



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 **nearly \$218 billion in economic activity** and **supports almost 1.3 million jobs in 2019**. Preliminary data suggest that parks and recreation’s economic impact held resilient during the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic, as local parks’ operations and capital spending \$225 billion in economic activity and supporting 1.25 million jobs

This is a conservative estimate that does not capture parks’ other economic benefits:

- 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- \$23.6 billion
2. Florida- \$15.9 billion
3. New York- \$14 billion
4. Texas- \$12 billion
5. Nevada- \$11.1 billion
6. Illinois- \$9.9 billion
7. Ohio- \$7 billion

8. Colorado- \$7 billion
9. Washington- \$6.5 billion
10. North Carolina- \$6 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.

- Nearly nine in 10 people agree that it is important to fund local park and recreation agencies to ensure every member of the community has equitable access to amenities, infrastructure and programming.
- Eighty-seven percent of people agree that parks and recreation is an important service provided by their local government.

Parks and recreation attracts people to communities

- Four in five U.S. adults seek high-quality parks and recreation when choosing a place to live.