

Landover Park

History and Character

Landover Park is a one-acre park in the Warwick Village neighborhood. There are no documented historic sites within the park. Historic Mount Auburn, the home of Helen Chapman Calvert and Calvert’s grandfather Thomas Swann, once stood just



above the park at the upper parking lot of adjacent Aspen House, which was built in 1963 shortly after Helen Calvert’s death (OHA 2010b). The City started leasing the park and pool site for public use from the Helen Calvert Trust in 1974. In 2006, the Trustees deeded the site, and with it the lease of the land to the City, to the Virginia Theological Seminary. The site remains privately owned and leased to the City. All that remain of the natural features of the park are scattered Eastern Red Cedar (*Juniperus virginiana*), Black Cherry (*Prunus serotina*), Black Locust (*Robinia pseudoacacia*), and Willow Oak (*Quercus phellos*) trees along the park edges.

Today, the park features an open lawn with picnic tables and playground. A pathway northwest of the park, outside the park boundary, leads to a retail area in the Arlandria neighborhood. Police report that because of the topography they have a hard time surveying the site, particularly the wooded area behind the playground. In 2005, the City removed a park shelter and plaza in the northwest corner of the park for safety and security reasons, though the wooden support structures remain on one side.

The City renovated the playground in 2010, installing a rubberized surface and new play equipment. The park has experienced increased use and has become a neighborhood gathering spot for families with children since that time.



The park entrance (image bottom left) includes unsightly patches of asphalt and a deteriorating fence line. The picnic area (image bottom right) is well shaded.

This plan does not evaluate the future needs for the adjacent Warwick pool. The pool, currently undergoing emergency repairs, is built into a hillside and has ongoing structural issues. The City considered potential future plans for the pool in the 2012 Aquatics Facilities Study.

Community Feedback

In Fall 2014, staff collected community feedback to understand how the Park is used and how it could be improved in the future. The following information summarizes what we heard through an online survey, community workshop, and “graffiti board” in the park. Over 270 people responded to the survey in total, nine of which were specific to Landover Park. Staff used the collected information to develop draft park plans.

In 10 years I would like this Park to...

(Top 3 rankings shown; based on a weighted score)

1. Be a safe place for children to explore
2. Be a place to create social connections
3. Be a place to relax

What would you like done with the open lawn?

Value	Count	Percent
Preserve it as is	6	100%
Enhance it	0	0%
Transform it	0	0%

Explain

What would you like done with the picnic area?

Value	Count	Percent
Preserve it as is	1	17%
Enhance it	5	83%
Transform it	0	0%

Explain

A shelter would be nice.
Add 1-2 more picnic tables
More tables

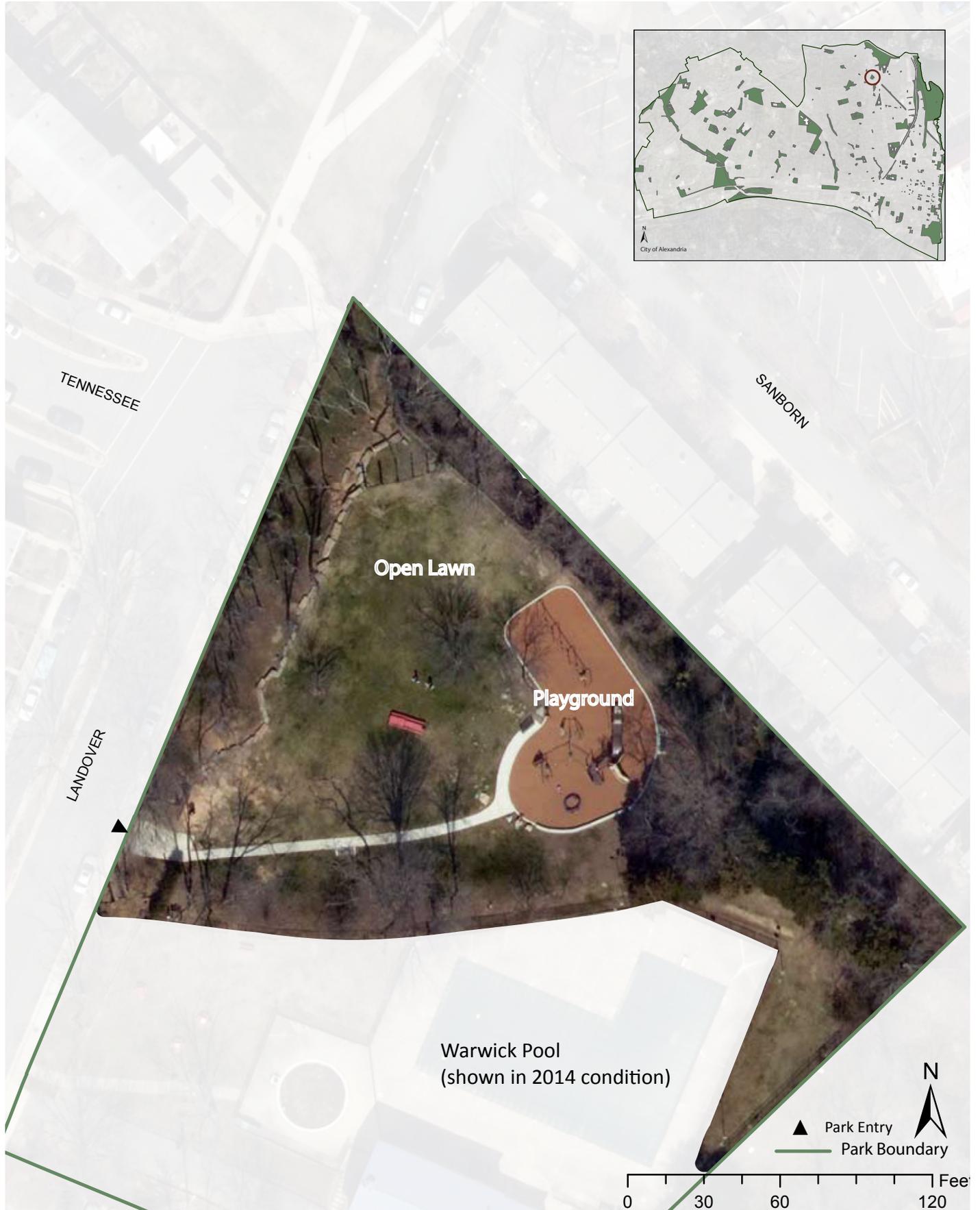
What would you like done with the playground?

Value	Count	Percent
Preserve it as is	3	50%
Enhance it	3	50%
Transform it	0	0%

Explain

More toddler swings
Would like to see more natural elements if any changes are made

Existing Conditions



How do you get to this Park?

Value	Count	Percent
Walk	9	100%
Bike (personal)	0	0%
Bike (Capital Bikeshare)	0	0%
Drive	0	0%
Public Transit	0	0%
Carpool	0	0%

How far do you typically travel to visit this park?

Value	Count	Percent
Less than 1/2 mile	9	100%
Between 1/2 mile to 1 mile	0	0%
Between 1-2 miles	0	0%
Over 2 miles	0	0%

What is currently NOT in the Park that you would like to see there?

Response

A few more picnic tables or benches would be nice.
 A picnic shelter
 Would like more natural play elements, such as a sandbox
 Adult equipment like pull-up bars and offer boot camp type classes would add some variety. Move a couple boulders for optimum (and safer) winter sledding.

Is there anything else you would like to tell us about the Park?

Response

Much improved over the years - but save the pool!
 People hold birthday parties there, but how do they reserve the space?

How often do you visit this park?

Value	Count	Percent
Daily	1	14%
Weekly	5	71%
Monthly	1	14%
Yearly	0	0%

Graffiti Sign

A "graffiti sign" in the Park had a marker attached and asked park users to write down what they would like their park to look like in the future. The sign was on site from September to November 2014 (image from October 27).



Comments from Community Workshop held on October 25, 2014

Area adjacent to pool	Enhance	Install new fence (e.g. attractive wrought iron or similar) to pool streetside fence
Area adjacent to pool	Enhance	Stabilize soils and remove erosion in area adjacent to the pool
Entire park	N/A	People love and use the park and playground
Entire park	Enhance	Plant new shade trees, especially on west end
Landover St	Enhance	Revisit parking in residential areas. Include signs?

Landover St	Enhance	Park sign, speed bump and pedestrian crosswalk in Landover St
Open area	Preserve	Preserve open areas
Open lawn	Enhance	Relocate picnic tables under shade trees and add 1 more table
Open lawn	Enhance	Add dog/pick up bag dispenser
Open lawn	Enhance	Check loose boulder around totom poles
Open lawn	Enhance	Enhance totem poles; check to secure
Playground	Enhance	New trash receptacle on West side of playground
Playground	Enhance	Fix gap between curb and grade -due to erosion- on east side of playground
Playground/Entrance	Enhance	Revisit dog signs - contradictions
Wooded areas	Transform	New activity area for children in wooded area behind existing playground.
Wooded areas	Enhance	Remove poison ivy

Draft Plan Feedback

In Spring 2015, the community provided feedback on the draft park plan through online surveys (see appendix for full results), park signs and public meetings. Based on information from the Spring input phase, staff updated the plans to best represent current and future community needs. Changes made to the Landover Park plan include keeping the area behind the playground unfenced to allow kids to explore and not installing a northern park entrance.

Implementation Strategy

The recommendations in the plan (shown right) can be implemented independent of other projects as funding is available, whether through city or non-city funds. The cost estimates (in 2015 dollars) do not include operating costs. Prior to the implementation of any recommendation, operating costs, if any, must be considered. The priority for each recommendation is shown as "low," "medium," or "high." RPCA determined these rankings based upon (1) park user safety, (2) community prioritization feedback and the results of the 2011 and 2013 Parks and Recreation Needs Assessment, (3) life span of the existing conditions, (4) potential for non-city funding sources, (5) level of user impact, (6) relationship to other projects.

Landover Park				
#	Recommendation	Priority	Estimated Cost	Dept Lead
1	Install crosswalks from Burgess Ave across Landover St	Medium	5,000-7,500	TES
2	Plant a new line of healthy trees and replace the fence along Landover St	Medium	10,000-20,000	RPCA
3	Renovate park entrance	High	10,000-12,500	RPCA
4	Install stairs to connect to the Warwick Pool picnic area	Medium	15,000-17,500	RPCA
5	Enhance picnic area	Medium	5,000-7,500	RPCA
6	Wrap the wooden poles with colorful material	Low	1,500-2,500	RPCA
7	Install railroad ties or other low barrier that can serve as a seating wall along playground	Medium	3,000-4,000	RPCA
8	Install shade structures over benches	High	10,000-15,000	RPCA

Improvement Recommendations

1 Install crosswalks from Burgess Ave across Landover St
 Currently, there are no crosswalks across Landover Street near the park entrance. Crosswalks would both serve as a traffic calming measure and as a visual cue to the park entrance.

2 Plant a new line of healthy trees and replace the fence along Landover St
 The existing trees along the street are in poor health and the existing fence is in bad condition, providing a poor sightline along the park. A new 4 ft standard fence and additional trees would make the park more welcoming and clean.

3 Renovate Park entrance
 The entrance has broken asphalt and is unsightly. A tidier park entrance would make the park more attractive.

4 Install stairs to connect to the Warwick Pool picnic area
 There is currently an opening in the fence between Warwick Pool and Landover Park, however there are no stairs to connect down the steep slope. Installation of stairs would provide a safer connection for Park users and stop the desire line from causing further erosion.

5 Enhance picnic area
 Install new picnic tables, a grill and trees to provide shade.

6 Wrap the wooden poles with colorful material
 The wooden poles, left from previous on site structure, could provide an opportunity for public art if wrapped with printed material, such as mylar.

7 Install railroad ties or other low barrier that can serve as a seating wall along playground
 A barrier along the playground will prevent mulch from entering the rubber surface area and address the associated maintenance issues.

8 Install shade structures over benches
 The playground is very hot in the summer. Shade structures overhead would make the site more comfortable for children and care-givers.



2015 Neighborhood Parks Improvement Plan: Appendix



Neighborhood Parks Plan

Landover Park

Community Feedback, Fall 2014



The Division of Park Planning, Design, and Capital Development is currently planning for the City's existing Neighborhood Parks, which we characterize as being 0.5 - 10 acres with a service area of up to 0.5 miles. The results of this plan will help determine budgeting priorities and recommendations for both short and long-term incremental improvements, ensuring that neighborhood parks serve Alexandria's needs now and into the future.

In Fall 2014, Staff collected community feedback to understand how the Park is used and how it could be improved in the future. The following information summarizes what we heard through an online survey, community workshop, and "graffiti board" in the park. Over 270 people responded to the survey in total, nine of which were specific to Landover Park.

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Response

A few more picnic tables or benches would be nice.
A picnic shelter
Would like more natural play elements, such as a sandbox
Adult equipment like pull-up bars and offer boot camp type classes would add some variety. Move a couple boulders for optimum (and safer) winter sledding.

Is there anything else you would like to tell us about the Park?

Response

Much improved over the years - but save the pool!
People hold birthday parties there, but how do they reserve the space?



Landover Park

Improvement Recommendations

Draft (Spring 2015)

1 Install crosswalks from Burgess Ave across Landover St

Currently, there are no crosswalks across Landover Street near the park entrance. Crosswalks would both serve as a traffic calming measure and as a visual cue to the park entrance.

2 Plant a new line of healthy trees and replace the fence along Landover St

The existing trees along the street are in poor health and the existing fence is in bad condition, providing a poor sightline along the park. A new 4 ft standard fence and new trees would make the park more welcoming and clean.

3 Renovate Park entrance

The entrance has broken asphalt and is unsightly. A tidier park entrance would make the park more attractive.

4 Install stairs to connect to Warwick Pool

There is currently an opening in the fence between Warwick Pool and Landover Park, however there are no stairs to connect down the steep slope. Installation of stairs would provide a safer connection for Park users and stop the desire line from causing further erosion.

5 Create a new park entrance on the north corner of the park

A new entrance would encourage pedestrians to enter from north end of the park and create a better access from Mt. Vernon Ave. Incorporating the existing wooden poles into the entrance can make a unique entrance and Park feature.

6 Wrap the wooden poles with colorful material

The wooden poles, left from previous on site structure, could provide an opportunity for public art if wrapped with printed material, such as mylar.

7 Install railroad ties or other low barrier along playground

A barrier along the playground will prevent mulch from entering the rubber surface area.

8 Install shade structures over benches

The playground is very hot in the summer. Shade structures overhead would make the site more comfortable for children and care-givers.

9 Install a fence along the corner of the Park

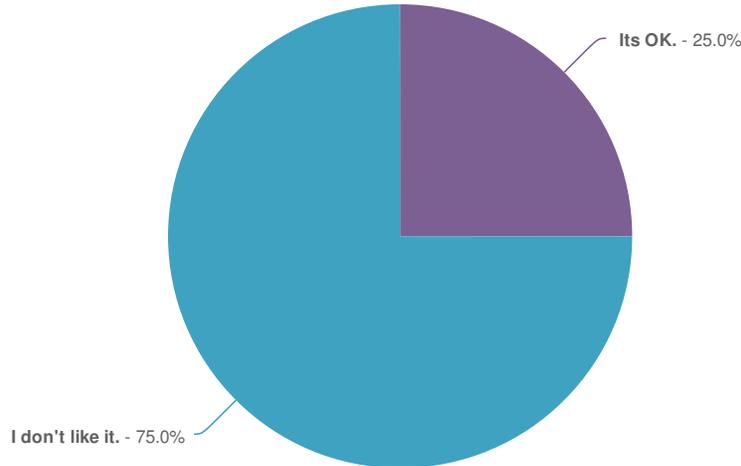
The area behind the pool is hidden from view and provides a safety concern. Closing it off from the public will help keep people, particularly children, from entering the area. The area behind the fence should be planted as a meadow or woodland area to lower maintenance needs.





Landover Park Draft Improvement Plan Survey Results, July 2015

What do you think of the following recommendations?-Create a new park entrance on the north corner of the park



Value	Percent	Count
Its OK.	25.0%	2
I don't like it.	75.0%	6
Total		8

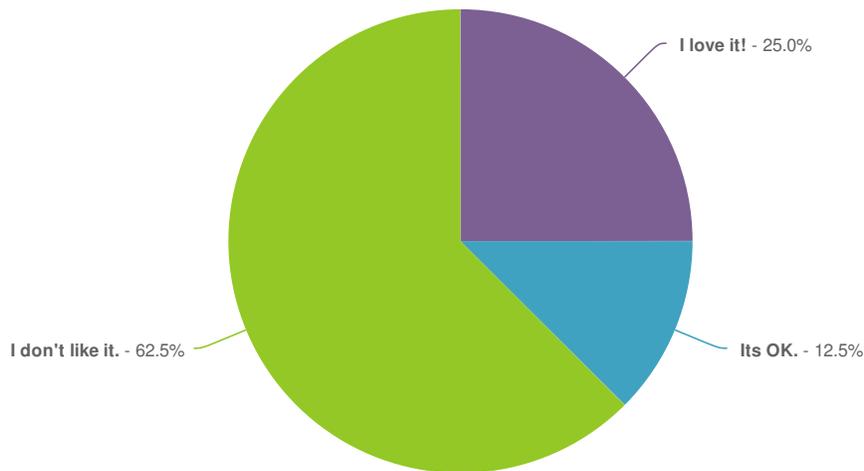
Explain-Create a new park entrance on the north corner of the park

Count	Response
1	The new entrance seems like a good idea, wrapping the poles seems out of place. The entire park is in earth tones, color fabric on the poles would seem garish in contrast.
1	If there is one thing I would stress the committee NOT do it is this. My main concern is safety for our residential community and the children who play in the park. First, this proposed entrance would basically lead into a parking lot for a very busy supermarket. This is very dangerous as it would make it easy for young children to potentially wander off into a dangerous area that is not well contained or secured. Also, unfortunately, the area near this proposed entrance often has loiters who are abusing alcohol. This is the sad truth. We have had to call law enforcement on several occasions on this very issue. Having the park so close to this public nuisance is another danger that is not worthwhile. I STRONGLY urge that this change not be made as it will make the park a less safe environment for our kids.
1	This is a safety issue - my kids run all over the park, and my older son occasionally plays out of my sight by the park fence, in the area where the new proposed entrance is. I'm okay with this, since the area is currently fenced, and I can keep one eye on the single park entrance to make sure he doesn't escape. Putting another entrance there will make my task much harder - I have two boys, and if my younger son needs me on the playground, I won't be able to monitor two entrances the way I currently can one.

Count Response

1	I like the restricted access now--having just one entrance makes it easier for me to ensure kids and/or dogs don't wander outside the park, but I can see how an additional entrance would make reaching the park easier for people.
1	Having two entrances could be a child safety hazard - children can easily get out and people out of sight at the top of the park can come in.
1	NO WAY! I don't want an entrance to the park from the parking lot and backs of restaurants where dayworkers sit on the street and homeless people loiter around. That is not safe and it would create another opening for little kids to get out from the park. The mylar around the wooden poles is a waste of money, kids use these poles as a soccer gate, whatever decoration you install would be destroyed in a few months.

What do you think of the following recommendations?-Install a fence along the corner of the Park



Value	Percent	Count
I love it!	25.0%	2
Its OK.	12.5%	1
I don't like it.	62.5%	5
Total		8

Explain-Install a fence along the corner of the Park

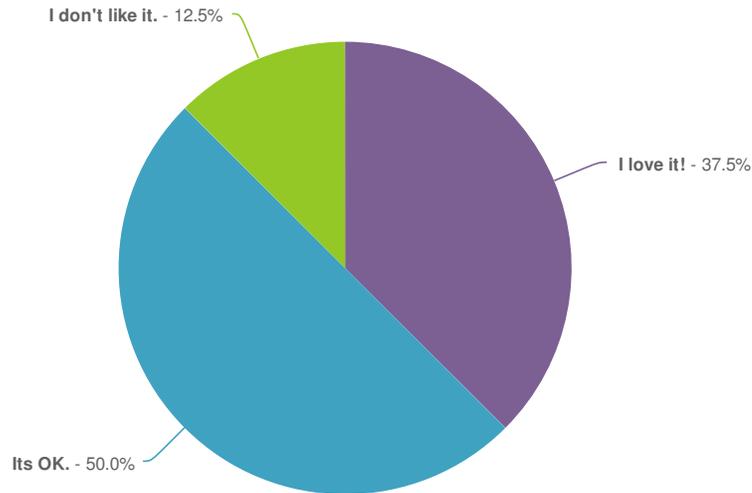
Count Response

1	I am opposed to this idea. The corner of the park is its most peaceful, tranquil area. I've never observed any dangerous or suspicious activities there, and it's a wonderful redoubt for little kids and pets to play without disturbing patrons elsewhere in the par. I'm again the very idea of walling off any part of the mark to the public--it defeats the whole purpose of parkland.
1	My kids love to play in the meadow behind the pool! I'm not a free-range parent, but letting them go up there, slightly out of sight but not out of voice range, allows them to practice independent play in a very safe way, since the area is fenced. Also, children love slightly wild places - their imaginations immediately start working in a way that the manicured playground doesn't facilitate. Up in that meadow and the blackberry bramble, they can be looking for buried pirate treasure, cross over into Narnia, or drop down the rabbit hole with Alice. Please, leave them this safe wild place to play independently.

Count Response

1	What about adding a path to the back (instead of to the pool and add something like a child's learning garden.
1	This is the worst idea. The kids love playing in that area, it is so nice and shaded and provides the kids an opportunity to explore in a safe, enclosed environment. It would be better to install staircase to enable easier access to that are and put some benches there for the parents to sit or some other play equipment.

What do you think of the following recommendations?-Install crosswalks from Burgess Ave across Landover St



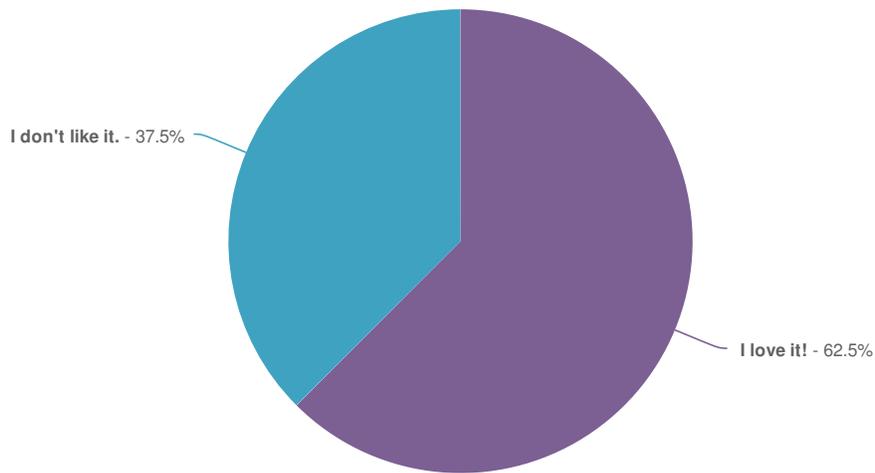
Value	Percent	Count
I love it!	37.5%	3
Its OK.	50.0%	4
I don't like it.	12.5%	1
Total		8

Explain-Install crosswalks from Burgess Ave across Landover St

Count Response

1	Better traffic control on mildly busy road
1	Good idea, since so many people need to cross the street, often with little kids and/or dogs.
1	It's a pretty low traffic area. I've never had problems with cars.
1	good idea!

What do you think of the following recommendations?-Install railroad ties or other low barrier along playground

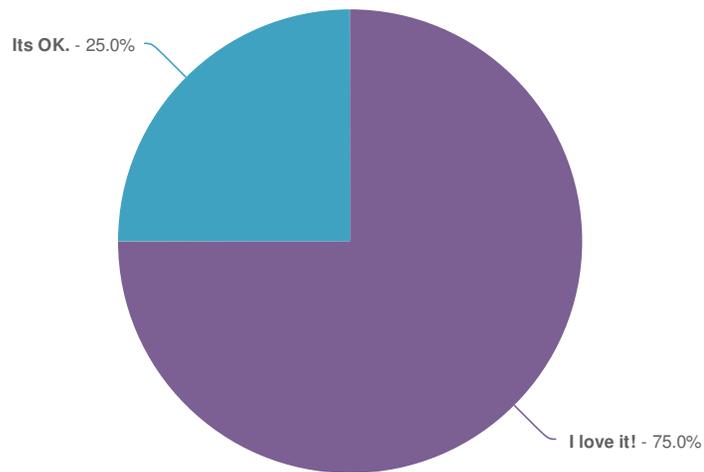


Value	Percent	Count
I love it!	62.5%	5
I don't like it.	37.5%	3
Total		8

Explain-Install railroad ties or other low barrier along playground

Count	Response
1	good idea!
1	The park can get quite crowded and it is good to have extended space for play. creating a low barrier would restrict play area for the children.
1	Should be high priority /early phase of plan. This is something simple that can provide an immediate improvement.
1	I don't think this is either necessary or a good idea. The railroad ties would only create a ground level obstacle kids for kids to step over to enter the play area. The current flat surface, with the cement border and seating area, is just fine the way it is.

What do you think of the following recommendations?-Install shade structures over benches

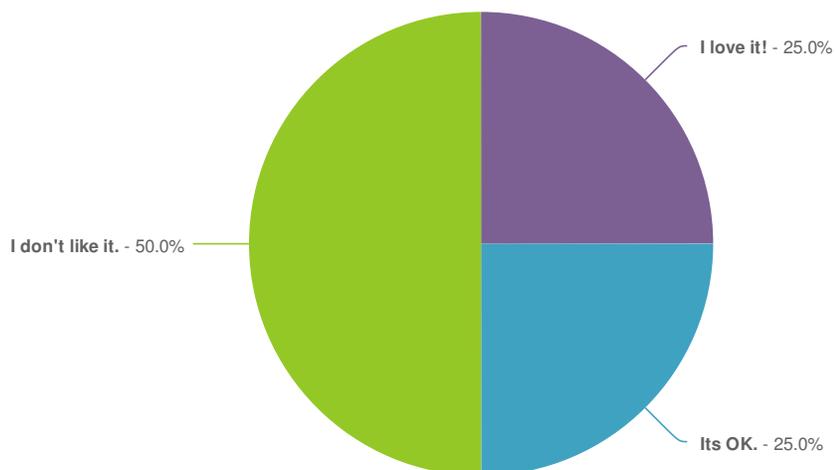


Value	Percent	Count
I love it!	75.0%	6
Its OK.	25.0%	2
Total		8

Explain-Install shade structures over benches

Count	Response
1	If they can be removed in the cold er months, then I support this idea. If not, I don't.
1	Shade is always nice
1	There are a number of benches. Can't we do simpler structures, but more benches?
1	Shades are nice, but additional trees would do a much better job of providing shade and are a cheaper option.

What do you think of the following recommendations?-Install stairs to connect to Warwick Pool



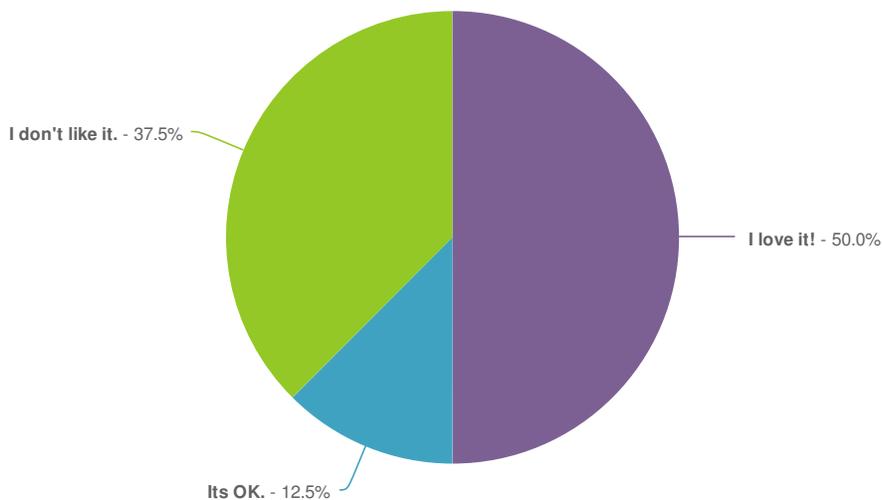
Value	Percent		Count
I love it!	25.0%		2
Its OK.	25.0%		2
I don't like it.	50.0%		4
Total			8

Explain-Install stairs to connect to Warwick Pool

Count Response

Count	Response
1	Nice convenience factor
1	When I asked someone the pool, they weren't sure if it would ever open. If it won't, the stairs aren't needed.
1	This is a neighborhood favorite for the winter when kids can go sledding into the park. Because it is a small area and not too steep of a ramp it is a great safe activity for kids in the winter. It would be sad to lose this wintertime fun and safe activity.
1	A good idea, especially for little kids who often trip on the slope between the two levels of the park.
1	there is no need for this at all, it is just as convenient to walk a few yards along Landover st.. It would be better to close the gap in that fence so that little kids couldn't get out from the park.

What do you think of the following recommendations?-Plant a new line of healthy trees and replace the fence along Landover St

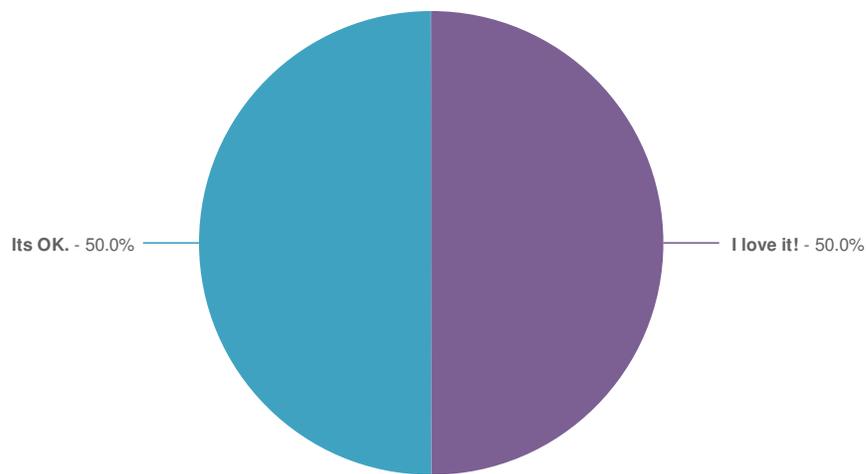


Value	Percent		Count
I love it!	50.0%		4
Its OK.	12.5%		1
I don't like it.	37.5%		3
Total			8

Explain-Plant a new line of healthy trees and replace the fence along Landover St

Count	Response
1	Beauty both park and street
1	Not if this means cutting down the wonderful tall shade trees that are already there. The existing trees, except those few that are obviously damaged or dead, look healthy to me, and they provide a fantastic shade canopy that makes the park so inviting.
1	Not a priority - plus the kids like a little wild area to play in (see my comments on the meadow behind the pool, this line of trees is a similar spot for them).
1	More shade trees are also needed around the perimeter of the playground. That area gets really hot during the day especially since the rubber surface absorbs a lot of heat.

What do you think of the following recommendations?-Renovate park entrance



Value	Percent	Count
I love it!	50.0%	4
Its OK.	50.0%	4
Total		8

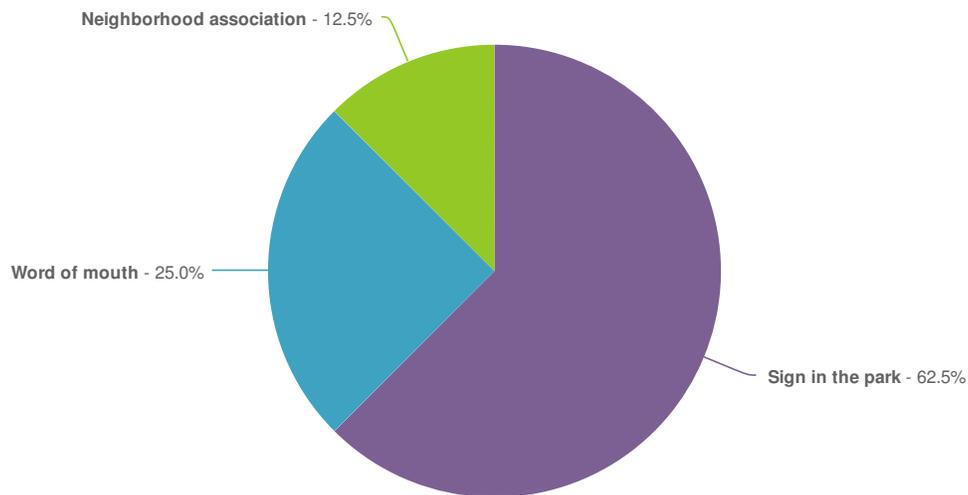
Explain-Renovate park entrance

Count	Response
1	It would be nice if the entrance was gated so that little kids couldn't get out
1	Pleasant idea, though current entrance seems adequate
1	The existing entrance seems fine to me, but I have no objection to improving it.

Do you feel all of the comments were heard and addressed in the draft Landover Park plan? If not, what is missing and how can we make the plan better?

Count	Response
1	Yes.
1	Generally, we are pleased that the city is interested in maintaining and upgrading the Landover Park, a beloved neighborhood park in Warwick Village. As a Warwick Village resident we have a vested interest that these changes reflect the needs and desire of the community. Please please please do NOT add an additional entrance to this park. The current entrance, especially if upgraded, will be enough to revitalize the park. Combined with the other park plans, the community will be benefited by these improvements. But please do not open the park up to this open parking lot where people could potentially wander in and put kids at risk.
1	The park can be improved by installing picnic shelter and allowing people to reserve the space for b-day parties. This would make a lot of revenue for the city, since during summer there are parties there every weekend. A grill would be nice too to go with the picnic tables. It would be great if the park had a bathroom, like the Fort Scott park in Arlington. The pool building already has bathrooms in it, opening them up to the public at least during warm weather seasons would be great!
1	There is a very large amount of litter at the park on a regular basis. Installing more trash cans closer to the play area may help alleviate that. It would also be nice to see the picnic tables moved from the fence line to the edge of the play structure so that they can serve both the grass area and the play structure.
1	I'm not sure I ever heard of the original comment period, and I come to the park at least 4-5 times a week.

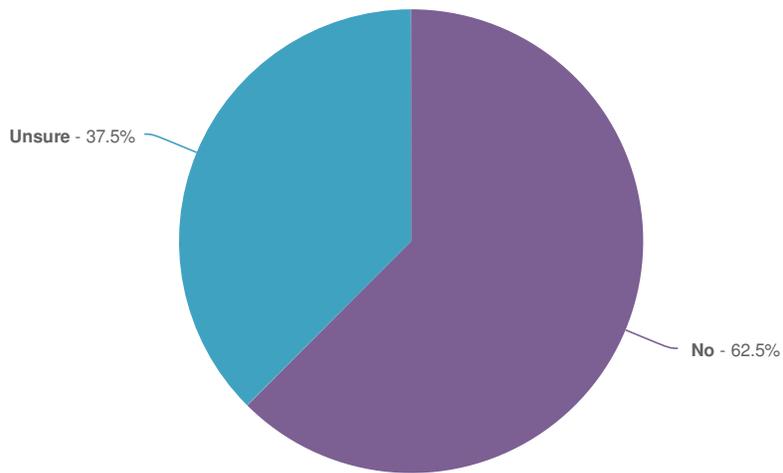
How did you learn about the Neighborhood Park Plan survey?



Value	Percent	Count
Sign in the park	62.5%	5
Word of mouth	25.0%	2
Neighborhood association	12.5%	1
Total		8

Responses "Other"	Count
Left Blank	9

Will you be attending the workshop on May 27 from 7pm-8:30pm at the Mount Vernon Recreation Center to discuss the draft plan?

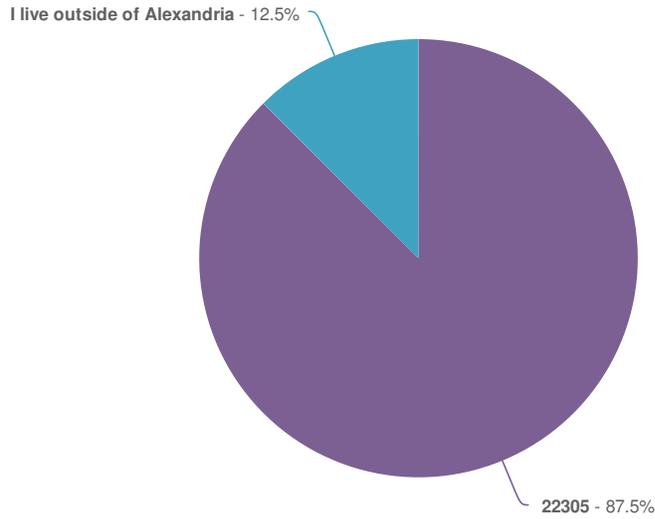


Value	Percent	Count
No	62.5%	5
Unsure	37.5%	3
Total		8

How many members of your household are in the following age groups?

	# in household	Responses
Under 5	7 100.0%	7
6-12	1 100.0%	1
30-49	6 100.0%	6
50-69	1 100.0%	1

What is your zip code?

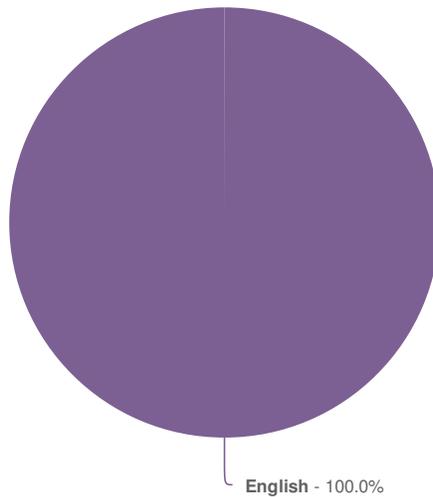


Value	Percent	Count	Statistics
22305	87.5%	7	Sum 156,135.0
I live outside of Alexandria	12.5%	1	Average 22,305.0
Total			Max 22,305.0

Responses "I live outside of Alexandria"

	Count
Left Blank	9

What is the primary language spoken in your home?



Value	Percent	Count
English	100.0%	8
Total		8

Responses "other"**Count**

Left Blank

9