

Rethinking Open Space



a new article guided by the 2018 comprehensive plan

Planning Commission Work Session, September 17, 2020

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Presentation outline

1. A positive need for open space

2. Existing standards

3. Draft proposal

4. Benefits

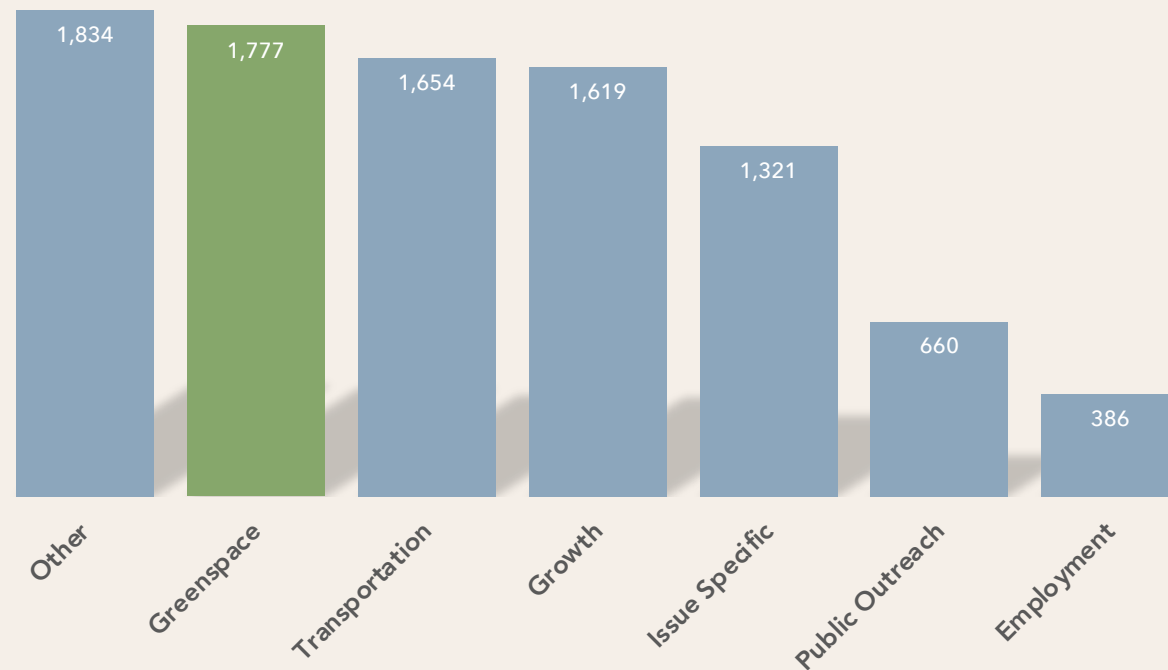
5. Next steps

6. Discussion

A new article drafted on public input

2018 Comprehensive Plan Public Input Report

Count of Category Comments



A new article drafted on public input

“Make sure to anchor the community through greenspace.”



A new article drafted on public input

"In our specific neighborhood wish natural resources were more accessible to walk"

"Equitable access to greenspaces is needed"

"Greenspace accessible to people of all incomes residing in all neighborhoods"



A new article drafted on public input

“Place to connect and provide a common touchpoint for a neighborhood”

“Greenspace & quality of life must be protected”

“More green space for people to congregare and have community.”



A new article drafted on public input

“Require more greenspace with every development”

“Incorporate parks, trails & greenspaces into any new development”

“More residential density if more common open space (HOA) is provided”



A new article drafted on public input

2016 Greenspace Survey

- 2,138 surveys completed
- Strong desire for accessible greenspace.
- Preference to reside close to greenspace that they are able to walk to.



A new article drafted on public input

"You cannot underestimate the value of a city that is green."

"Availability and accessibility of greenspace is essential for human growth and development."

"Incorporate parks in new development areas."



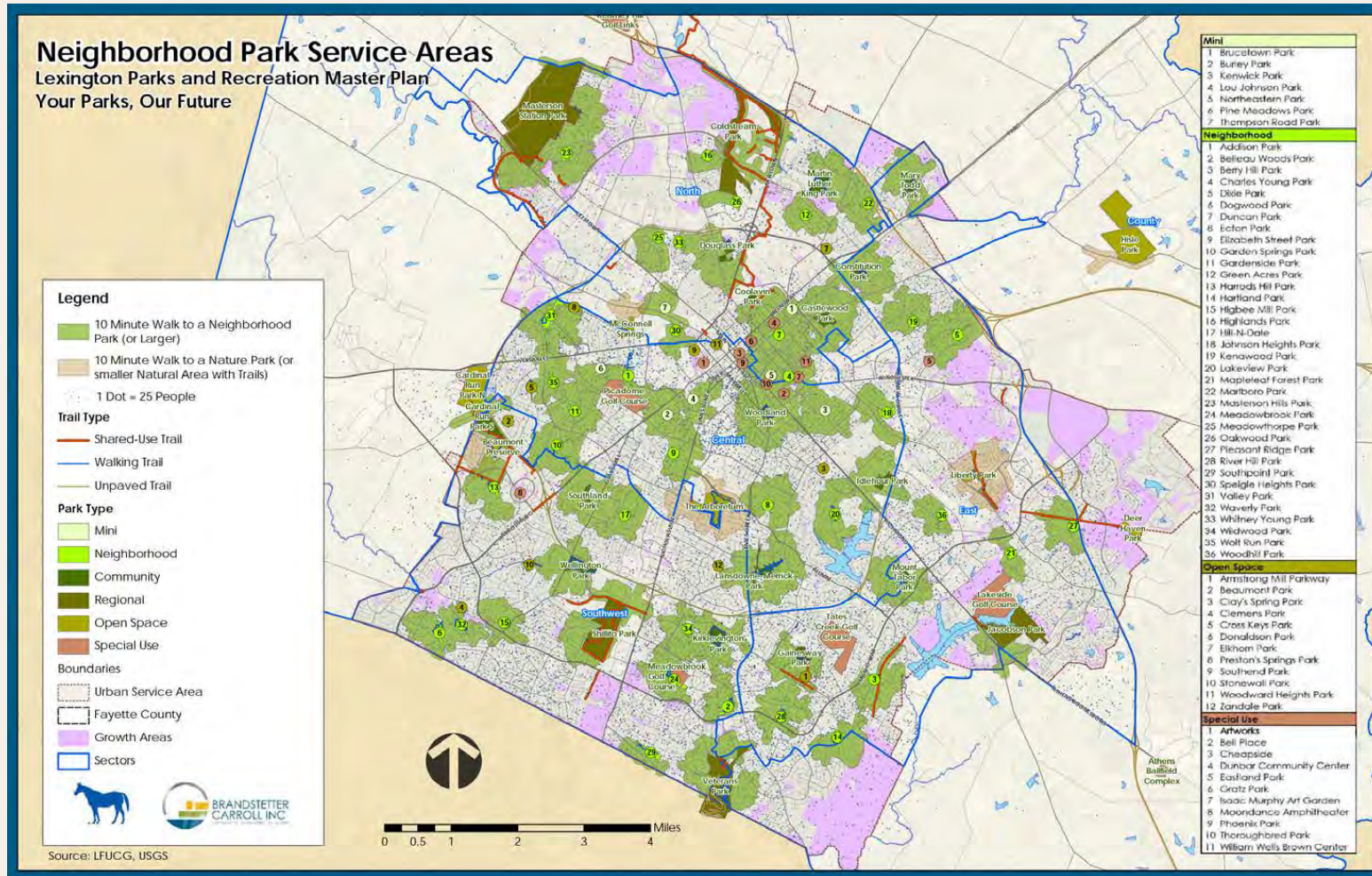
A new article drafted on data-driven goals

2018 Your Parks, Our Future Master Plan

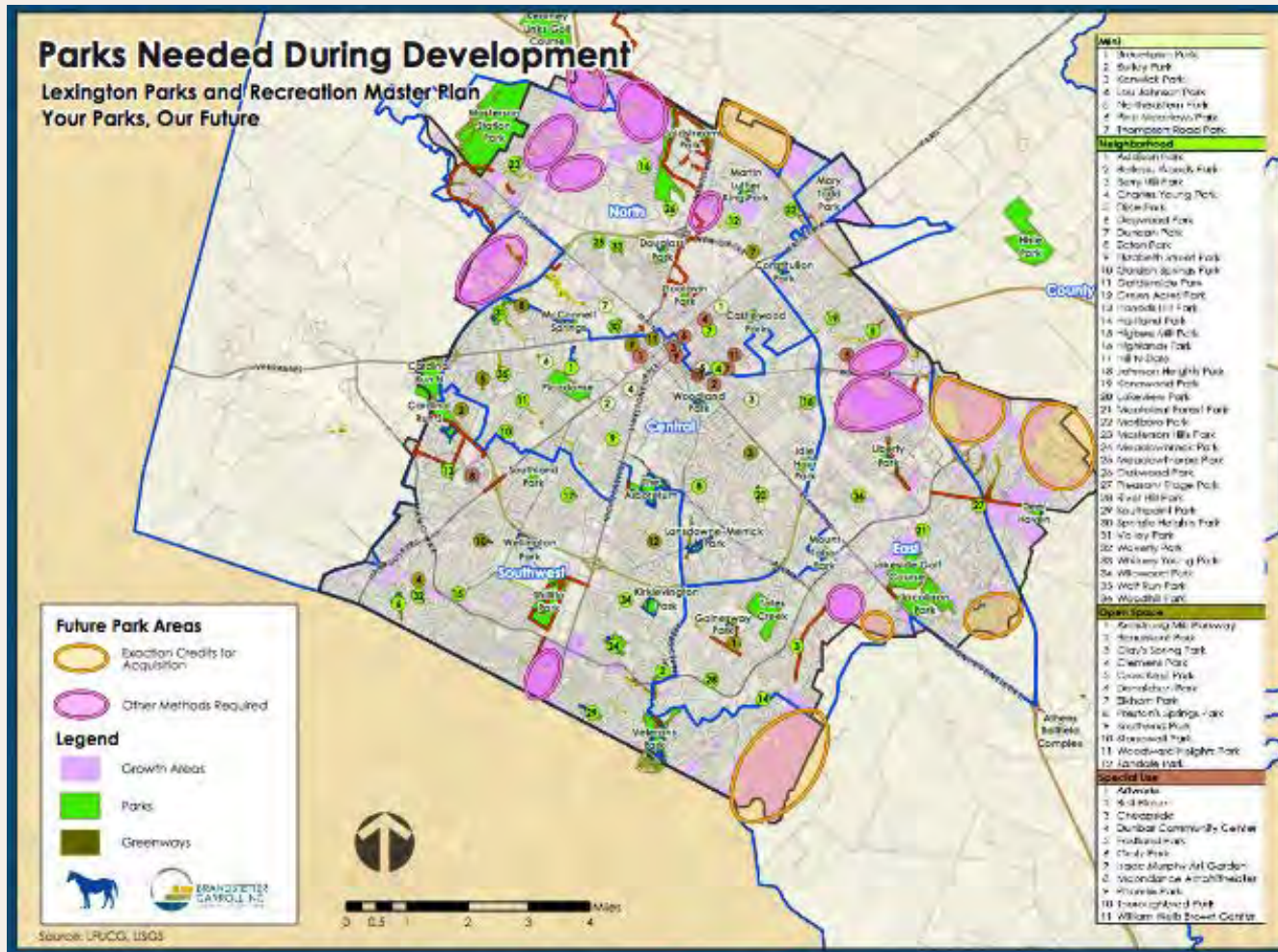
- 63% of households underserved by small neighborhood parks
- 34% list “too far from home” as reason for not using parks (national average is 12%)
- Small neighborhood parks second most needed behind walking and hiking trails



Neighborhood Park Service Areas



Parks Needed During Development



A new article drafted on *local* standards

2018 Your Parks, Our Future Master Plan

“Increase the population served within a 10-minute walk of a Neighborhood Park (or larger) from the current 40% to 65% through development of existing parkland, new parks in growing areas (including developer contributions), and improved access to existing parks.”



A new article drafted on national standards

National Recreation and Park Association, The Trust for Public Land, & The Urban Land Institute

“Ensure that everyone in your city has safe, easy access to a quality park within a 10-minute walk of home by 2050.”



A new article drafted on national standards

LEED v4 Neighborhood Development

“Locate 90% of planned and existing dwelling units and nonresidential use entrances within a 1/4-mile (5-minute walk) walk of at least one civic and passive use space.”



Comprehensive Plan Goals and Objectives

Theme A: Growing successful neighborhoods

Goal 2: Support infill and redevelopment throughout the Urban Service Area as a strategic component of growth.

Incorporate adequate greenspace and open space into all development projects, which serve the needs of the intended population.



Comprehensive Plan Action Item

Amend the Zoning Ordinance to redefine open space requirements.



Where are we now?

- Zoning Ordinance contains 169 mentions of "open space"
- Scattered across multiple articles
- Ambiguous definition
- Difficult to measure
- Standards don't apply in some areas where they should



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Minimum Useable Open Space by Zone

ZONE	Minimum Useable Open Space
A-R Agricultural Rural	No limitation
A-B Agricultural Buffer	No limitation
A-N Agricultural Natural Areas	No limitation
A-U Agricultural Urban	No limitation
R-1A Single Family Residential	No limitation
R-1B Single Family Residential	No limitation
R-1C Single Family Residential	No limitation
R-1D Single Family Residential	No limitation
R-1E Single Family Residential	No limitation
R-1T Townhouse Residential	Not less than ten percent (10%) of the total lot area for any townhouse shall be devoted to private useable open space either on each lot or on land adjacent and directly accessible to each lot. Such open space shall be for the private use of the residents of each individual townhouse and shall be physically separated from other private open space or common open space by plantings, fences, or walls. The least dimension of the private open space shall be eight (8) feet.
R-2 Two-Family Residential	No limitation
R-3 Planned Neighborhood Residential	Minimum Usable Open Space - 20%. (See also Group Residential)
R-4 High Density Apartment	Minimum Usable Open Space - 20%. (See also Group Residential)
R-5 High Rise Apartment	Minimum Usable Open Space - 20%. (See also Group Residential)
M-1P Mobile Home Park	Not less than ten percent (10%) of the site on which a mobile home park is located shall be devoted to open space available to the residents of the entire park.
MU-1 Neighborhood Node	Open Space - 10 percent.
MU-2 Neighborhood Corridor Zone	Open Space - 10 percent.
MU-3 Mixed-Use Community Zone	Open Space - 15%.
PUD-1 Planned Unit Development-1	22A-6(e) USABLE OPEN SPACE - Within a planned unit development, not less than thirty percent (30%) of the gross land area shall be restricted to useable open space.
PUD-2 Planned Unit Development -2 (Luigart)	None Required.
P-1 Professional Office	No limitation, except where residences are provided, then 10%.
P-2 University Research Campus	40% for the entire P-2 development, as specifically regulated under Article 8-24(o) herein.
B-1 Neighborhood Business	No limitation, except where dwelling units are provided as principal uses; then 10%.
B-2 Downtown Business	No limitation (except that residential uses shall provide useable open space equal to not less than 10% of only those floors occupied by dwelling units).
B-2A Downtown Frame Business	No limitation, except that residential uses shall provide useable open space equal to not less than ten percent (10%) of only those floors occupied by dwelling units.
B-2B Lexington Center Business	No limitation, except that 10% shall be required for any residential area.
B-3 Highway Service Business	No limitation.
B-4 Wholesale and Warehouse Business	No limitation.
B-5P Interchange Service Business	(nothing listed)
B-6P Commercial Center	Minimum Usable Open Space - 15%
I-1 Light Industrial	No limitation.
I-2 Heavy Industrial	No limitation.
EX-1 Exclusive Use	(nothing listed)
EAR-1 Residential 1 EAMP	At least twenty-five percent (25%) of the net developable acreage of any project in the EAR-1 zone shall be open space.
EAR-2 Residential 2 EAMP	At least twenty-five percent (25%) of the net developable acreage of any project in the EAR-2 zone shall be open space.
EAR-3 Residential 3 EAMP	At least twenty-five percent (25%) of the net developable acreage of any project in the EAR-3 zone shall be open space.
CC Community Center EAMP	At least 25% of the net developable acreage of any development within a CC zone shall be open space.
CD Conservation District EAMP	(nothing listed)
ED Economic Development EAMP	At least 25% of the net developable acreage of any development within an ED zone shall be open space. Such open space may be clustered across multiple lots or tracts to facilitate the common use of the land.
AM-1 Ag Market Overlay Zone	24B-10(h) REQUIRED OPEN SPACE - No limitation, except for all uses permitted under Article 24B-3 above that are not listed as permitted in the zone classification underlying the AM-1 zone, then forty percent (40%) of the lot.

Group Residential (R-3, R-4, R-5)	
Density (d.u./net acre)	Usable open space required
<5 d.u./acre	5%
5 to 15 d.u./acre	20%
16 to 40 d.u./acre	15%
>40 d.u./acre	10%

For Group Residential projects located in the Infill and Redevelopment Area, there is an Open Space Reduction: "For projects located within 1,000 feet of an existing LFUCG park space, the minimum required open space shall be reduced by 50%."

***Note that in many places throughout the Zoning Ordinance, additional open space can be provided to gain increased building height, FAR, etc. For example, see Zone B-2A and Article 9 Group Residential.**

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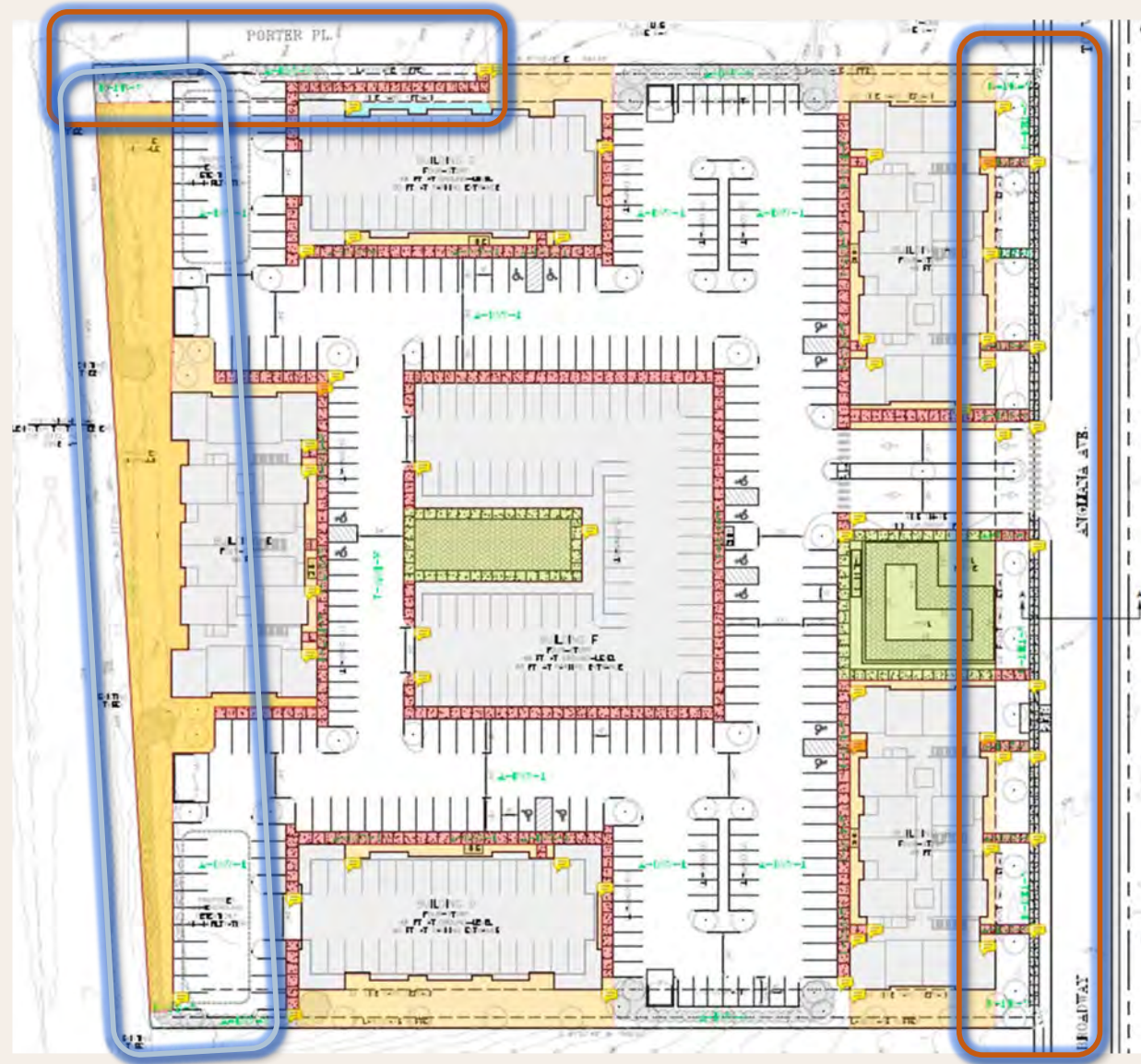


Current definition

OPEN SPACE, USEABLE - Outdoor area of a lot or tract which is designated and used for outdoor living, recreation, pedestrian access or planting. Such areas may be ground or roof space seventy-five percent (75%) open to the sky, balconies a minimum of five (5) feet wide, an enclosed deck, porch, or ground floor portions of a building constructed on columns. Off-street parking and loading areas, driveways, vehicular use area perimeter landscaping and interior landscaping, unenclosed fire escapes, or required front and side street side yard areas do not qualify as useable open space; provided, however, that those portions of the required side street side yard may qualify as useable open space, as long as such open space is separated from the street right-of-way by a fence or solid screen planting.

An example

- R-5 Group residential
- 5.6 acres
- 385 dwelling units
- Minimum useable open space
 - Required: 10%
 - Provided: ~20%



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Workspaces v

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10 ft
5 m

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So, what are the big issues?

1. Inefficient

Definition is too complex.
Regulations are scattered
across individual zones.

2. Multi-family

Current requirements do
not ensure open spaces
planned for use by people.

3. Single Family

Our single family residential
developments deserve access
to common open space, too.

The Proposal

**Minimum Useable
Open Space**

The Proposal

Minimum Useable
Open Space



Combined Open
Space

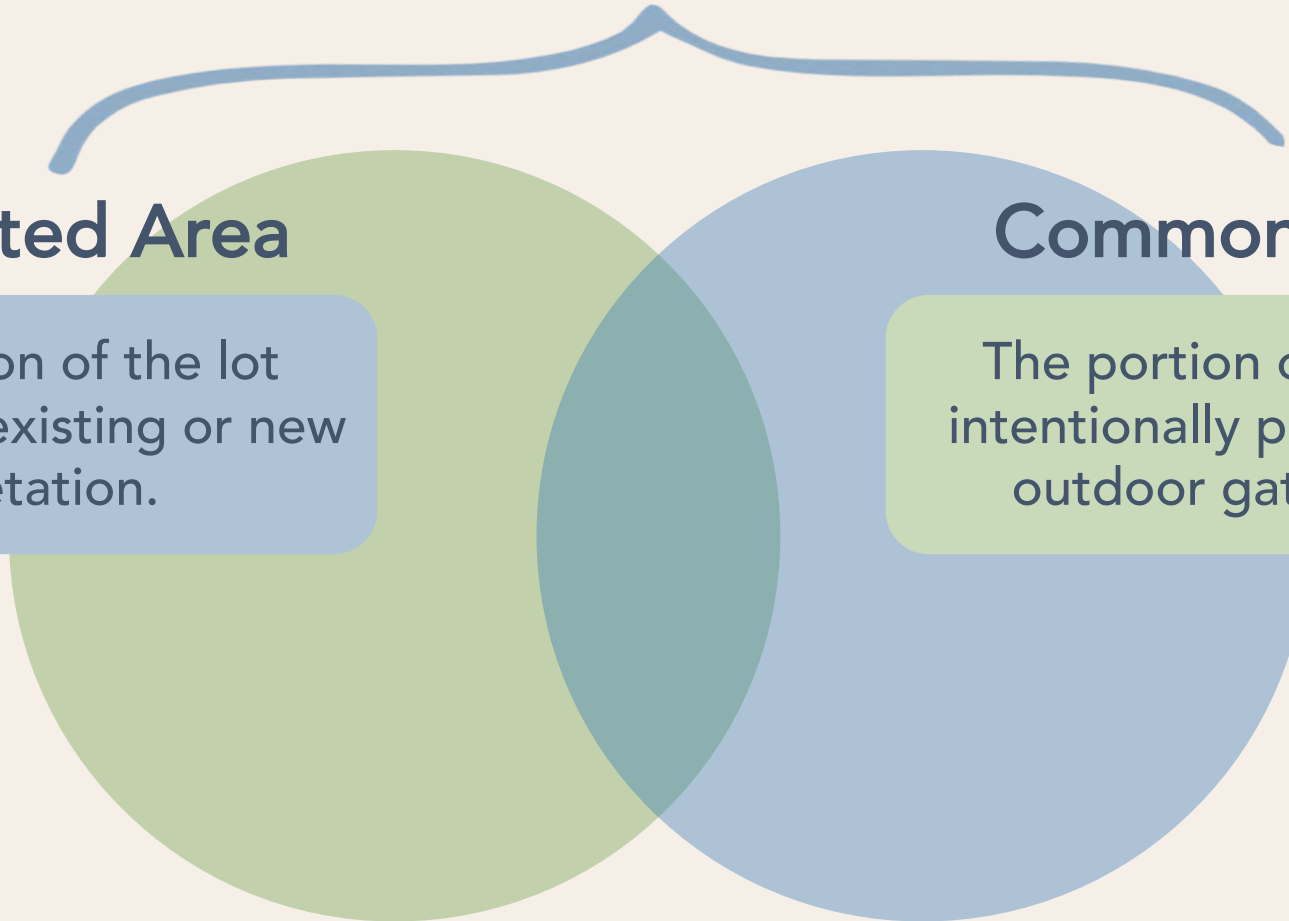
Combined Open Space

Vegetated Area

The portion of the lot covered by existing or new vegetation.

Common Area

The portion of the lot intentionally planned for outdoor gathering.





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10 ft
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Combined Open Space



Vegetated Area

The portion of the lot covered by existing or new vegetation.

Common Area

The portion of the lot intentionally planned for outdoor gathering.

What we are planning to regulate

Multi-family

- Not asking for more than is already required
- Most likely asking for slightly less combined open space
- In exchange for better quality common areas

Single family

- Minimum useable open space requirements currently do not apply
- We will be asking for the inclusion of common areas

What we are planning to regulate

Vegetated Areas

- Limited restrictions
- Potential bonuses for ecological areas such as pocket forests, pollinator gardens, etc.

Common Areas

- Access
- Size and Dimensions
- Visibility
- Adjacent Uses
- Minor Physical Improvements
- Plantings and Trees
- Pedestrian Scale Lighting
- Maximum Slope
- Green Infrastructure Areas



What we are not planning to regulate

- Types of vegetation
- Play equipment, outdoor structures, etc.
- Specific locations

- The new standards will be flexible—aimed at access and functionality

Relationship between FAR, Parking, and Open Space

- The three things that constitute a site: building, parking areas, and open space
- We are tackling these changes with a coordinated, multipronged approach
- Regulatory changes we are pursuing all support the Neighborhood Pillars of Density, Design, and Equity

Density

Design

High quality open spaces balance the impacts of increased density.

Equity

Access to high quality open space becomes increasingly important as we grow.

Benefits

Public Health & Community Wellbeing



Environmental Quality & Stewardship



Economic Development

- Trends show that skilled workers seek out the places they want to live—and then seek out work
- Employers look for quality of life infrastructure

Combined Ratings*			
CORPORATE SURVEY			
Site Selection Factors	2019	2018	
Ranking			
1.	Highway accessibility	92.4	87.2 (3)**
2.	Availability of skilled labor	92.3	90.5 (1)
3.	Labor costs	87.1	89.1 (2)
4.	Quality-of-life	82.2	82.8 (6)
5.	Occupancy or construction costs	80.3	76.1 (10)
6.	Corporate tax rate	79.7	86.7 (4)
7.	Energy availability and costs	79.5	77.8 (8)
8.	Tax exemptions	75.0	83.0 (5)
9.	Environmental regulations	73.0	69.9 (16T)
10.	Proximity to major markets	72.6	71.8 (14)
11.	Right-to-work state	72.0	70.2 (15)
12.	Available buildings	71.3	76.7 (9)
13.	Expedited or "fast-track" permitting	70.7	64.9 (19)
14.	State and local incentives	70.2	82.5 (7)
15.	Inbound/outbound shipping costs	69.8	69.2 (18)
16.	Proximity to suppliers	68.1	72.8 (13)
17.	Available land	64.4	75.6 (11)
18.	Low union profile	62.7	74.4 (12)
19.	Training programs/technical schools	60.3	69.9 (16T)
20.	Availability of long-term financing	59.5	60.5 (21)
21.	Availability of unskilled labor	59.0	59.4 (22)
22.	Raw materials availability	56.1	55.6 (23)
23.	Accessibility to major airport	50.6	62.7 (20)
24.	Water availability	45.2	51.6 (24)
25.	Proximity to innovation commercialization/R&D centers	35.7	41.5 (27)
26.	Availability of advanced ICT services	26.7	50.0 (25)
27.	Railroad service	25.3	46.6 (26)
28.	Waterway or oceanport accessibility	20.3	34.1 (28)

* All figures are percentages and are the total of the "very important" and "important" ratings of the Area Development Corporate Survey and are rounded to the nearest tenth of a percent.

** 2018 ranking [Link to full survey results](#)

The Community AND Developers Need Reform

- Our focus throughout implementation of Imagine Lexington has been to unlock higher utilization of existing land.
- That land is very expensive.
- Two primary constraints:
 - Address the needs/wants of the community
 - Ensure that developers have the tools to meet those needs AND make a profit

What does this mean for the Open Space ZOTA?

- Generally more space for development
- In exchange for purposeful open space

Multi-family

- Most likely asking for less combined open space
- In exchange for better quality common areas

Single Family

Leverage non-developable areas to serve as community-focused open space.

Next steps

2020

Fall & Winter Develop Draft Text & Internal Coordination

2021

Winter Engage Stakeholder Groups

Spring Update Planning Commission

Coordination and Outreach

LFUCG Coordination

- Parks and Recreation
- Environmental Services
- Bike & Pedestrian
- Water Quality
- Engineering
- Public Safety
- Senior Services
- Boards and Commissions

Stakeholder Groups

- Development
- Realty
- Builders (BIA)
- Designers (ASLA, USGBC, ULI)
- Neighborhoods
- Sustainability (Fayette Alliance, Bluegrass Youth Sustainability Council)



Questions?
