Economic Impact Report – Talking Points

Parks build healthy, vibrant and resilient communities. However, they are also powerful engines of economic activity.

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

Operations and capital spending for local parks generates **more than $154 billion dollars in economic activity** and supports **more than 1.1 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:

- California — $15.9 billion dollars
- Illinois — $10.6 billion dollars
- Texas — $7.7 billion dollars
- Florida — $7.2 billion dollars
- New York — $5.2 billion dollars
- Colorado — $4.0 billion dollars
- Ohio — $3.4 billion dollars
- Virginia — $3.2 billion dollars
- North Carolina — $2.7 billion dollars
- Washington — $2.6 billion dollars
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.

A recent survey found 92 percent of Americans agree parks and recreation are important local government services (comparable to police/fire/schools/transportation).

Moreover, 85 percent of Americans seek high-quality park and recreation amenities when choosing a new place to live.

Americans, on average, visit their local park and recreation facilities approximately twice a month.