

Summary of Issues in POPS Methodology Affecting Public Space Planning Decisions for the next 20 Years

Arlington's Public Spaces Master Plan (PSMP) or "POPS" will be used as the basis for how investments and planning, decisions are made for parks and recreation for the next 20 years, including decisions for multi-million-dollar CIP improvements (synthetic turf & lights) and on-going costly maintenance. It will also be used as a benchmark for future reviews of need.

While the PSMP alludes to field usage and DPR states publicly that, "more fields are needed" based on a Population Based Level of Service (LOS) methodology, DPR's own internal data show that those statements and the subsequent recommendations are not based on any actual supply/demand data. DPR has such supply/demand data, but is refusing to make them part of the POPS process or any public process. DPR is refusing to do this despite DPR'S own outside expert consultants stating that supply/demand data is needed for the LOS methodology.

Issues:

Public processes are guided by these faulty recommendations and will prevent a thoughtful and true evaluation to consider how to meet other priority public space needs such as natural areas, open space, trails, community spaces, etc...

- The Population Based LOS [Methodology](#) was NOT fully implemented and contains no actual data referencing Arlington's supply/demand—actual usage and need of its fields
- The consultants' methodology statement requiring that supply/demand data be part of the process is omitted from the POPS process and document.
 - "Each community determine its own LOS standard **based on current supply/demand and future supply/demand projections**" [POPS LOS Methodology 171220](#)
- Inefficiently managed facilities have caused a mis-perception about field need in the County, confirmed by outside consultants' reports, DPR's staff "rover" reports on field usage, and DPR's analyses on over-scheduling <http://parks4everyone.org/utilization-data/>
- The LOS is based instead almost exclusively on peer cities and national averages. There is no information about how these averages were evaluated <http://parks4everyone.org/population-based-level-of-service/>
 - "peer cities" have some elements similar to Arlington and other elements like parkland totals are very different in some localities.
 - How are peer cities' facilities counted/considered in the totals (i.e combination fields, synthetic vs grass turf, APS vs. only park facilities)?
- A true evaluation of field usage and need is prevented when there is a lack of transparency about the need and utilization of this data, such as in the Four Mile Run Valley, Williamsburg Lights, and Virginia Highlands Park processes. [Transparency in public processes](#)
- The County **needs to ensure that we are using sound data, methodology and be able to meet the needs of a growing population:**
 - Allow the public to have a transparent review of this data in a process to help determine the needs for all of our public spaces.
 - Do not approve a POPS plan with this portion of faulty, yet critical recommendations which are tied to acres of public land and tens of millions of dollars in maintenance and improvements.