



Economic Impact Report – Talking Points

Not only do park and recreation professionals provide essential services to their communities, but also parks are powerful engines of economic activity.

A new report issued by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) — in partnership with the Center for Regional Analysis at George Mason University — demonstrates the vast economic impact of local parks and recreation nationwide.

Operations and capital spending for local parks and recreation across the United States generated **more than \$201 billion in economic activity** and **supported almost 1.1 million jobs in 2021**.

This is a conservative estimate that does not capture parks' other economic benefits, which includes:

- Higher real estate values
- Health and wellness benefits
- Conservation/Resiliency benefits
- Tourism
- Economic development

The report also includes a state-level analysis that highlights the economic impact of local parks in **all 50 states** and the **District of Columbia**.

The top 10 states with the highest economic impact include:

1. California - \$21 billion
2. Florida - \$15 billion
3. Texas - \$14 billion
4. New York - \$10 billion
5. Illinois - \$8 billion
6. Colorado - \$7 billion
7. Ohio – \$5 billion
8. Washington - \$5 billion

9. Minnesota – \$4 billion
10. North Carolina - \$4 billion

NRPA urges policymakers and elected officials **at all levels of government** to prioritize park and recreation funding, as local parks are a critical part of what makes a city, town or county a vibrant and prosperous community.

Other Important Points to Consider

Public support for parks and recreation is strong.

- Ninety percent of U.S. adults say that parks and recreation is an important local government service. People of all ages, income levels and all racial, ethnic and political backgrounds agree that parks and recreation is essential.
- Nearly nine in 10 people agree that it is important for local, state and federal governments to fund local park and recreation agencies sufficiently in order to ensure every member of the community has equitable access to amenities, infrastructure and programming.
- Sixty-two percent of U.S. adults — crossing ages, income levels and political affiliation — are more likely to vote for politicians (e.g., mayor, county executive or council member) who make park and recreation funding a priority.

Parks and recreation attracts people to communities

- Nearly three in four U.S. adults say that access to a nearby park, playground, open space or recreation center is an important factor in deciding where they want to live.
- Investments in improving a community's quality of life can create a virtuous cycle: high-quality places attract workers and employers, which in turn attract more investments and jobs.