



Beauregard Small Area Plan

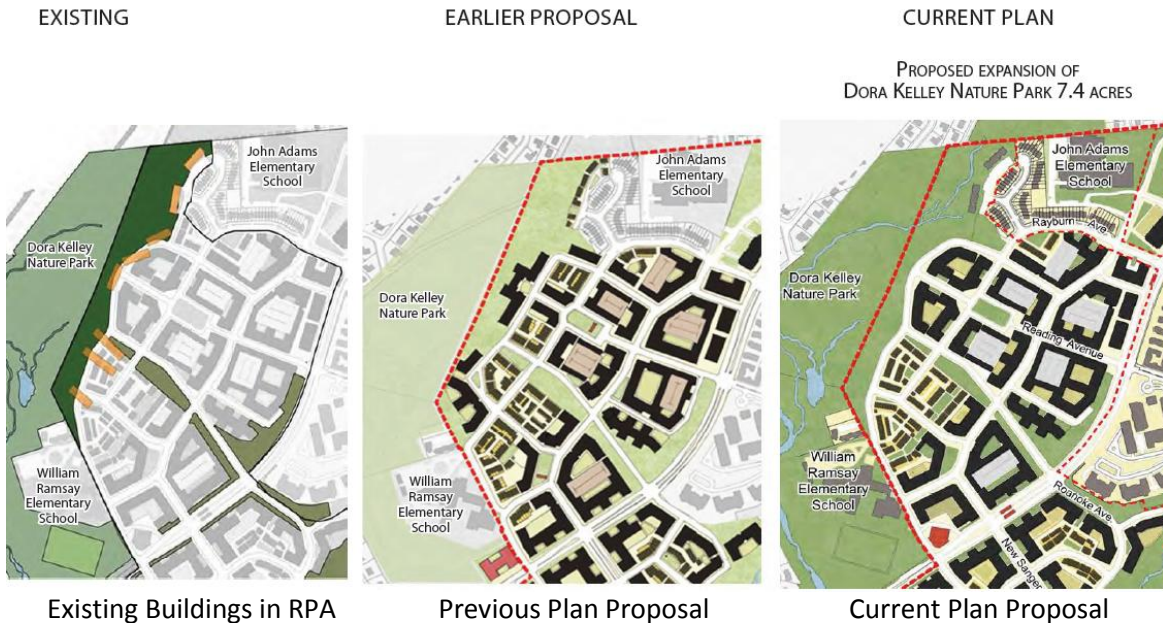
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Open Space

Issues: For many people, trees and open space are what make Beauregard a special place and distinct from other neighborhoods in Alexandria. However, the Winkler Botanical Nature Preserve and the Dora Kelley Nature Park are the only publically accessible open spaces. The Plan proposes to provide 44.54 acres of public open space and defined open space areas (private with public easement) in addition to the Winkler Botanical Preserve and the Dora Kelley Nature Park.

Current challenges for the Plan to address: increase public park acreage, improve connections to and among parks, add facilities for recreation (especially fields and trails), and improve environmental conditions.

Evolution of the Plan Adjacent to Dora Kelley Nature Park



1. The Plan’s Vision for Trees and Open Space

The Plan preserves, expands and enhances public open space throughout the Plan area, including increasing the amount of trees and public open space, public access to open space, connections between open spaces, and recreational activities supported by open spaces. The Plan also adds important safeguards for the environment, especially in the valleys. The Plan:

- Increases public open space by 7.4 acres adjacent to Dora Kelley Nature Park by shrinking the boundary of the area where development is permitted.

- Adds .85 acres of open space in the Town Center neighborhood using BRAC-133 funds.
- Includes recommendations to provide a 40% tree canopy as part of redevelopment.
- In addition to the 44.54 acres of public open space, additional ground level open space will be required or part of the future rezoning process.
- Adds a new multi-purpose synthetic turf field near William Ramsay Elementary School
- Adds or improves connections among:
 - Wildlife and nature corridors
 - Chambliss Park and John Adams Elementary School
 - Holmes Run Greenway
 - Winkler Botanical Preserve
 - William Ramsay Elementary School
- Adds safeguards for the environment in the ecologically sensitive stream valleys (also called “resource protection areas” or RPAs) by:
 - removing buildings and other impervious surfaces from RPAs
 - enhancing protection of streams from stormwater runoff

Figure 1



2. Highlights of the Open Space Plan

The Plan calls for a variety of public spaces at every scale to compliment the unique character in each neighborhood. Some of the highlights include:

- *Dora Kelley Nature Park:* The Plan adds 7.4 acres along the eastern edge of this park between John Adams and William Ramsay elementary schools.
- *Town Center square:* Centrally-located .60-acre public park is framed with buildings and will be designed to accommodate gatherings and events.
- *New park adjacent to the Town Center:* The Plan adds a .85-acre park adjacent to the Town Center, to be acquired with \$1.5 million in BRAC-133 funds.
- *Holmes Run-Turkey Run Greenway:* Turkey Run is the stream that flows from the Winkler Preserve to Holmes Run in Dora Kelley Nature Park. Creating a new 13.5 acre natural open space area along this stream will involve removing the buildings that are too close to the stream as well as stabilizing the shoreline (now suffering from erosion) and restoring the stream itself.
- *Pedestrian bridges:* Small-scale pedestrian bridges will connect the neighborhoods.
- *Community gardens:* A portion of the greenway will be reserved for community or cooperative gardens.
- *Play areas:* The Plan calls for outdoor play areas for all age groups, including children's playgrounds.
- *Dog parks:* There will be at least one fenced dog park of at least ½ acre in size. Additional dog parks may be required as part of the development review process.
- *Neighborhood parks:* Public parks and open spaces are provided within each neighborhood that range in size from 0.5 to 2.0 acres.
- *Ramsay multi-purpose recreation field:* This new lighted synthetic turf field is located between Ramsay Elementary and Beauregard Street. The field is easily accessible by bike or walking and parking will be provided in the nearby Ramsay lot. The field will be located in a manner that will minimize impacts on Dora Kelley Nature Park.
- *Adjacent school open space:* The Plan recommends improvements to the open spaces adjacent to schools and parks.
- *Ground level and roof-top open space:* In addition to parks, the Plan recommends additional ground level open space and green roofs.
- *Tree canopy:* The redevelopment sites currently have tree canopy coverage of 30-35%. The Plan recommends tree canopy coverage of 40%.

3. Community-Expressed Concerns Regarding Trees and Open Space

Community input is the primary source of inspiration for the open space concept in the Beauregard Plan, and this concept continues to evolve in response to public comments. Specific community concerns include:

- *Will there be a net increase of public open space?* Yes, the Plan adds 44.54 acres of public open space of which .85 acres has been added in the most recent revision of the Plan near the Dora Kelley Nature Park and consolidated in the Foster Fairbanks Neighborhood.
- *Will public space be located throughout the Plan area?* Yes, each neighborhood will have public open space, with most neighborhoods having a variety of open space options from which to choose.
- *How does the Plan make sure that public space is welcoming to the public and does not feel like private open space?* It is important that public spaces be designed so that it is clear at a glance that they are for public use. Land that is right next to a house or an apartment building may be technically “public” but you might not feel comfortable sitting or walking there unless you live there. Using streets to separate parks from private buildings helps ensure that public spaces “feel” public and gives the public easier access to the park. Another option is to locate “active” land uses such as retail adjacent to plazas and squares or adding open space adjacent to existing open space and parks.
- *How has the Plan addressed concerns about the streets adjacent to parks?* In response to public concerns, the most recent revisions to the Plan reduce the width of the street and changes the material of the street to be more compatible with the adjoining park.
- *How has the Plan addressed concerns about impacts of the multi-purpose field on the tree canopy and Dora Kelley Nature Park?* Future engineering of the will minimize the impact of the field on the tree canopy and the park. While some existing trees near Beauregard Street will be impacted during construction, they will be replaced. The field will not impact the Dora Kelley Nature Park.

Figure 2

