

City of Alexandria, Virginia

City of Alexandria Proposed Playspace Policy

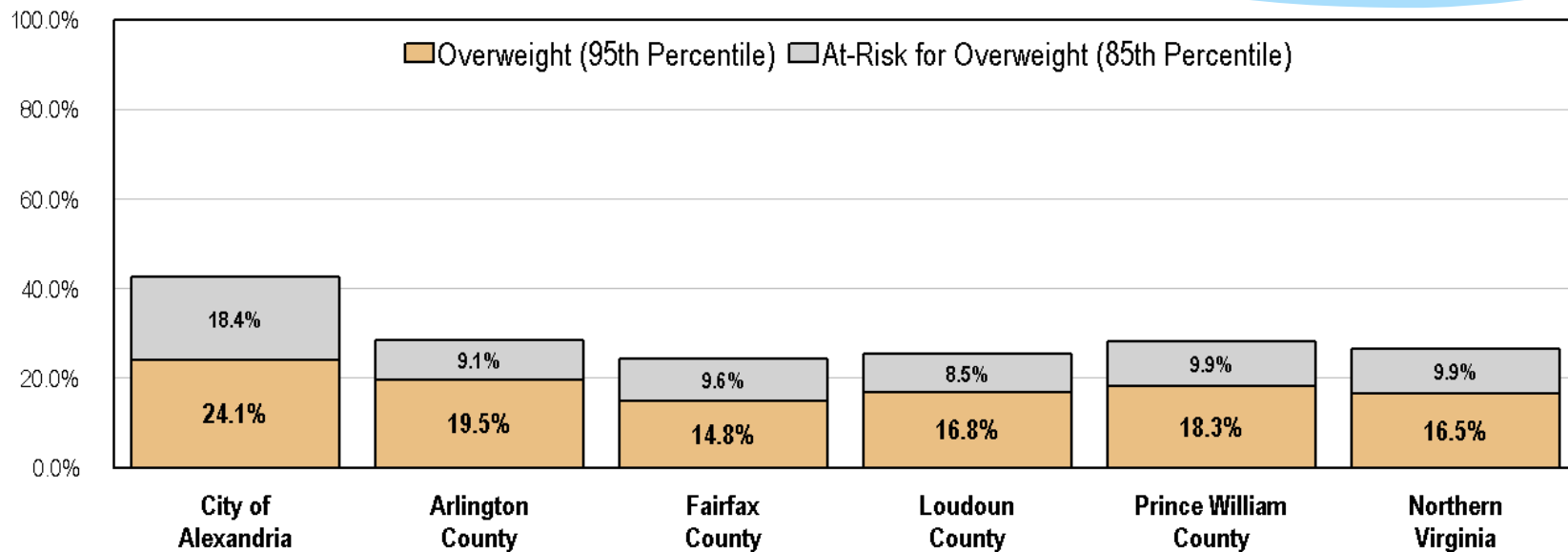
Alexandria City Council
Public Hearing
October 19, 2013



Why are we focusing on Playspaces?



Prevalence of Overweight Among Children & Adolescents (By Region)



Sources: • 2007 PRC Child & Adolescent Obesity Survey. © Professional Research Consultants, 2007. [Item 87]

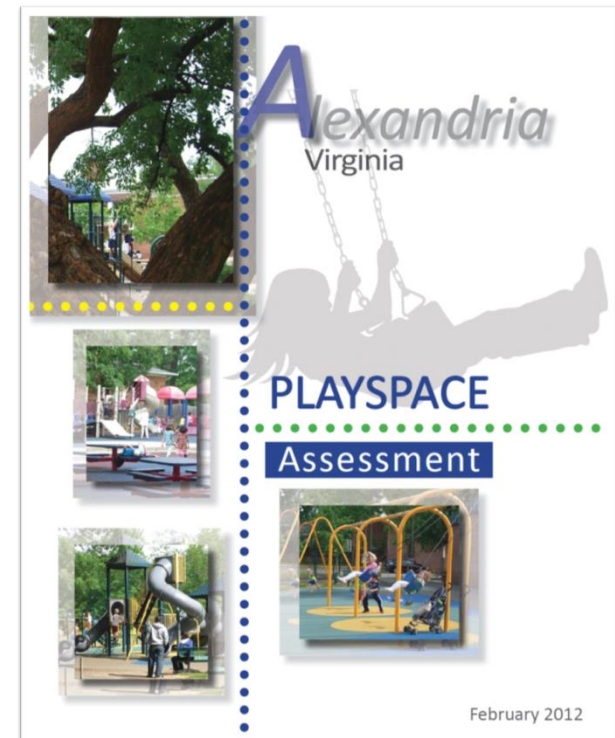
- Notes:
- Reflect children and teens aged 2 to 18 years.
 - Based on heights and weights reported by parent respondents.
 - The definition of overweight for children and adolescents is having a body mass index (BMI), a ratio of weight to height (kilograms divided by meters squared), at or above the 95th percentile of U.S. growth charts for their gender and age.

Survey conducted in 2007 by Inova Health System

Background



- 2012 Partnership for a Healthier Alexandria, Alexandria Playspace Assessment
 - Studied barriers to outdoor play
 - Identified underserved areas
 - Improve quality, location, distribution
- Related City Health initiatives: Smoke-free schools, parks and playgrounds, healthy foods, complete streets

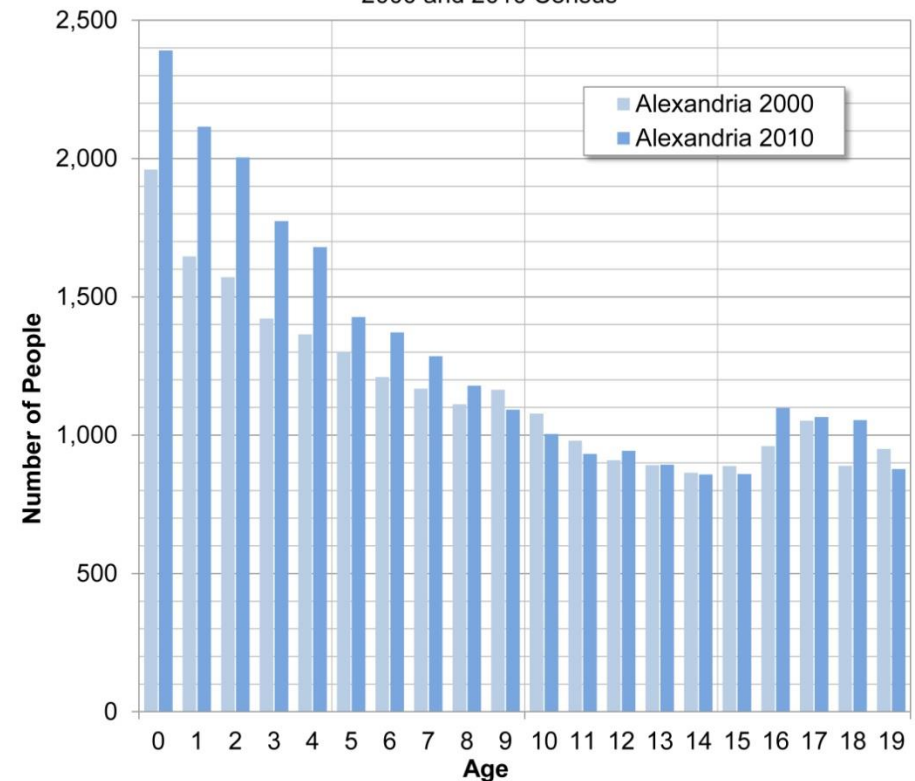


Alexandria 2010 Census Data



- Children 5 years and under make up 8.1% of population with 11,391 children
- 23% increase in children age 5 and under, since 2000
- Youth population growth rate more than twice that of total population.

Alexandria Population by Single Years of Age
2000 and 2010 Census

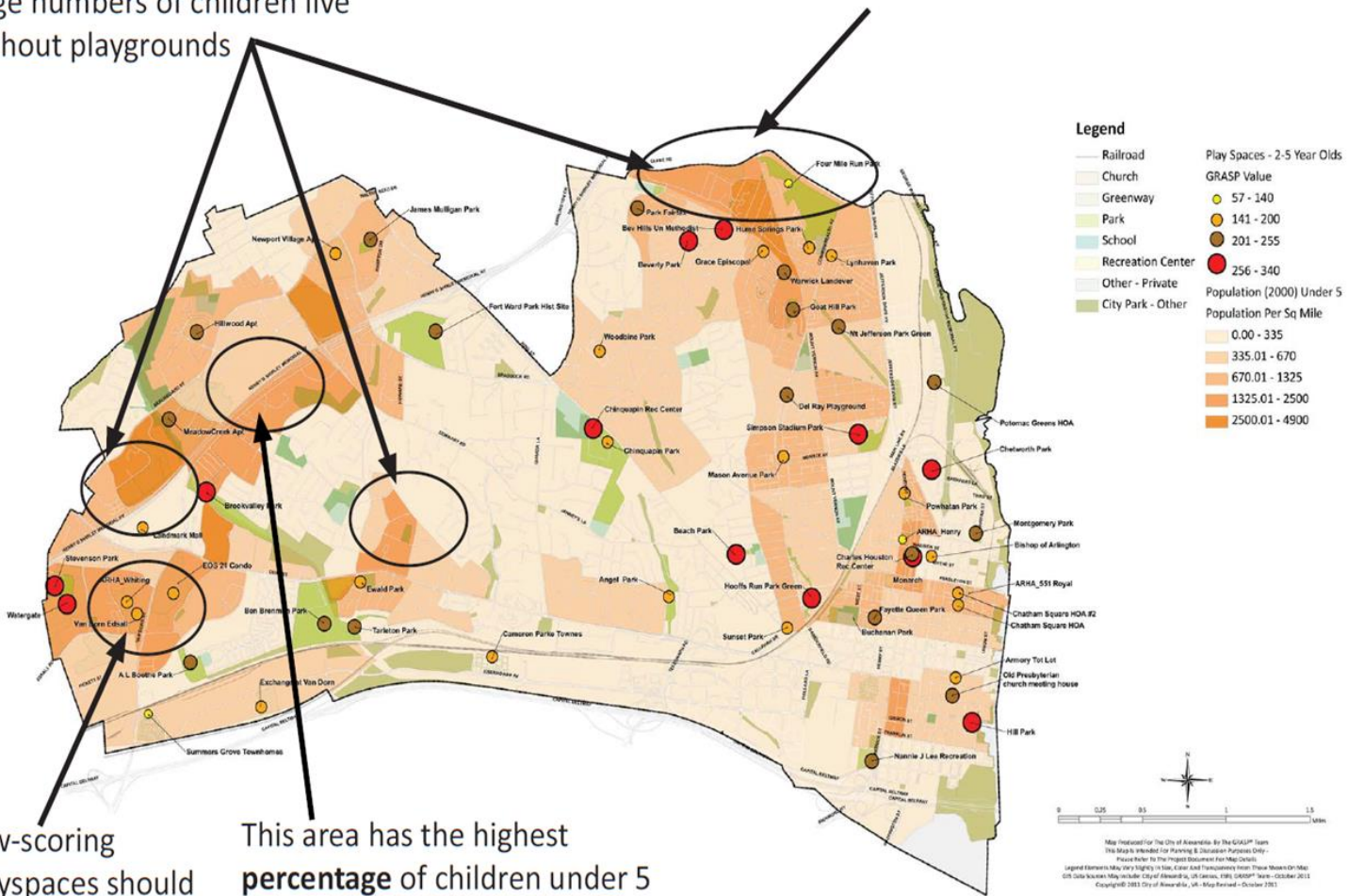


2012 Alexandria Playspace Assessment Findings



Potential gaps (areas where large numbers of children live without playgrounds)

This area has the highest **number** of children under 5 of all census tracts in the City



Low-scoring
playspaces should
be enhanced here

This area has the highest
percentage of children under 5

Map Prepared for the City of Alexandria by the GRASP team
This Map is Intended for Planning & Discussion Purposes Only
Accuracy Not Guaranteed for Map Details
Legend Elements May Vary Slightly in Size, Color and Transparency from Those Shown On Map
GIS Data Sources May Include: City of Alexandria, US Census, 1990, 2000, 2010
Copyright © 2013 City of Alexandria, VA - Map Revised - October 2013

Project Play



Project Play: Mobilizing the community to improve play in Alexandria Virginia

What have we done so far?

- Alexandria Playspace Assessment
- Playground Spruce Up Grants
- Project Play Task Force
 - Play series
 - Drafting playspace policy
 - Mobile app
 - Identifying ways to improve and increase playspaces



Improving playspaces with small investments



Why a Playspace Policy?



City Council Strategic Plan Goal 2

“The City protects and enhances the health of our residents”

- A City commitment to optimal health and development opportunities for children and youth by providing high quality play spaces

Definition of PLAY:

- ❖ ***Playspaces are an outdoor or indoor facility, or site where elements specifically intended for children’s play and/or unstructured recreation are located.***

Free and spontaneous activity of children associated with motion of the body and action of the mind for the purposes of pleasure, delight, growth, health, and development.



Playspace Policy



- Consider playspaces in relevant policy and planning processes.
- Optimize quality, access and opportunity for play through planning, design, and/or enhancement of playspaces.
- Led by RPCA, in collaboration with P&Z and the Partnership for a Healthier Alexandria.
- Engage non-profits, community groups, and private partners to provide & enhance playspaces.



Potential funding sources include existing CIP Playground program, private re-development, grant partnerships, and other sources.

Desired Policy Outcomes



Ensuring playspaces are included in policy and planning processes

- Increase in quality, distribution, and access of playspaces
- Increase in numbers of children using playspaces
- A decrease in rate of overweight children

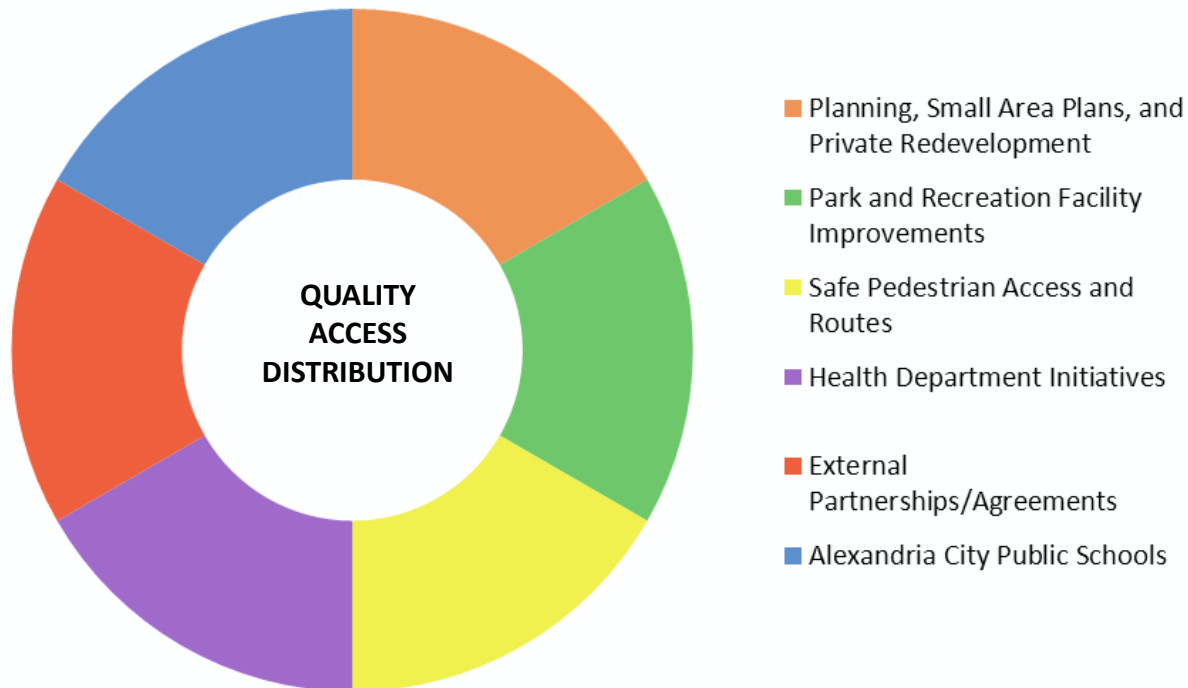


"We always watch our kids, and if something happens, we can go quickly. I think [that] the park also has many entrances/exits isn't always good, because people pass the park as a shortcut. Sometimes they throw garbage or trash. I think only one entrance/exit is good if the park isn't so big. The location of the park is also important. If the park is near a very busy street, it's hard for us to go, and when the kids run from the playground, it causes accidents." —Mie

Implementation Plan



- A framework/action plan to improve quality, access, and distribution of playspaces through several key City function areas:



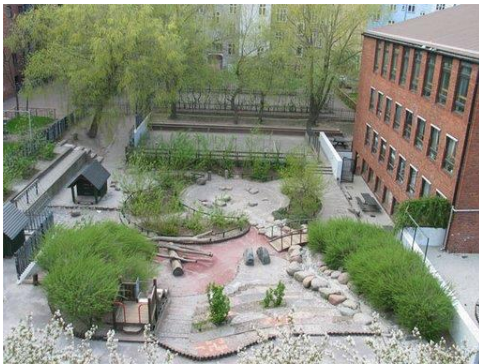
Implementation Plan



- Incorporate best practices for creating quality play spaces.
- Establish Playspace Technical Advisory Team to provide technical design guidance and monitor progress.
- Consider playspaces in land use planning and development processes.
- Places priority on areas and age groups identified in the Playspace Assessment.



Envisioning Future Play...



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Envisioning Future Play...



Current Initiatives



- New Cora Kelly School Playground opened June 2013
- CIP Playgrounds Renovations include Boothe Park (FY14) and Four Mile Run Park(FY15)
- Formation/recruitment of Playspace Technical Advisory Committee underway
- Beauregard Small Area Plan Implementation underway