

Task 3

Open Space Alternatives

The City of Alexandria's Zoning Ordinance outlines the minimum requirement for open space for each zone. The alternatives listed are intended to mitigate the impact of the development on the City's open space system. When an applicant is unable to meet its open space requirement in full, and the Small Area Plan does not already guide an alternative, the applicant may pursue the following alternatives with RPCA staff approval:

- **Alternative 1: Staff will evaluate the developer purchasing and either deeding or placing a public access easement of off-site open space.**
- **Alternative 2: Staff will evaluate the developer's monetary or in-kind contribution to park improvements and maintenance.**
- **Alternative 3: Staff will evaluate the developer's contributions to the Open Space Fund.**

A hybrid approach combining the above alternatives is also permitted with RPCA guidance and approval.

Staff review of the methodologies for implementing the alternatives listed above is required. Park Planning staff will ensure that the alternatives align with City Council's priorities and other Citywide policies while maintaining the intent of the above alternatives.

Monetary Open Space Contributions

Monetary open space contributions, as noted in Alternatives 2 and 3, will be determined by City staff and will be used to fulfill the recommendations of the City's Park Improvement Plans, Public Open Space Assessments (Walkability, Condition, Design, and Equity Assessments), and/or meet amenity needs within the City (amenities include, but are not limited to, playgrounds, sports courts, athletic fields, dog parks, fitness equipment, etc.).

Open Space Contribution Policy

This Plan recommends continuing to study the impacts of increased density on the City's open space system and exploring opportunities for reducing the negative impacts of overcrowding and overuse of City facilities and open space.

Land Use Conversion and Open Space Needs

As with many cities around the country, Alexandria is experiencing an increase in conversions from office/commercial buildings to residential uses. Many of these conversions are carried out administratively without the review of open space needs within the development due to the current limitations of the Zoning Code. Residential development open space needs are greater than commercial uses and directly impact the City's existing open space infrastructure. Because of this, this Plan recommends further review of open space requirements in connection with building use conversions.

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In addition to reviewing the open space requirements of the zones where conversions occur, this Plan recommends that the regulatory structure be reviewed to provide for open space needs for building use conversions, including on-site provisions of open space and contributions in-lieu.

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