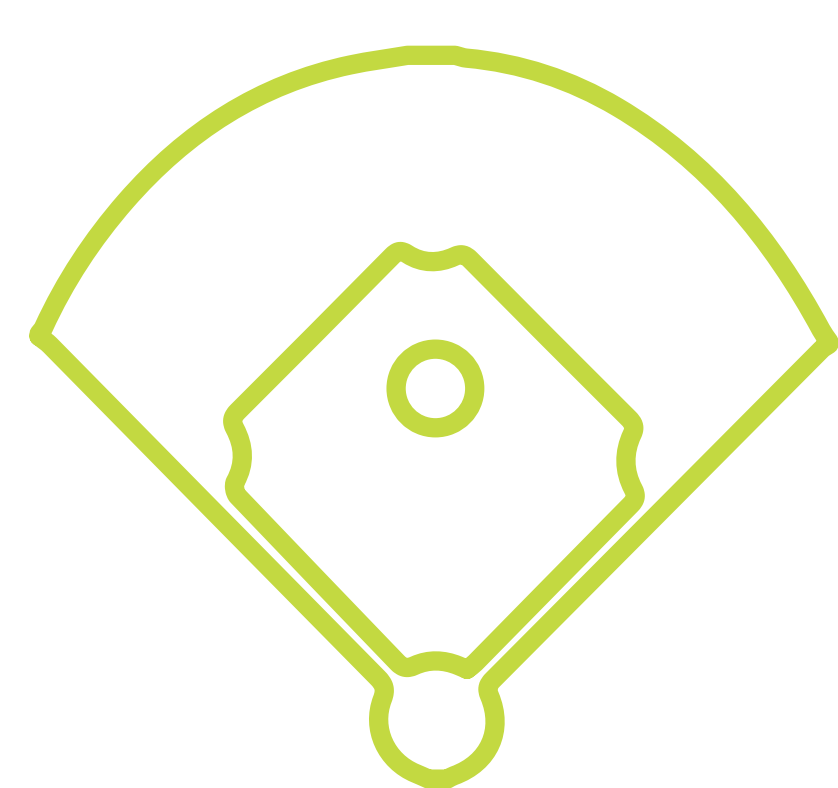
**2,100 HOURS OF USABLE TIME WITH LIGHTS ON SYNTHETIC**

*compared to 700 hours of usable time natural grass fields with lights.*

	No Lights	Lights
Grass	700	900
Synthetic	1,400	2,100



1 synthetic turf field with lights



3 natural grass fields without lights

## OTHER BENEFITS

- » lower maintenance and utility costs (i.e. water)
- » fewer weather-related cancellations
- » more durable
- » year-round use

# SYNTHETIC FIELDS & LIGHTING

## CONVERSION CRITERIA

Fields will be prioritized for conversion by taking into account:

- » capacity calculations based on current maintenance standards and desired field conditions
- » the availability of existing amenities (e.g., parking, lighting, restrooms)
- » whether the park master plan calls for lights
- » site evaluation (e.g., topography, trees, location)

## LIGHTING MITIGATION

To mitigate light intrusion, the County may use a variety of techniques depending on the context, including:

- » glare and spill reduction – shielding, reflectors, wattages, beam types, mounting height, aiming angles, and dimming
- » design techniques – planting, trees, physical buffers
- » operational techniques – curfews, limiting special events, staff presence, seasonal hours
- » community agreements & standing committees



Arlington County continues to stay abreast of the latest research regarding the safety of synthetic turf and the latest lighting technologies.

GIVE US YOUR INPUT!



COMMENTS ON CONVERSION CRITERIA

place a sticky note with your input on the conversion criteria:

COMMENTS ON LIGHTING MITIGATION

place a sticky note with your input on the lighting mitigation techniques:

GENERAL FEEDBACK

place a sticky note with your thoughts on synthetic fields and lighting:

# 14 DEEPER DIVES CASUAL USE SPACES

## POLICY

**1.3. ENSURE ACCESS TO SPACES THAT ARE INTENTIONALLY DESIGNED TO SUPPORT CASUAL, IMPROMPTU USE AND CONNECTION WITH NATURE.** *(Find it in the draft plan on p. 86–87)*

## CONTEXT

### CASUAL USE SPACES INCLUDE:

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

### CASUAL USE SPACES DO NOT INCLUDE:

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

## EXAMPLES

- » Strolling through a treed area
- » Reading a book
- » Sitting on a bench
- » People watching
- » Laying on a lawn
- » Bird watching
- » Picnicking
- » Playing catch



Penrose Square

## THE PLAN

Enhancing and creating casual use spaces:

- PARK FRAMEWORK PLANS**
- ACCESS STANDARDS**
- PARK MASTER PLANNING PROCESS**
- PARK MASTER PLANS**
- COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

As the County develops framework plans for all public spaces (1.2.2), casual use spaces will be identified as areas distinct from those that support more formal recreation programs.

*If these spaces can be inventoried:*  
As part of its context-sensitive activity-based approach to providing amenities (1.3), the County will use access standards to determine where access is lacking to casual use spaces.

Resident input during the park master planning process will inform whether casual use spaces should be enhanced or added. (1.3.2)

Any casual use spaces identified in 10 new park master plans to be developed by the County (1.2.3) will be purposefully designed.

Through inclusive and transparent community engagement practices (6.3.3) and ongoing public space evaluations (6.3.4), users will be empowered to advocate for casual use spaces.

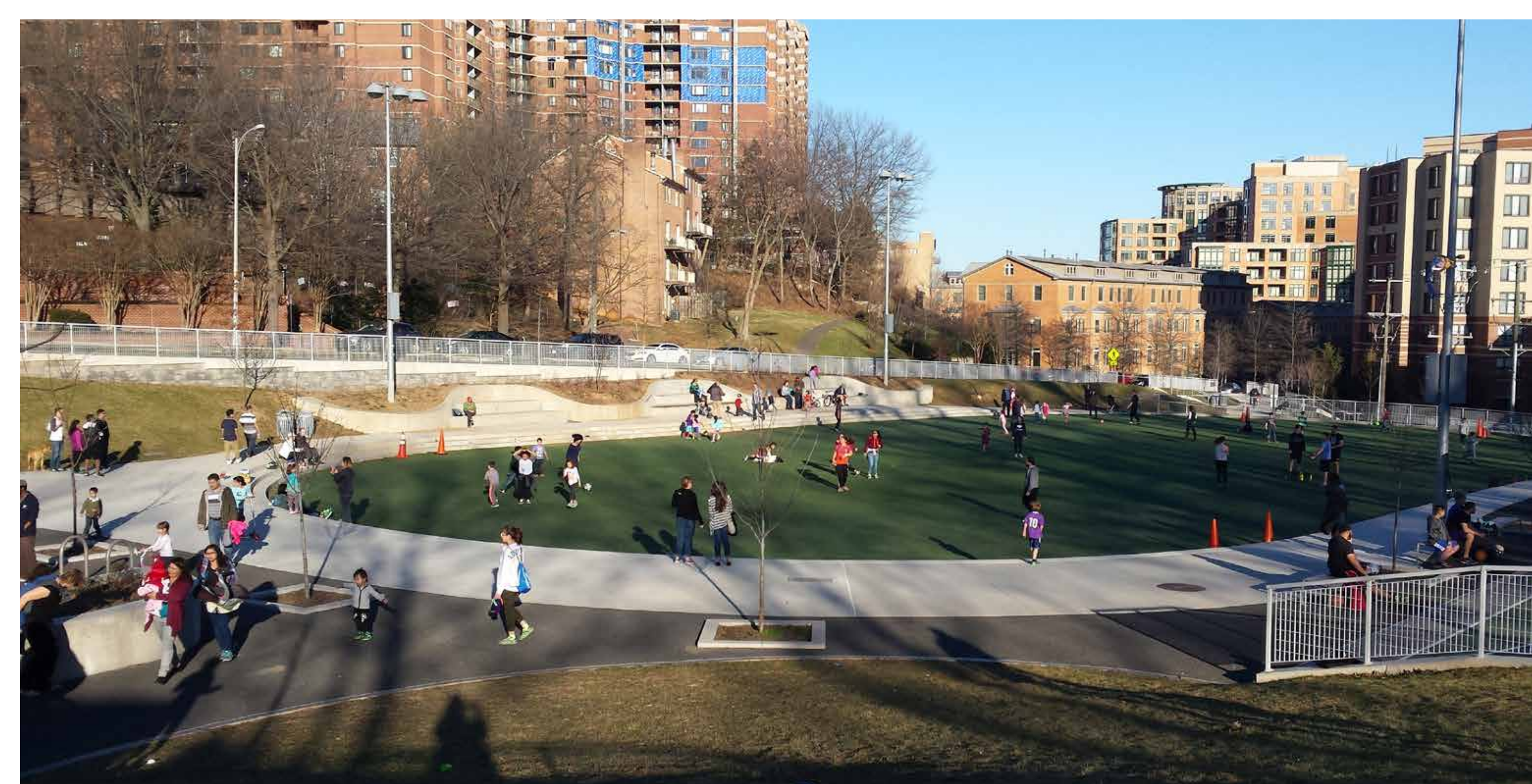


## INTEGRAL PART OF THE SYSTEM

*casual use spaces should be intentional parts of the system, not just spaces that are “left over”*

## GENERAL FEEDBACK

*place a sticky note with your thoughts on casual use spaces:*



Rocky Run Park



Doctors Run



Welburn Square

↑  
GIVE US YOUR INPUT!