



# The Economic Impact of Local Parks

An Examination of the Economic Impacts of Operations and  
Capital Spending on the United States Economy

## Center for Regional Analysis

The Center for Regional Analysis, housed in the School of Policy, Government, and International Affairs at George Mason University, is the premier university-based regional economic research center in the Washington, D.C. Metropolitan Area. The Center provides regionally relevant, globally informed research for businesses, governments, and nonprofit agencies.

Terry L. Clower, Ph.D. – Director

Jeannette Chapman – Research Associate

Keunwon (Abraham) Song – Graduate Research Assistant

© 2015 National Recreation and Park Association

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

---

Executive Summary .....	iii
Introduction.....	1
Methods.....	2
National Analysis.....	3
Summary of Findings - National Analysis .....	4
State-Level Analysis .....	5
Case Study Analysis .....	7
References.....	20

# LISTING OF TABLES

---

Table 1: Economic Impacts of Local and Regional Public Parks on the United States Economy – 2013.....	4
Table 2: Economic Impacts of Spending by Local and Regional Parks by State.....	5
Table 3: Park Typologies .....	7
Table 4: Parks Included in the Case Study Analysis.....	8
Tables of Economic Impacts by Park .....	9
5a: Forest Park	
5b: Shawnee Mission Park	
5c: Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Park	
5d: Waterfront Park	
5e: Elgin Sports Complex	
5f: City Park	
5g: Reid Park Zoo	
5h: Balloon Fiesta Park	
5i: Fossil Trace Golf Club	
5j: Memorial Park	
5k: Sleepy Hollow Golf Course	
5l: Atlanta BeltLine Park	
5m: Great Miami River Bikeway	
5n: Carpenter Park Recreation Center	
5o: Henderson Multigenerational Center	
5p: Monon Community Center	
5q: Highland Heritage Regional Park	
5r: Winton Woods Park	
5s: Electric City Water Park	
5t: San Gabriel River Trail	
5u: South Germantown Park	

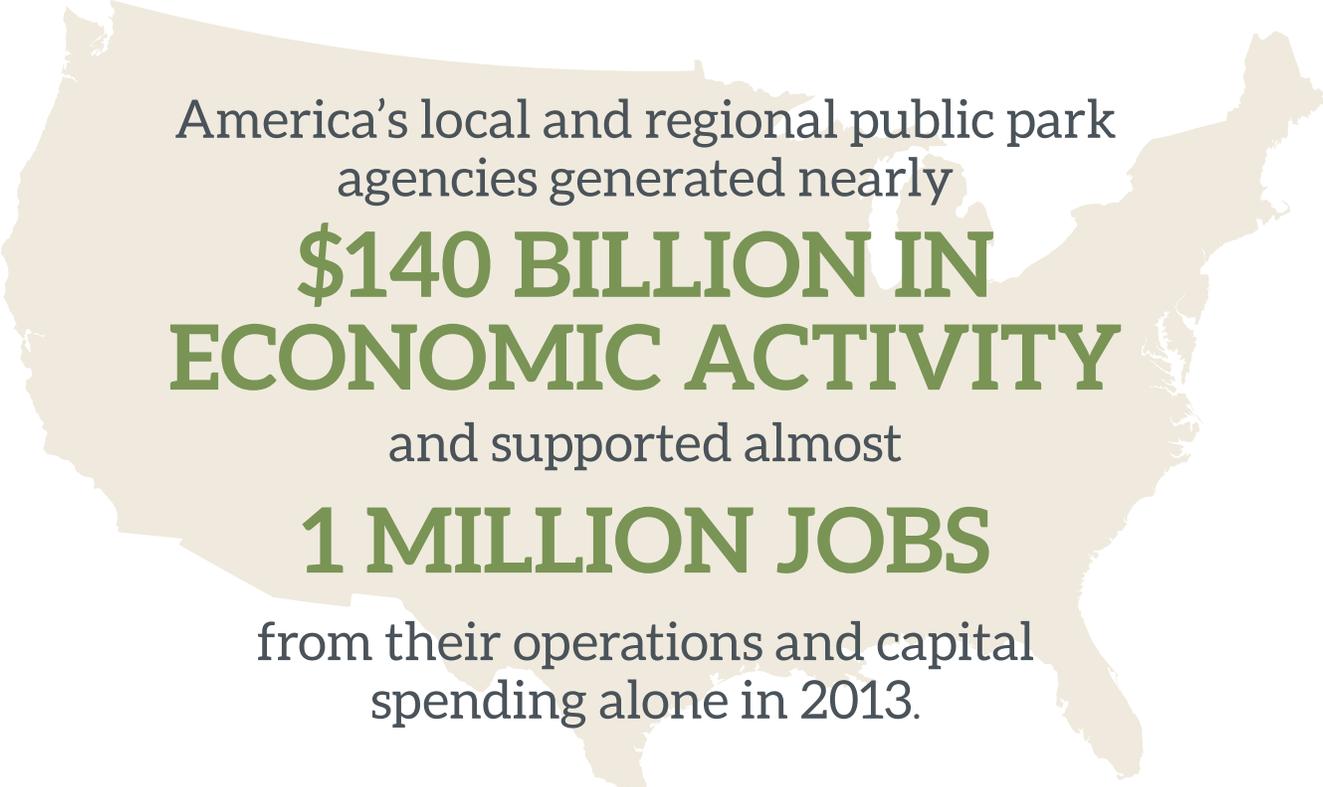
# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

---

The following summarizes the research findings of the Center for Regional Analysis on the economic impact of local and regional public park systems' spending in the United States. This research, commissioned by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA), adds to the growing body of evidence that the benefits of parks extend well beyond their role as a public amenity and an enhancement to quality of life in their communities.

The analyses reported here cover three areas: a national-level study, state-level assessments, and economic impacts of selected case study parks. Key characteristics of the research include the following:

- The study is focused exclusively on the direct, indirect (business transactions of park agency vendors) and induced (employees spending their earnings) effects local and regional park agencies' spending have on economic activity. The research does not measure the effects of visitor spending or the benefits local and regional park agencies generate for the environment, health and wellness, and property values.
- Data for this analysis come from the U.S. Census Bureau survey of local government employment and spending data from 1,169 local and regional park agencies accessed from NRPA's PRORAGIS database and/or park system budget data posted online. Data for the case study park analysis were supplied by the relevant park agencies.
- Data analysis tasks employed economic input-output multipliers developed by IMPLAN, Inc. and the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis. The analyses provide estimates of economic activity (output or the value of transactions), value added (equivalent to gross domestic product), labor income (salaries, wages and benefits) and employment (headcount jobs).



America's local and regional public park agencies generated nearly  
**\$140 BILLION IN ECONOMIC ACTIVITY**  
and supported almost  
**1 MILLION JOBS**  
from their operations and capital spending alone in 2013.

## Key Findings From the National Study

**Operations and capital spending by local and regional public park agencies generated nearly \$140 billion in economic activity and supported almost 1 million jobs in 2013.**

Details:

- Local and regional public park agencies directly provided more than 356,000 jobs in the United States during 2013, equating to nearly \$32.3 billion in operations spending.
- Operations spending by park agencies generated nearly \$80.0 billion in total economic activity, boosted the gross domestic product (GDP) by \$38.8 billion and supported nearly 660,000 jobs that paid in excess of \$24 billion in salaries, wages and benefits.
- Local and regional park systems spent an estimated \$22.4 billion on capital programs, leading to about \$59.7 billion in economic activity, a contribution of \$29.2 billion to the GDP, \$19.6 billion in labor income and more than 340,000 jobs.
- In total, the nation's local and regional public park agencies spent nearly \$54.7 billion in 2013, leading to \$139.6 billion in economic activity, just under \$68.0 billion in contributions to the GDP, and nearly 1 million jobs that generated labor income of \$43.8 billion in 2013.

### Economic Impact of Local and Regional Public Parks on the United States Economy – 2013

	Operating Impacts	Capital Spending Impacts	Total Impact of Local and Regional Parks' Spending
Economic Activity (transactions)	\$79,972,818,000	\$59,655,408,000	<b>\$139,628,226,000</b>
Value Added (GDP)	\$38,782,352,000	\$29,169,189,000	<b>\$67,951,541,000</b>
Labor Income (salaries, wages, benefits)	\$24,176,431,000	\$19,613,750,000	<b>\$43,790,181,000</b>
Employment (jobs)	658,478 jobs	340,604 jobs	<b>999,082 jobs</b>

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, PRORAGIS, IMPLAN (RIMS), Center for Regional Analysis

# INTRODUCTION

---

The following reports the findings of the analysis of the economic impacts of spending by local park systems in the United States. This research adds to the growing body of evidence that the impacts of parks extend well beyond their role as a public amenity and enhancement to quality of life in communities across the United States.

The academic and professional literature has established well-recognized contributions of parks to quality of life. This is evidenced by multiple studies that indicate residents prefer to live in proximity to a quality park system. The National Association of Home Builders reports that the presence of parks seriously influences 65 percent of home buyers. A 2001 study by the National Association of Realtors found that 50 percent of survey respondents would be more likely to choose a neighborhood near parks or open spaces and are willing to pay more to be located close to a park or open space. This has led much of the research to focus on the impacts of parks on nearby property values.

Another common approach to assessing the impacts of park systems is to examine the local and/or regional economic consequences of spending by non-local park visitors. There are dozens, if not hundreds, of these types of analyses conducted for individual park venues, such as for entertainment, golf courses and aquatic parks, and broader studies of state parks and park systems. There are recurring studies assessing the economic contributions of national parks on local, state and the national economies. In 2011, the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation sponsored a study that estimated the economic value of all outdoor recreation, nature conservation, and historic preservation activities and venues, not including motorized sports, boosted national economic activity by more than \$1 trillion and supported 9.4 million jobs.

Emerging areas of research include assessing the economic impacts of parks in terms of carbon mitigation (usually based on vegetation coverage) and the health effects park visitors enjoy from exercise and stress relief associated with park and park facility visits. Increasingly, these studies include estimating the economic value of these impacts. For example, regular visitors to recreation facilities have lower incidences of obesity, which lowers healthcare spending for hypertension, cardiac disease and diabetes.

The remaining type of impact research addresses the economic consequences of operations and capital spending by park systems. This is a common component of private-sector entertainment, amusement and other park facilities impact studies. For example, the International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions estimated that in 2011 the nearly 30,000 attractions in the United States generated \$211 billion in economic activity. These types of economic benefits also come from public park-related expenditures. While there are national-level studies for amusement and similar parks (IAAPA) and state- and national-level studies of federal- and state-funded parks, we are not aware of a systematic assessment of the national economic impacts of local and regional public park systems.

This study fills that gap in the understanding of the impacts of local and regional park and recreation agency spending in the United States. This study looks at three levels of analysis. The first level is a study of the economic benefits of operations and capital spending by local and regional parks summarized at the national level. The second level provides state-by-state estimates for all 50 states and the District of Columbia. And, the third level offers analyses of the economic impacts of park-related spending for a selection of individual parks.

# METHODS

---

As noted above, there are several approaches to assessing the economic value of park systems. The most common is what is generally termed as an economic impact analysis. Economic impact analyses provide estimates of the value of new spending as the dollars for goods and services move through the regional economy. Economic impact analyses provide information to allocate resources among competing projects, assess the potential returns to public (or private) investments and policies, and put “hard numbers” to political strategies.

However, as pointed out in a 2010 study sponsored by the National Recreation and Park Association, this terminology is not technically correct. Simply put, an “economic impact” analysis should be an assessment of the net impacts of spending that (a) does not include direct spending by public agencies, and (b) only counts non-local visitor spending for a subset of visitors. The alternative term for studies that examine the impacts of a broader set of spending offered in the NRPA report is a “significance analysis.” The report quotes Stynes (2001):

“Economic significance is ‘a measure of the importance or significance of the project/program (rather than its impacts) within the local economy which shows the size and nature of economic activity associated with the project/program in the area.’”<sup>1</sup>

In this study, we recognize the convention established by the 2010 NRPA report; however, while the use of the term “economic significance” is academically more correct, it means little to non-academic policymakers and the general public. At the same time, it is important to communicate the contribution operations and capital spending by local and regional park agencies has on economic activity and job creation in a manner consistent with the majority of other studies in the public domain. Therefore, we will keep with the common practice in the professional and academic literature and refer to the “economic impacts” of local and regional park spending in this report.

This study’s estimates of the economic impacts of local and regional public park agencies focus exclusively on operations and capital spending. What is not measured is economic activity generated by local and regional park systems from tourism. For our national-level analysis, the vast majority of visitor spending would be a net zero sum. If a resident of Kentucky visits a local park in Missouri, it would be a net gain for Missouri but a net loss for Kentucky. But, for the United States, there is no additional visitor spending. While there are a number of local parks that entertain visitors from outside the United States, this represents a very small portion of total visitors to local park systems across the nation.

With the state-level analyses, the assessment of the economic impacts of park-generated tourism spending is beyond the scope of this analysis, due largely to limitations on data availability. Therefore, we do not include visitor spending in the state-level assessments.

Further, the scope of the study does not consider the economic benefits resulting from other benefits of local and regional parks. This includes this study not attempting to assess the economic value of parks resulting from carbon mitigation and health-related benefits of parks.

<sup>1</sup>Crompton (2010). *Measuring the Economic Impact of Park and Recreation Services*. National Recreation and Park Association

# NATIONAL ANALYSIS

---

Operations spending estimates for local park systems are derived from the Survey of Local Government Employment in 2013 and the IMPLAN economic input-output model. This survey, conducted by the United States Census Bureau, provides an estimate of the number of individuals (head count) employed by local governments in park and recreation departments. Using the number of employees, the IMPLAN model provides an estimate of total direct output, which is treated as operations spending for the park systems. The relationship between total spending and employment is based on national averages for entities operating in the park and recreation industry and closely related activities.

We derive estimates of local and regional capital spending by park agencies from data available in NRPA's PRORAGIS database. In addition, we obtained budget records for more than 400 local park systems through Internet searches. In total, we had direct information on the ratio of capital spending to operating spending for 1,169 park systems. We applied the observed ratio of capital to operating spending to our estimates of operating spending to determine an estimated total for capital spending for all local and regional public park systems in the nation.

Note that this approach leaves out a component of capital spending. The capital spending observed from PRORAGIS and our document searches showed to be representative of major capital purchases and developments. According to data in PRORAGIS, there are capital items, such as small equipment and vehicles, purchased through ordinary (annual) budgeting. Since the capital spending data does not specifically include these recurring capital expenditures, the study's estimates of total capital spending among local and regional public parks are likely understated. More importantly, we report the impacts of capital spending separately since they are nonrecurring in nature. However, in any given year, one can reasonably assume that there will be substantial total capital spending among the nation's local and regional public park systems.

Economic input-output models provide estimates of direct, indirect and induced effects of new spending. Direct effects are the spending by local and regional park systems, whether for operations or capital spending programs and include spending for equipment, utilities, goods, services and personnel costs. Indirect effects capture the spending associated with the park systems' vendors. For example, a park system contracts with a local company to spray for mosquitoes. The pest control company, in turn, hires employees, purchases pesticides and contracts with a bookkeeping service. The bookkeeping service rents office space, hires workers, and purchases office supplies and so on. The model adjusts for spending that leaves the study area. In this study, the model would adjust for imports of materials and goods purchased from foreign sources. For example, some portion of the value of fuel used in park equipment will represent purchases of imported oil.

The model estimates the total effects on output, labor income, value added and employment. Output is essentially a measure of the value of transactions. Labor income includes salaries, wages and benefits. Value added is the measure most closely equivalent to gross domestic product (GDP) and includes property income, dividends, corporate profits and other measures. Employment is the number of headcount jobs. The databases used to build the economic input-output model account for full- versus part-time employment in the relevant sectors of the economy.

## Summary of Findings – National Analysis

Based on the 2013 Census Bureau survey, local and regional park agencies provided more than 356,000 direct jobs, which equates to almost \$32.3 billion in operating spending. This level of spending generated almost \$80 billion in total economic activity, boosted the GDP by \$38.8 billion and supported almost 660,000 jobs paying in excess of \$24 billion in salaries, wages and benefits across the nation (see Table 1). These local and regional park agencies also spent an estimated \$22.4 billion on capital programs leading to an additional \$59.7 billion in economic activity, a contribution of \$29 billion to gross domestic product, \$19.6 billion in labor income and more than 340,000 jobs.

In total, for 2013, operation and capital spending by the nation’s local and regional public park systems amounted to about \$54.7 billion, creating \$139.6 billion in economic activity, almost \$68 billion in value added, and more than 990,000 jobs that boosted labor income by \$43.8 billion.

**Table 1**  
**Economic Impacts of Local and Regional Public Parks**  
**on the United States Economy – 2013**

	Operating Impacts	Capital Spending Impacts	Total Impact of Local and Regional Parks’ Spending
Economic Activity (transactions)	\$79,972,818,000	\$59,655,408,000	<b>\$139,628,226,000</b>
Value Added (GDP)	\$38,782,352,000	\$29,169,189,000	<b>\$67,951,541,000</b>
Labor Income (salaries, wages, benefits)	\$24,176,431,000	\$19,613,750,000	<b>\$43,790,181,000</b>
Employment (jobs)	658,478 jobs	340,604 jobs	<b>999,082 jobs</b>

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, PRORAGIS, IMPLAN (RIMS), Center for Regional Analysis

# STATE-LEVEL ANALYSIS

---

This component of the research project examines the economic impacts of local and regional parks spending in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. As with the national analysis, this part of the study utilized employment data from the U.S. Census Bureau for local and regional park systems as a proxy measure of operations spending. Estimates of total economic impacts, including direct, indirect and induced effects, come from Regional Impact Modeling System (RIMS-II) multipliers developed by the Bureau of Economic Analysis and packaged by IMPLAN, Inc.

The estimates of capital spending for state parks are based on proportional relationships between operating and capital spending observed in the national-level analysis. As with the national analysis, this approach does not include “ordinary” capital spending for minor equipment that appears in annual budgets. As a result, the estimate presented in this section likely understates the actual total economic impact of local and region park agency spending.

The findings of the state-level analysis are presented in Table 2. The reader will note that the sum of the state-level impacts does not equal the national-level economic impact estimates presented in the previous section. This should not be a surprise. For any given state, some of the spending by local and regional park systems could “leak out” of the host state. For example, if the fertilizer used on sports fields located at an Oklahoma City park was produced by a manufacturer in Arkansas, the value of that product production would not count as an impact on the Oklahoma economy. In addition, since the spending for this fertilizer originated outside of Arkansas, we would not capture this fertilizer sale in the Arkansas state-level impacts. Therefore, the economic activity related to the manufacture of this fertilizer is “lost” in our state-level analysis. Note that since all of this economic activity occurred within the United States, this “lost” activity is captured in the national-level analysis.

There is substantial variance in the economic impacts of local and regional park spending across the states, which reflects, among other things, population differences. Nonetheless, local and regional park spending is a substantial contributor of jobs and economic activity across the nation, with state impacts ranging from a few hundred million dollars to billions of dollars in economic activity supported each year.

**Table 2**  
**Economic Impacts of Local and Regional Park Spending by State – 2013**

State	Economic Activity (Transactions)	Labor Income	Employment (Jobs)
Alabama	\$1,231,368,975	\$417,528,606	11,470
Alaska	\$265,134,937	\$108,872,161	2,092
Arizona	\$2,149,280,345	\$787,288,139	17,696
Arkansas	\$428,924,501	\$151,675,101	3,898
California	\$17,612,301,914	\$7,269,695,775	126,775
Colorado	\$4,626,619,238	\$1,723,877,013	36,247
Connecticut	\$1,107,632,241	\$417,751,961	8,439
District of Columbia	\$120,024,356	\$57,078,384	896
Delaware	\$89,921,606	\$33,946,700	724
Florida	\$7,485,741,762	\$2,705,649,730	60,801
Georgia	\$2,250,326,290	\$821,402,880	18,918

State	Economic Activity (Transactions)	Labor Income	Employment (Jobs)
Hawaii	\$691,858,315	\$238,927,777	6,050
Idaho	\$454,217,509	\$191,932,807	3,677
Illinois	\$12,976,606,775	\$5,053,654,955	96,317
Indiana	\$1,389,670,498	\$475,290,562	11,322
Iowa	\$964,052,949	\$310,393,234	8,497
Kansas	\$963,563,756	\$306,534,784	9,123
Kentucky	\$639,712,355	\$235,487,123	5,729
Louisiana	\$1,494,830,925	\$528,867,125	12,045
Maine	\$371,882,669	\$134,109,078	3,224
Maryland	\$2,733,136,376	\$1,015,962,730	22,167
Massachusetts	\$1,096,322,748	\$447,553,157	8,149
Michigan	\$1,837,080,712	\$621,526,087	15,831
Minnesota	\$2,834,173,626	\$1,064,812,177	22,411
Mississippi	\$427,893,980	\$141,266,189	4,037
Missouri	\$2,241,684,781	\$797,733,784	18,199
Montana	\$206,687,842	\$66,401,994	1,952
Nebraska	\$461,242,866	\$158,995,140	4,150
Nevada	\$1,811,550,556	\$601,196,410	14,491
New Hampshire	\$212,896,528	\$71,496,917	1,930
New Jersey	\$2,221,874,679	\$815,319,633	17,638
New Mexico	\$621,205,459	\$211,468,552	5,468
New York	\$6,289,207,072	\$2,816,457,874	43,090
North Carolina	\$3,023,768,668	\$1,071,753,103	26,278
North Dakota	\$504,269,473	\$156,685,464	4,737
Ohio	\$4,220,208,229	\$1,532,261,515	34,718
Oklahoma	\$587,643,531	\$215,268,484	4,928
Oregon	\$1,936,083,772	\$700,445,644	16,701
Pennsylvania	\$1,628,999,305	\$599,192,057	12,480
Rhode Island	\$181,624,393	\$67,479,124	1,499
South Carolina	\$1,194,136,298	\$398,101,667	11,124
South Dakota	\$357,992,328	\$121,493,158	3,278
Tennessee	\$1,690,819,194	\$620,702,417	14,577
Texas	\$6,323,030,540	\$2,350,569,439	51,190
Utah	\$2,049,226,575	\$676,403,185	18,163
Vermont	\$81,951,201	\$29,716,828	714
Virginia	\$3,742,039,883	\$1,380,790,852	30,737
Washington	\$2,376,885,949	\$898,978,144	18,021
West Virginia	\$319,531,238	\$106,401,450	2,859
Wisconsin	\$1,429,374,002	\$492,351,757	12,279
Wyoming	\$387,698,334	\$132,829,457	3,385

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, PRORAGIS, IMPLAN (RIMS), Center for Regional Analysis

# CASE STUDY ANALYSIS

---

This research component assesses the economic impacts of specific parks located within local and regional park systems across the country. The example parks offer a more detailed analysis of park-related spending and the associated economic impacts to show how a differing mix of park types within a system of parks could affect that system’s economic impacts. In all, data were provided for 21 parks reflecting geographic and operational diversity.

Participating park systems provided data for this analysis, some of which was augmented by the PRORAGIS database and direct data gathering from online resources. Our analysis assesses the economic impacts of operations and capital spending for each of the participating parks at the state level.

In this analysis, we have sufficient data to include ordinary capital spending that appears in the operating budget for some agencies. The analysis utilized RIMS-II multipliers obtained from IMPLAN, Inc., to calculate the impacts of park-related spending on total state economic activity, employment and labor earnings.

The 21 parks included in this analysis come from 17 different states and represent ten different types of facilities. The categorization of park types is based on primary use and/or scale of operations at the park. Table 3 describes the park categorizations and Table 4 lists the parks included in this analysis.

**Table 3**  
**Park Typologies**

Park Typology	Description
Big Parks	Very large, multipurpose parks that are typically “destination” facilities
Regional Parks	Large parks serving local and regional visitors with a range of amenities
Community Parks	Smaller scale facilities serving one or more neighborhoods
Community Sports Fields	Amateur athletic fields that primarily serve local or regional constituencies
Cultural	Cultural amenity parks, historic sites, botanical gardens
Festival	Typically large venues that host significant state or national events
Golf	Public golf courses
Rec/Community Center	Recreation or community center with multiple activities and amenities
Water Park	Primary feature is aquatic recreation and may have seasonal operations
Hike/Bike Trails	Low services, nature trails, paved or non-paved

**Table 4**  
**Parks Included in the Case Study Analysis**

State	Type	Case Site	Park System
MO	Big Parks	Forest Park	City of St. Louis Parks, Recreation, and Forestry
KS	Big Parks	Shawnee Mission Park	Johnson County Park & Recreation District
CO	Regional Parks	Highland Heritage Regional Park	Douglas County Parks, Trails and Building Grounds
OH	Regional Parks	Winton Woods	Great Parks of Hamilton County
FL	Community Parks	Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Park	Miami-Dade County Parks, Recreation and Open Spaces Department
OR	Community Parks	Waterfront Park	Portland Parks & Recreation
IL	Community Sports Fields	Elgin Sports Complex	Elgin Parks and Recreation Department
LA	Cultural	City Park	New Orleans City Park
AZ	Cultural	Reid Park Zoo	Tucson Parks and Recreation Department
NM	Festival	Balloon Fiesta Park	City of Albuquerque
CO	Golf	Fossil Trace Golf Club	Golden, CO
TX	Golf	Memorial Park	Houston Parks and Recreation Department
OH	Golf	Sleepy Hollow Golf Course	Cleveland Metroparks
GA	Hike/Bike Trail	Atlanta BeltLine Inc.	Atlanta Parks and Recreation
OH	Hike/Bike Trail	Great Miami River Bikeway	Five Rivers MetroParks
TX	Rec/Community Center	Carpenter Park Recreation Center	Plano Parks and Recreation Department
NV	Rec/Community Center	Henderson Multigenerational Center	Henderson Parks and Recreation
IN	Rec/Community Center	Monon Community Center	Carmel Clay Parks & Recreation
MT	Water	Electric City Water Park	City of Great Falls
CA	Hike/Bike Trail	San Gabriel River Trail	County of Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation
MD	Big Park	South Germantown Park	Maryland National Capital Park & Planning Commission

Source: NRPA, Center for Regional Analysis

The following tables present analysis of the economic impacts for each of the case study parks. The estimates show the impact of park-specific spending on total economic activity, labor earnings and employment for the park's host state. Several of the parks included in this analysis show no capital spending in the year assessed for this analysis. This does not mean that the host park system did not engage in any capital spending.

**Table 5a**  
**Economic Impacts of Forest Park – 2013**

Park Typology	Impact
Park System	St. Louis Parks and Recreation
State	Missouri
<b>Operating Impacts</b>	
Economic Activity	\$ 3,917,779
Labor Income	\$ 1,343,910
Employment	37
<b>Capital Spending</b>	
Economic Activity	\$ 337,415
Labor Income	\$ 117,067
Employment	2
<b>Total Impacts</b>	
Economic Activity	\$ 4,255,194
Labor Income	\$ 1,460,977
Employment	39

Sources: Park systems, NRPA, Center for Regional Analysis

**Table 5b**  
**Economic Impacts of Shawnee Mission Park – 2013**

Park Typology	Impact
Park System	Johnson County Parks and Recreation
State	Kansas
<b>Operating Impacts</b>	
Economic Activity	\$ 1,597,912
Labor Income	\$ 490,003
Employment	17
<b>Capital Spending</b>	
Economic Activity	\$ 381,640
Labor Income	\$ 132,538
Employment	3
<b>Total Impacts</b>	
Economic Activity	\$ 1,979,552
Labor Income	\$ 622,541
Employment	20

Sources: Park systems, NRPA, Center for Regional Analysis

**Table 5c**  
**Economic Impacts of Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Park – 2013**

Park Typology	Impact
Park System	Miami-Dade County Parks, Recreation & Open Spaces Department
State	Florida
<b>Operating Impacts</b>	
Economic Activity	\$ 362,465
Labor Income	\$ 126,284
Employment	3
<b>Capital Spending</b>	
Economic Activity	\$ 99,645
Labor Income	\$ 30,724
Employment	1
<b>Total Impacts</b>	
Economic Activity	\$ 462,110
Labor Income	\$ 157,008
Employment	4

Sources: Park systems, NRPA, Center for Regional Analysis

**Table 5d**  
**Economic Impacts of Waterfront Park – 2013**

Park Typology	Impact
Park System	Portland Parks and Recreation
State	Oregon
<b>Operating Impacts</b>	
Economic Activity	\$ 1,328,393
Labor Income	\$ 463,259
Employment	13
<b>Capital Spending</b>	
Economic Activity	\$ -
Labor Income	\$ -
Employment	-
<b>Total Impacts</b>	
Economic Activity	\$ 1,328,393
Labor Income	\$ 463,259
Employment	13

Sources: Park systems, NRPA, Center for Regional Analysis

**Table 5e**  
**Economic Impacts of Elgin Sports Complex – 2013**

Park Typology	Impact
Park System	Elgin Parks and Recreation
State	Illinois
<b>Operating Impacts</b>	
Economic Activity	\$ 1,728,241
Labor Income	\$ 648,777
Employment	15
<b>Capital Spending</b>	
Economic Activity	\$ -
Labor Income	\$ -
Employment	-
<b>Total Impacts</b>	
Economic Activity	\$ 1,728,241
Labor Income	\$ 648,777
Employment	15

Sources: Park systems, NRPA, Center for Regional Analysis

**Table 5f**  
**Economic Impacts of City Park – 2013**

Park Typology	Impact
Park System	New Orleans Parks and Recreation
State	Louisiana
<b>Operating Impacts</b>	
Economic Activity	\$ 24,220,474
Labor Income	\$ 8,260,076
Employment	225
<b>Capital Spending</b>	
Economic Activity	\$ 10,234,640
Labor Income	\$ 3,675,532
Employment	65
<b>Total Impacts</b>	
Economic Activity	\$ 34,455,114
Labor Income	\$ 11,935,608
Employment	290

Sources: Park systems, NRPA, Center for Regional Analysis

**Table 5g**  
**Economic Impacts of Reid Park Zoo – 2013**

Park Typology	Impact
Park System	Tucson Parks and Recreation
State	Arizona
<b>Operating Impacts</b>	
Economic Activity	\$ 6,904,056
Labor Income	\$ 2,437,765
Employment	65
<b>Capital Spending</b>	
Economic Activity	\$ -
Labor Income	\$ -
Employment	-
<b>Total Impacts</b>	
Economic Activity	\$ 6,904,056
Labor Income	\$ 2,437,765
Employment	65

Sources: Park systems, NRPA, Center for Regional Analysis

**Table 5h**  
**Economic Impacts of Balloon Fiesta Park – 2013**

Park Typology	Impact
Park System	City of Albuquerque
State	New Mexico
<b>Operating Impacts</b>	
Economic Activity	\$ 733,871
Labor Income	\$ 240,811
Employment	7
<b>Capital Spending</b>	
Economic Activity	\$ 160,241
Labor Income	\$ 50,760
Employment	1
<b>Total Impacts</b>	
Economic Activity	\$ 894,112
Labor Income	\$ 291,572
Employment	8

Sources: Park systems, NRPA, Center for Regional Analysis

**Table 5i**  
**Economic Impacts of Fossil Trace Golf Club – 2013**

Park Typology	Impact
Park System	City of Golden
State	Colorado
<b>Operating Impacts</b>	
Economic Activity	\$ 3,430,340
Labor Income	\$ 1,232,045
Employment	31
<b>Capital Spending</b>	
Economic Activity	\$ 1,991,152
Labor Income	\$ 685,434
Employment	13
<b>Total Impacts</b>	
Economic Activity	\$ 5,421,492
Labor Income	\$ 1,917,479
Employment	44

Sources: Park systems, NRPA, Center for Regional Analysis

**Table 5j**  
**Economic Impacts of Memorial Park – 2013**

Park Typology	Impact
Park System	Houston Parks and Recreation
State	Texas
<b>Operating Impacts</b>	
Economic Activity	\$ 11,963,901
Labor Income	\$ 4,287,139
Employment	111
<b>Capital Spending</b>	
Economic Activity	\$ -
Labor Income	\$ -
Employment	-
<b>Total Impacts</b>	
Economic Activity	\$ 11,963,901
Labor Income	\$ 4,287,139
Employment	111

Sources: Park systems, NRPA, Center for Regional Analysis

**Table 5k**  
**Economic Impacts of Sleepy Hollow Golf Course – 2013**

Park Typology		Impact	
Park System		Cleveland Metro Parks	
State		Ohio	
<b>Operating Impacts</b>			
Economic Activity	\$	1,973,238	
Labor Income	\$	690,598	
Employment		19	
<b>Capital Spending</b>			
Economic Activity	\$	123,238	
Labor Income	\$	41,452	
Employment		1	
<b>Total Impacts</b>			
Economic Activity	\$	2,096,476	
Labor Income	\$	732,050	
Employment		20	

Sources: Park systems, NRPA, Center for Regional Analysis

**Table 5l**  
**Economic Impacts of Atlanta BeltLine – 2013**

Park Typology		Impact	
Park System		Atlanta Parks and Recreation	
State		Georgia	
<b>Operating Impacts</b>			
Economic Activity	\$	12,055,339	
Labor Income	\$	4,241,672	
Employment		117	
<b>Capital Spending</b>			
Economic Activity	\$	-	
Labor Income	\$	-	
Employment		-	
<b>Total Impacts</b>			
Economic Activity	\$	12,055,339	
Labor Income	\$	4,241,672	
Employment		117	

Sources: Park systems, NRPA, Center for Regional Analysis

**Table 5m**  
**Economic Impacts of Great Miami River Bikeway – 2013**

Park Typology	Impact
Park System	Five Rivers Metro Parks*
State	Ohio
<b>Operating Impacts</b>	
Economic Activity	\$ 130,167
Labor Income	\$ 45,556
Employment	1
<b>Capital Spending</b>	
Economic Activity	\$ 277,824
Labor Income	\$ 96,686
Employment	2
<b>Total Impacts</b>	
Economic Activity	\$ 407,991
Labor Income	\$ 142,242
Employment	3

Sources: Park systems, NRPA, Center for Regional Analysis  
 \* Five Rivers Metro Parks manages 9 of the the bikeway's 86 miles. The figures presented here represent the economic impact of Five Rivers Metro Parks' operational and capital spending.

**Table 5n**  
**Economic Impacts of Carpenter Park Recreation Center – 2013**

Park Typology	Impact
Park System	Plano Parks and Recreation
State	Texas
<b>Operating Impacts</b>	
Economic Activity	\$ 1,219,950
Labor Income	\$ 437,156
Employment	11
<b>Capital Spending</b>	
Economic Activity	\$ -
Labor Income	\$ -
Employment	-
<b>Total Impacts</b>	
Economic Activity	\$ 1,219,950
Labor Income	\$ 437,156
Employment	11

Sources: Park systems, NRPA, Center for Regional Analysis

**Table 5o**  
**Economic Impacts of Henderson Multigenerational Center – 2013**

Park Typology	Impact
Park System	Henderson Parks and Recreation
State	Nevada
<b>Operating Impacts</b>	
Economic Activity	\$ 2,713,575
Labor Income	\$ 868,070
Employment	25
<b>Capital Spending</b>	
Economic Activity	\$ 9,383
Labor Income	\$ 3,319
Employment	0
<b>Total Impacts</b>	
Economic Activity	\$ 2,722,958
Labor Income	\$ 871,389
Employment	25

Sources: Park systems, NRPA, Center for Regional Analysis

**Table 5p**  
**Economic Impacts of Monon Community Center – 2013**

Park Typology	Impact
Park System	Carmel Clay Parks and Recreation
State	Indiana
<b>Operating Impacts</b>	
Economic Activity	\$ 11,745,100
Labor Income	\$ 3,872,139
Employment	148.5
<b>Capital Spending</b>	
Economic Activity	\$ 42,341
Labor Income	\$ 15,274
Employment	0.3
<b>Total Impacts</b>	
Economic Activity	\$ 11,787,441
Labor Income	\$ 3,887,413
Employment	148.8

Sources: Park systems, NRPA, Center for Regional Analysis

**Table 5q**  
**Economic Impacts of Highland Heritage Regional Park – 2013**

Park Typology	Impact
Park System	Douglas County Parks and Trails and Building Grounds
State	Colorado
<b>Operating Impacts</b>	
Economic Activity	\$ 1,078,868
Labor Income	\$ 387,488
Employment	10
<b>Capital Spending</b>	
Economic Activity	\$ 179,712
Labor Income	\$ 61,864
Employment	1
<b>Total Impacts</b>	
Economic Activity	\$ 1,258,580
Labor Income	\$ 449,352
Employment	11

Sources: Park systems, NRPA, Center for Regional Analysis

**Table 5r**  
**Economic Impacts of Winton Woods Park – 2013**

Park Typology	Impact
Park System	Great Parks of Hamilton County
State	Ohio
<b>Operating Impacts</b>	
Economic Activity	\$ 20,129,632
Labor Income	\$ 7,045,012
Employment	191
<b>Capital Spending</b>	
Economic Activity	\$ 1,710,652
Labor Income	\$ 575,384
Employment	11
<b>Total Impacts</b>	
Economic Activity	\$ 21,840,284
Labor Income	\$ 7,620,396
Employment	202

Sources: Park systems, NRPA, Center for Regional Analysis

**Table 5s**  
**Economic Impacts of Electric City Water Park – 2013**

Park Typology	Impact
Park System	City of Great Falls
State	Montana
<b>Operating Impacts</b>	
Economic Activity	\$ 834,546
Labor Income	\$ 258,442
Employment	9
<b>Capital Spending</b>	
Economic Activity	\$ -
Labor Income	\$ -
Employment	-
<b>Total Impacts</b>	
Economic Activity	\$ 834,546
Labor Income	\$ 258,442
Employment	9

Sources: Park systems, NRPA, Center for Regional Analysis

**Table 5t**  
**Economic Impacts of San Gabriel River Trail – 2013**

Park Typology	Impact
Park System	County of Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation
State	California
<b>Operating Impacts</b>	
Economic Activity	\$ 630,688
Labor Income	\$ 250,935
Employment	5
<b>Capital Spending</b>	
Economic Activity	\$ -
Labor Income	\$ -
Employment	-
<b>Total Impacts</b>	
Economic Activity	\$ 630,688
Labor Income	\$ 250,935
Employment	5

Sources: Park systems, NRPA, Center for Regional Analysis

**Table 5u**  
**Economic Impacts of South Germantown Park – 2013**

Park Typology	Impact
Park System	Maryland National Capital Park & Planning Commission
State	Maryland
<b>Operating Impacts</b>	
Economic Activity	\$ 13,876,622
Labor Income	\$ 4,972,183
Employment	130
<b>Capital Spending</b>	
Economic Activity	\$ 98,247
Labor Income	\$ 39,833
Employment	1
<b>Total Impacts</b>	
Economic Activity	\$ 13,974,870
Labor Income	\$ 5,012,018
Employment	131

Sources: Park systems, NRPA, Center for Regional Analysis

# REFERENCES

---

City Parks Alliance, Why Are Parks Important to Cities? <http://www.cityparksalliance.org/action-center/mayors-for-parks/why-are-parks-important-to-cities>.

Cullinane Thomas, C., C. Huber, and L. Koontz. 2014. *2013 National Park Visitor Spending Effects: Economic Contributions to Local Communities, States, and the Nation*. Natural Resource Report NPS/NRSS/EQD/NRR–2014/824. National Park Service, Fort Collins, Colorado

Cullinane Thomas, C., C. Huber, and L. Koontz. 2015. *2014 National Park Visitor Spending Effects: Economic Contributions to Local Communities, States, and the Nation*. Natural Resource Report NPS/NRSS/EQD/NRR–2015/947. National Park Service, Fort Collins, Colorado.

International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions. *The Economic Impacts of the U.S. Attractions Industry 2011*. Oxford Economics. Theme parks, family entertainment centers, historical sites, museums, nature parks, water parks, zoos, aquariums, botanical gardens.

Southwick Associates 2011. *The Economics Associated with Outdoor Recreation, Natural Resources Conservation and Historic Preservation in the United States*. Prepared for The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation [http://www.trcp.org/assets/pdf/The\\_Economic\\_Value\\_of\\_Outdoor\\_Recreation.pdf](http://www.trcp.org/assets/pdf/The_Economic_Value_of_Outdoor_Recreation.pdf)

Public Policy Associates, Inc. (2007). *Measuring the Economic Value of Recreation, Programs and Parks: A How-To Guide*. Michigan Recreation and Park Association. Available at <http://www.mparks.org/Portals/0/Resource-Center/Justifying%20Parks%20and%20Recreation/Economic%20Impact/Guide%20to%20Measuring%20Economic%20Value%20of%20Parks%20and%20Recreation%20-%20MRPA.pdf>



**NRPA**

National Recreation  
and Park Association

22377 Belmont Ridge Road  
Ashburn, VA 20148-4501  
800.626.NRPA (6772)

[www.nrpa.org](http://www.nrpa.org)

© 2015 National Recreation and Park Association