

Investing in Parks and Recreation



NATIONAL RECREATION
AND PARK ASSOCIATION



Photo courtesy of City of Eugene, Oregon.

Parks and recreation programs are one of the few public services that bring people together, creating shared experiences that enrich, engage and empower communities. It is critical to protect funding and support for parks and recreation to allow for continued growth and ensure access to these essential services and spaces for generations to come.

82% of the American population has visited a park in the past year.

50M youth participate in a program annually.

NRPA advocates for increased and fair investment in parks and recreation

Strong funding is essential for sustaining park and recreation services. Despite the widespread benefits that parks and recreation offer, they are chronically underfunded, with many systems having a significant capital improvement project backlog. Parks are vital to communities nationwide, providing essential health and well-being benefits and frontline emergency services. Adequate and sustained funding is needed for park and recreation facilities and infrastructure, high-quality programming, long-term planning, community engagement, and environmental resilience.

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Our Legislative Priorities

- Maintain the investment for the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF). LWCF supports funding to safeguard natural areas and provide recreation opportunities for Americans.
- Maintain the investment by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention to support youth mentoring. Park and recreation agencies are on the front lines, delivering high-quality programming to improve community safety and success by investing in our youth.
- Maintain the investment from Community Development Block grants (CDBG) to improve facilities and provide recreation opportunities in communities.
- Maintain the investment in programs that promote health and wellness in parks and recreation. These programs such as CDC's Chronic Disease Prevention Program and the USDA summer meals program build healthier people and communities.
- Maintain the investment in the Clean Water State Revolving Fund, which plays a vital role in park-based water infrastructure. Parks can help prevent flooding and dramatically improve stormwater management in communities.

INVESTMENT IMPACT

- 83% of park and recreation agencies provide Out-of-School Time/Mentoring programs serving millions of youth.
- In FY 2024 alone, CDBG grantees spent over \$185 million for park improvements benefitting hundreds of communities nationwide.



For more information, email advocacy@nrpa.org.