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Wilkes Street Park Design Planning Process

Park and Recreation Commission

September 17, 2020

Site Background

- Wilkes Street Park located in the southwest quadrant of the City.
- To the west of the site is South Columbus Street, to the east is South Patrick Street.
- The property is split into two parcels by South Alfred Street.
- Park is a 0.7 acres linear park with a multiuse path through the middle (part of the bike trail system in the City).
- The surrounding area has a lot of children and older adults.
- The area where the park is located was previously known as "The Bottoms."



Project Background

South Patrick Street Housing Affordability Strategy

- The South Patrick Street Housing Affordability Strategy states that the Wilkes Street Open Space “will be implemented by adjacent property owners through redevelopment with all applicable approvals.” (pg. 24)
- The City will lead a concept design of the two open spaces with the intention that the improvements would be implemented “in kind” by the adjacent property owners.
- The open space plans will contain a Phase I and Phase II design to allow for flexibility in implementation.



Design Guidelines

- Summer 2019, City staff met to learn about the park (staff from RPCA, Planning and Zoning, Transportation and Environmental Services, Archeology, Housing, etc.)
- Using each person's expertise a list of design principles for the park was created





Design Guidelines

- Wilkes Street Park will be improved to include play areas, seating, open passive areas that will be designed to be accessible and accommodating to all ages and abilities.
- The improvements to the Wilkes Street public open space will incorporate the history of the neighborhood through interpretive design elements.
- Maintain the multiuse path as part of the park design. The path needs to accommodate both pedestrians and bicyclists safely.
- RPCA 2019 Needs Assessment indicate the some of the strongest needs for Alexandria residents are walking trails and loops, outdoor public art, natural areas and access to nature.
- Park design will include shade, incorporate CPTED standards, and replace site furnishings with City standard furniture (including light poles).

Community Survey

- Community input needed to redesign the park
 - Short online survey used to gain insight on what the community would like the park to look like
 - Survey was available from **Friday, August 14** until **Friday, September 11**



Community Survey Results

1. 91% walk to the park
2. 79% live less than half a mile from the park
3. 51% use the park weekly, 23% use it daily
4. 86% of users use the park as a transportation route; 16.28% use it to relax; 11.63% use it to play; 4.65% use it to socialize; 6.98% use it for other
5. Ranking
 - a. **Access to nature**
 - b. **Landscaping**
 - c. **Play features**
 - d. **Historic and cultural heritage**
 - e. **Central lawn**
 - f. Community gathering area
 - g. Seating area
 - h. Outdoor fitness area
 - i. Educational elements
 - j. Picnic tables
6. Traditional play equipment – naturalistic play equipment (76 – more naturalistic play equipment)
7. *Mainly a big open space – various park amenities and uses (45 – mainly a big open space)*
8. *Traditional city seating – nontraditional city seating (54 – nontraditional city seating)*
9. Landscape with plantings – paved areas (17 – landscape with plantings)
10. *One main shared use path – multiple paths (52 – multiple paths)*

Park Planning Process

- **Pre Planning**
 - **August 13:** RPCA hosted a virtual kick-off meeting with the community.
 - **August 14 – September 11:** RPCA received input through Community Survey
- **Proposed Planning Process**
 - **September 17:** RPCA present the park project and survey results to the Park and Recreation Commission.
 - **September 18 – October 16:** Using the public input, the developer design team prepare design options for the park.
 - **November (date to be determined):** RPCA host a second community meeting with the applicant design proposals for the park. After the community meeting a second online survey and public engagement is conducted asking for community feedback on the design options. Online survey is available for four weeks.
 - **December – January:** Developer design team prepare a final park design using community input collected.
 - **January:** RPCA present final park design to the Park and Recreation Commission for public hearing.
 - **February:** RPCA present final park design to the Park and Recreation Commission for endorsement.



Public Art Process

NEW PUBLIC ART COMING SOON

alexandriava.gov/publicart

  @alexartsoffice • #artsALX



The Office of the Arts is a Division of the Alexandria's Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities.

Commission Action

RECOMMENDATION: That the Park and Recreation Commission endorse the Wilkes Street Park Planning Process as presented by staff.

Questions



Project Website

- **Wilkes Street Park's Project Page:**
<https://www.alexandriava.gov/116143>

Wilkes Street Park is an 0.7 acre neighborhood park located in Old Town. The park has trees, seating areas, and a multi-use trail that is part of the City's bike trail system. In 1979, City Council dedicated the Veterans Memorial Walkway that runs through the east block of the park.

Location: 850 Wilkes Street

Description:

The [South Patrick Housing Affordability Strategy](#) adopted in 2019 envisions Wilkes Street Park to be accessible and accommodating to all ages and abilities. The plan recommends improvements such as play areas, seating, and open passive areas. The design of the park improvements will be done in collaboration with the [Heritage Redevelopment](#). The proposed improvements will also feature a site specific work of public art as approved by the Alexandria Commission for the Arts. Developers will construct the park improvements in phases, as a condition of their redevelopment approvals.

Funding: Developer Contributions and Public Art Capital Funding

Status: Design

Design Documents

- [Wilkes Street Park Design Guidelines](#) 

Important Dates:

- **August 13:** The Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities (RPCA) hosts a kick-off meeting with the community and Public Art Task Force.
- **August 14:** RPCA receives input on park design through online survey and public engagement. Survey available until

City of Alexandria, Virginia



North Potomac Yard Market Lawn and Metro Plaza

**Park and Recreation Commission
September 17, 2020**



Commission Action



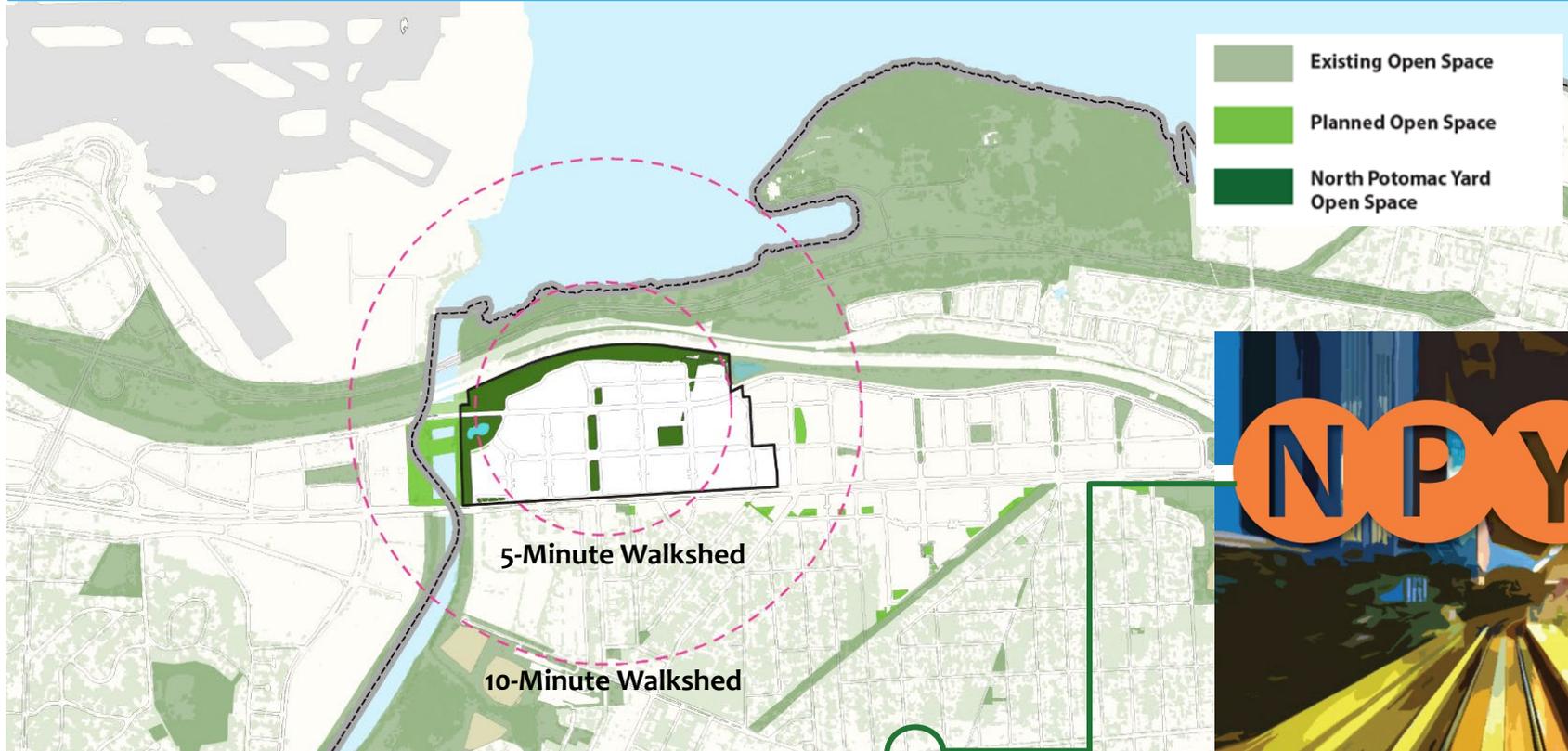
- Commission to provide recommendations to Planning Commission and City Council on:
 - Market Lawn
 - Metro Plaza

Presentation Agenda



- Orientation
- Market Lawn
 - Presentation
 - City Staff Remarks
 - Commission Discussion
 - Recommendation
- Metro Plaza
 - Presentation
 - City Staff Remarks
 - Commission Discussion
 - Recommendation
- North Potomac Yard Schedule Update

North Potomac Yard Small Area Plan

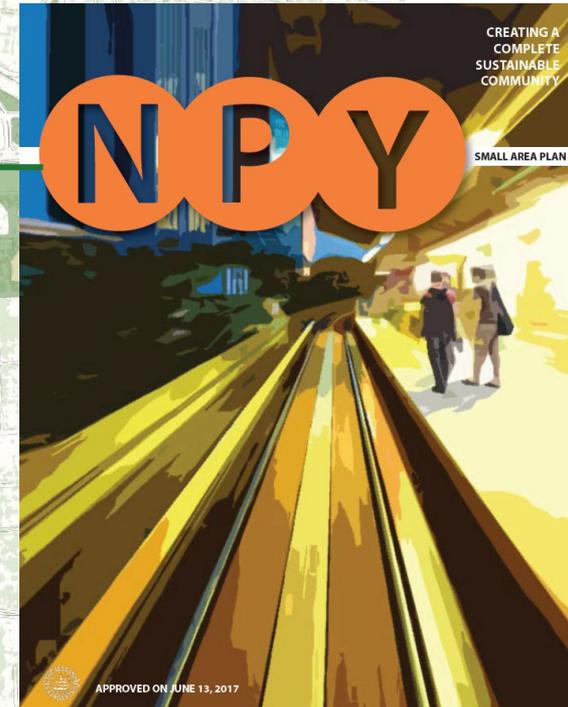


- Existing Open Space
- Planned Open Space
- North Potomac Yard Open Space

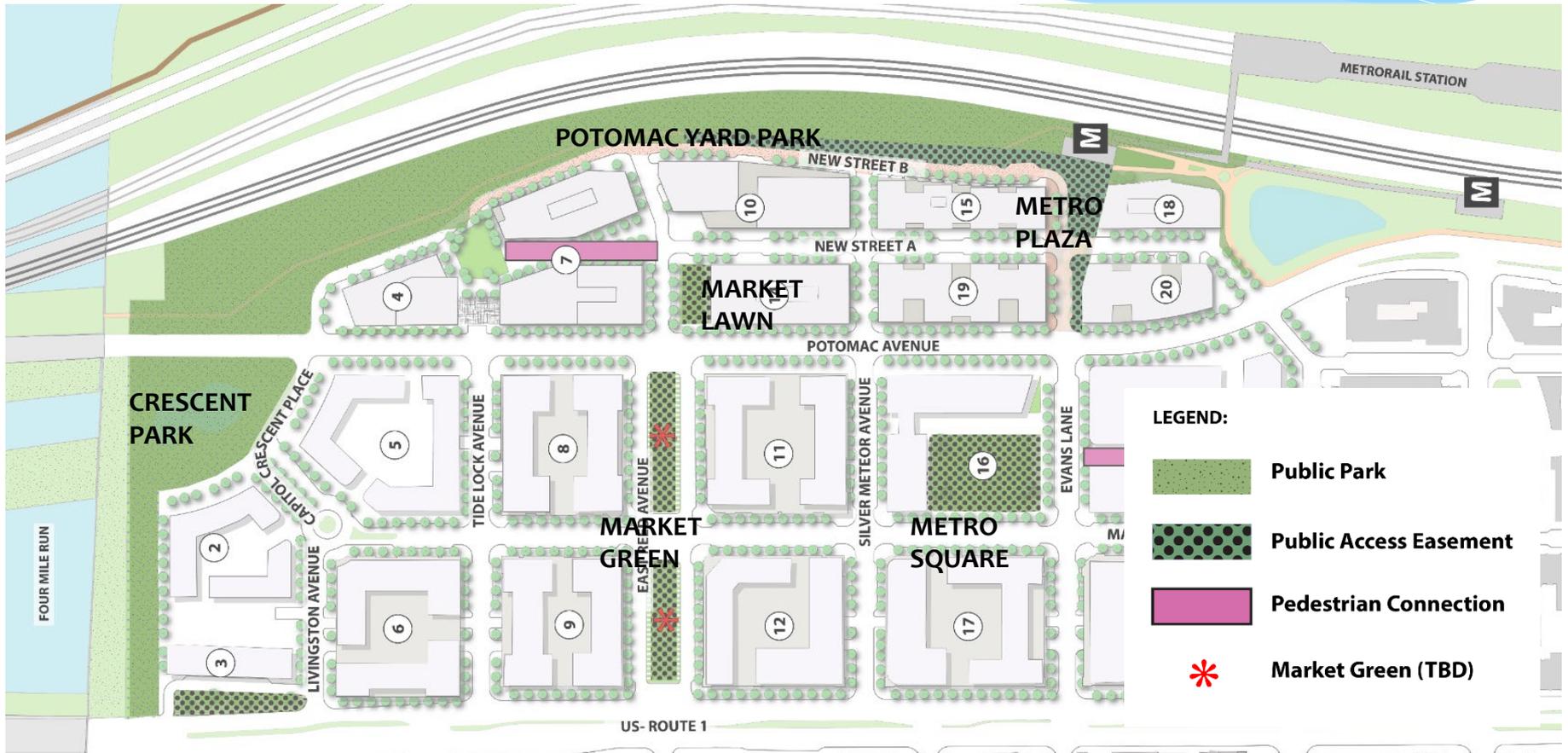
5-Minute Walkshed

10-Minute Walkshed

The Plan recommends a comprehensive network of open spaces that provide a variety of experiences, serve to define the neighborhoods in which they are located, and provide connections to local and regional open spaces systems and trails.



North Potomac Yard Open Space Network





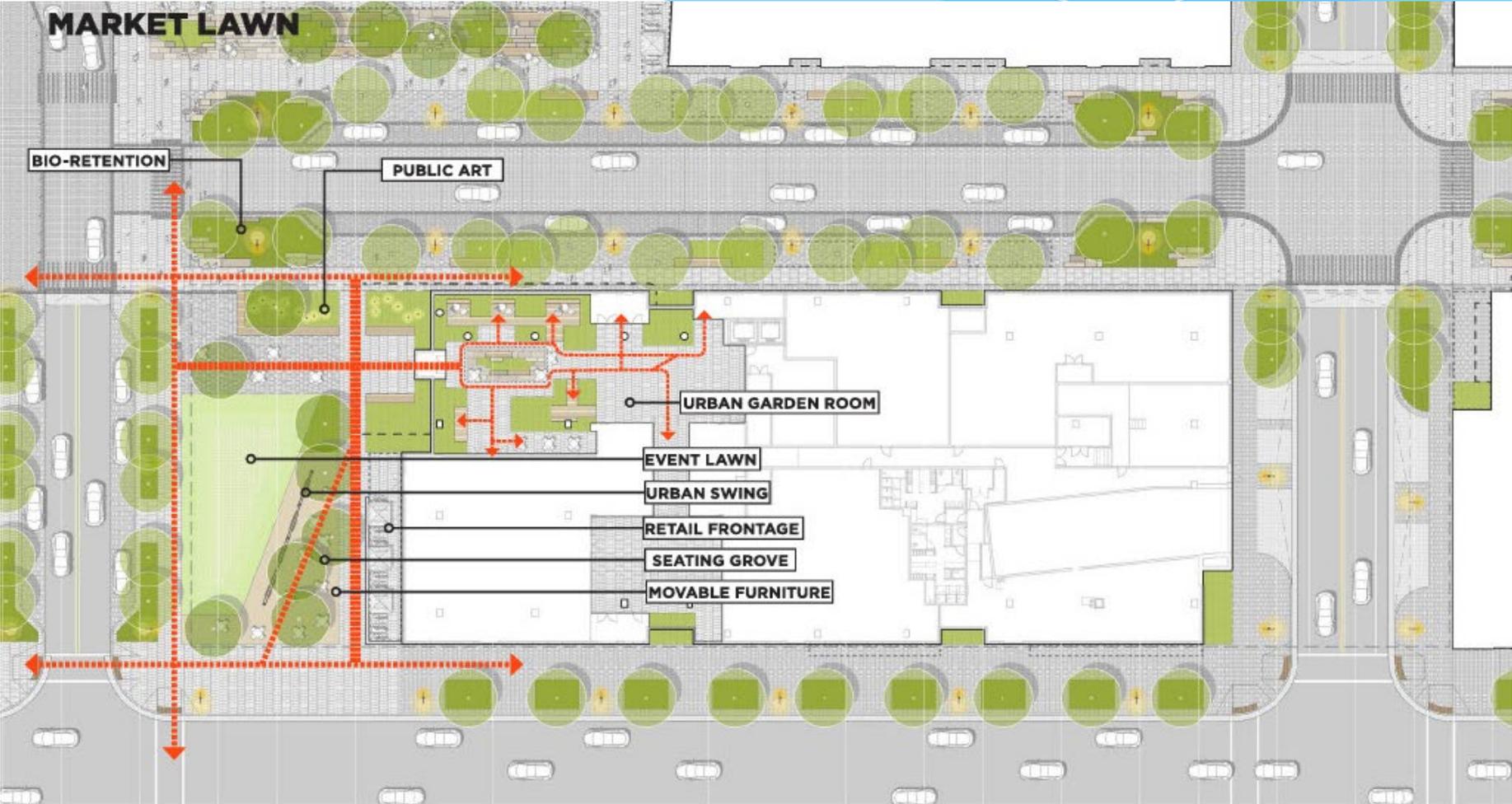
Market Law

Market Lawn - Context



MARKET LAWN
APPROX 0.2 ACRES

Market Lawn - Plan



Market Lawn - Perspectives



Market Lawn - Perspectives



Market Lawn – Concept Images



North Potomac Yard Small Area Plan



City Staff Remarks

- **Market Lawn**

- Staff believes the design achieves the goals of the North Potomac Yard SAP by providing a flexible space, to accommodate a variety of events and uses.
- Staff recommends further refinement of site details during final site plan to ensure long term success of the space.
- Staff recommends that the City reserve the right to program Market Lawn for up to five events annually, to be coordinated through a Memorandum of Understanding.



Commission Discussion

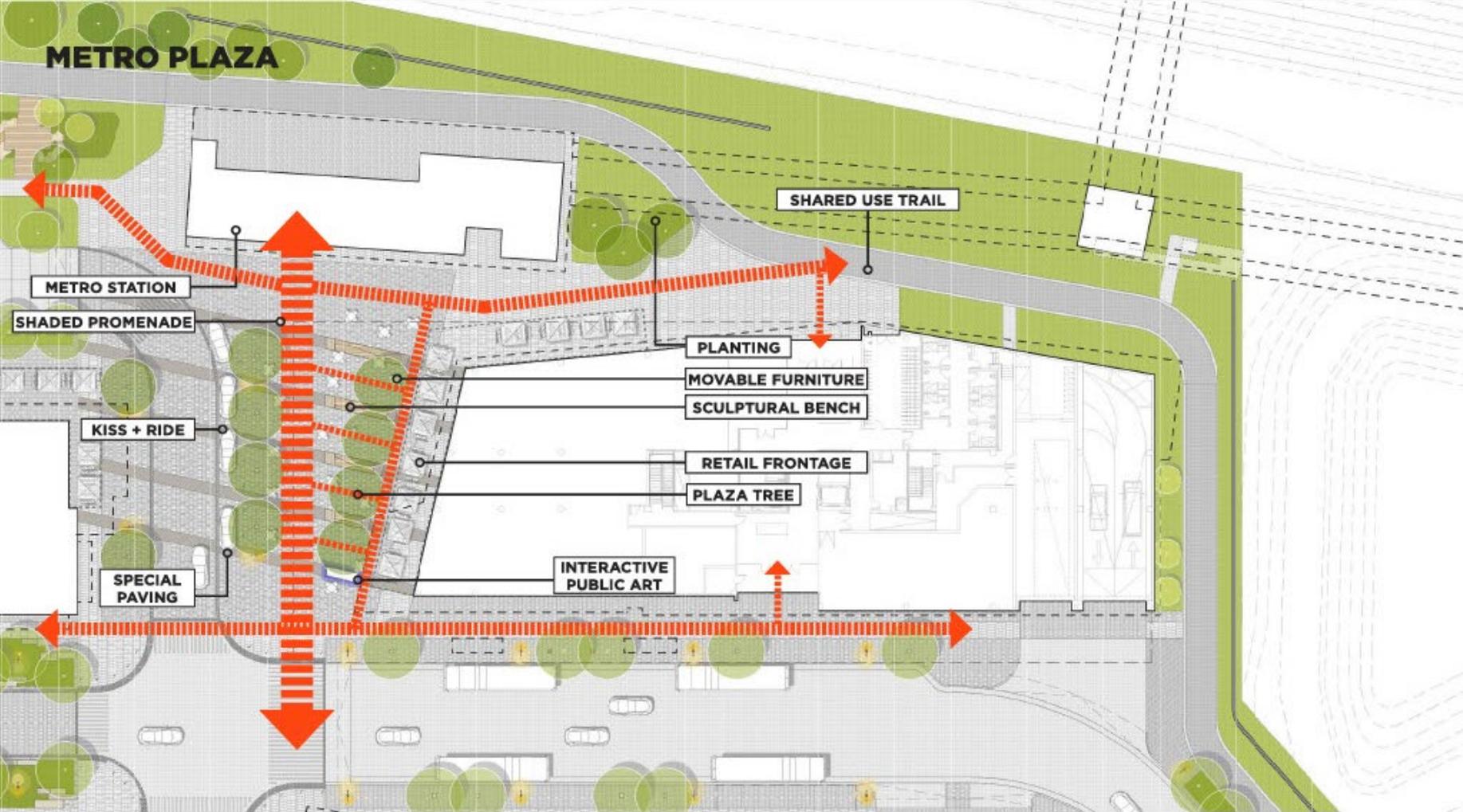


Metro Plaza

Metro Plaza- Context



Metro Plaza - Plan



Metro Plaza - Perspectives



Metro Plaza - Perspectives



Metro Plaza – Concept Images



North Potomac Yard Small Area Plan



City Staff Remarks

- **Metro Plaza**
 - Staff supports the general vision including the pavement patterns, integration of lighting into the seating, decorative lighting elements, potential for public art and a mix of seating/nodes to create inclusive and accessible space.
 - Staff recommends that the applicant continue to refine the concepts, as recommended by the Potomac Yard Design Advisory Committee.
 - Metro Plaza is required in the CDD to be a minimum of 0.3 acres, but the current design is 0.16 acres. Staff recommends that the missing 0.14 acres be added to other open spaces identified in the CDD for Phase 1 or Phase II of North Potomac Yard.
 - Staff recommends that the City reserve the right to program Market Lawn for up to five events annually, to be coordinated through a Memorandum of Understanding



Commission Discussion



North Potomac Yard Schedule

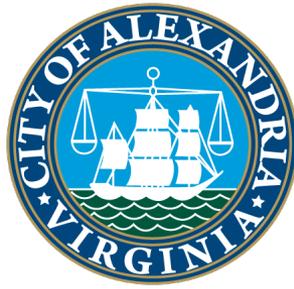
- **July 9:** Park & Recreation Commission
 - Presentation on Market Lawn, Metro Plaza and Potomac Yard Park
- **July 23:** Market Lawn and Metro Plaza Verification of Completeness
- **Early August:** Potomac Yard Park Completeness Submission
- **Mid-September:** Potomac Yard Park Verification of Completeness Submission
- **September 17:** Park & Recreation Commission
 - Action - Market Lawn & Metro Plaza
- **October 6:** Planning Commission (Market Lawn & Metro Plaza)
- **October 15:** Park and Recreation Commission
 - Presentation on Potomac Yard Park Design
- **October 17:** City Council (Market Lawn & Metro Plaza)
- **November 19:** Park & Recreation Commission
 - Action - Potomac Yard Park
- **December 1:** Planning Commission (Potomac Yard Park)
- **December 12:** City Council (Potomac Yard Park)

North Potomac Yard Small Area Plan



Additional information:

[North Potomac Yard Implementation and Virginia Tech Innovation Campus website](#)



FY 2021 Community Matching Fund

Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities

Park & Recreation Commission Meeting
September 17, 2020

Background

- RPCA established the Community Matching Fund with the approval of the FY 2017-FY 2026 Capital Improvement Budget.
- The Fund is part of RPCA's PARKnership Program, a program that oversees partnerships for the development, design, construction and operation of recreational and park facilities and/or programs.
- The Fund promotes collaborative partnerships among City of Alexandria community organizations by providing matching 1:1 dollars for groups that propose fundraising for park and recreation improvement projects.

Process

- In FY21, there are a total of \$25,000 City matching funds. RPCA will give 1:1 matching awards in an amount up to \$25,000. Awards may vary given in any amount between \$2,500 (for project totals of \$5,000) to \$25,000 (for project totals for \$50,000).
- Due to an applicant withdrawing from an FY20 project, an additional \$7,500 in City matching funds are available.
- **Total Available City Matching Funds in FY21 = \$32,500**
- Any community group that lives and/or works in the City of Alexandria can apply for the matching fund. Proposals must show that the project will:
 - Provide a public benefit, free and open to all members of the public;
 - Be located on City owned parks property or recreational facility;
 - Emphasize self-help, with project ideas initiated, planned and implemented by the neighbors and community members impacted by the project; and
 - Demonstrate the ability to raise the community match within one year.



Public Hearing Process

- Applications accepted March 1 through June 26*
- We received five applications, one of which did not meet the qualifications. Senior Management and technical staff experts reviewed the applications. At the PRC meeting, staff will present the proposed projects in the following order:

1. Lynhaven Gateway Park Improvements
2. Charles Hill Park Game Table (Note: On September 16 the applicant withdrew the application)
3. Lockett Field Batting Cages
4. Potomac Yard Fitness Court

Staff recommends two projects move forward:

- **Lynhaven Gateway Park and Lockett Field**
- **Total City Award = \$17,950**



Public Hearing Process

- Applicants and the public will have an opportunity to speak and answer questions from the Commission after each presentation.
- RPCA will also take written comments by email at lucresha.murphy@alexandriava.gov until October 9, 2020.
- Senior staff will make final recommendations to the Park and Recreation Commission members and announce the awards at the October 15, 2020 meeting.

Lynhaven Gateway Park Improvements

- **Applicant:** Lynhaven Citizens Association
- **Project Description:**
 - The project will provide park improvements consistent with the 2020 Pocket Park Improvement Plans
- Improvements include:
 - Information Kiosk
 - Additional Seating (6 Adirondack Chairs and 3 Outdoor Picnic Tables)
 - Removing two Mounds and leveling Central Area
 - Resurfacing Remaining Mound
 - Installation of a Power Source and String Lights
 - Storage Box for tables and share neighborhood items (Chalk ,Corn Hole, etc)
 - Planting Boxes with Native Plants
 - General Landscaping
 - Sign Refresh



Total Project Cost: \$13,000

Proposed City Contribution: \$8,000

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends approval, contingent on refining the scope of improvements, and community outreach

Charles Hill Park Game Table

- **Applicant:** Del Ray Community Partnership
- **Project Description:**
 - The project will add a game table and seating located near the center of the park, offset from the pathway. Applicant will also build and install a "Game Library" to store board games and game pieces.
- **Total Project Cost:**
\$5,000
- **Proposed City Contribution:**
\$2,500

Staff Recommendation: Due to the applicant withdrawing the application on September 16, this project is no longer under consideration



Lockett Field Batting Cages

- **Applicant:** Alexandria Little League
- **Project Description:**
 - The project will add two batting cages located on the side of first and third baselines.
- **Total Project Cost:**
\$19,900
- **Proposed City Contribution:**
\$9,950

Staff Recommendation:

Staff recommends approval. Staff will work with the applicant to determine the size and placement of the batting cages.

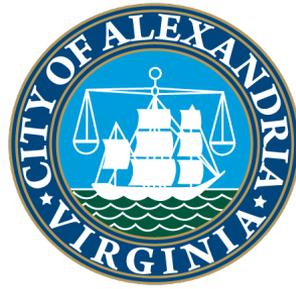


Potomac Yard Park Fitness Court

- **Applicant:** Kaiser Permanente
- **Project Description:**
 - The project will add a Fitness Court to Potomac Yard Park near the Kaiser Medical Facility on Potomac Avenue.
- **Total Project Cost:**
\$125,000
- **Proposed City Contribution:**
\$25,000

Staff Recommendation: Staff does NOT recommend approval due to reduced City funding in FY2021. Siting within Potomac Yard Park will require revisions to the park's approved site plan (DSUP).





Discussion & Questions