



## MEETING NOTICE

**TUALATIN PARK ADVISORY COMMITTEE**  
**September 13, 2016 - 6:00 PM**

**COMMUNITY SERVICES ADMINISTRATION OFFICE**  
**Tualatin Community Park**  
**8515 SW Tualatin Road**

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**A. CALL TO ORDER**

1. Roll Call

**B. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

1. July 12, 2016
2. August 23, 2016

**C. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

1. Chair
2. Staff
3. Public

**D. OLD BUSINESS**

1. Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update
2. Tualatin River Greenway Trail Project Award Application

**E. NEW BUSINESS**

1. Community Development Block Grant Application
2. Oregon Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan
3. National Recreation and Park Association Information

**F. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

**G. COMMUNICATIONS FROM COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

**H. ADJOURNMENT**



## DRAFT MINUTES

### TUALATIN PARK ADVISORY COMMITTEE July 12, 2016

### COMMUNITY SERVICES ADMINISTRATION OFFICE Tualatin Community Park 8515 SW Tualatin Road

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**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Kay Dix, Krista Nanton, Dana Paulino, Valerie Pratt, Stephen Ricker, Dennis Wells

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Anthony Warren (excused)

**STAFF PRESENT:** Rich Mueller, Parks and Recreation Manager

**PUBLIC PRESENT:**

**OTHER:**

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#### **A. CALL TO ORDER**

Chairperson Dennis Wells called the meeting to order at 6:09 pm.

#### **B. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The minutes of the May 10, 2016 meeting were unanimously approved, on a motion by Stephen Ricker, and seconded by Valerie Pratt.

#### **C. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

1. Chair

There were none.

2. Staff

Rich Mueller provided updates on the following: Meals on Wheels People newsletter, Basalt Creek Concept Plan update, trail count numbers, temporary mobile food unit regulations, Youth Advisory Council update, ArtSplash announcement, library events, American Trails newsletter, Bicycle Alliance newsletter, National Park Foundation newsletter, Intertwine Alliance newsletter and Tualatin Historical Society newsletter.

3. Public

There were none.

#### **D. OLD BUSINESS**

1. Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update

The committee reviewed and discussed *Tualatin Parks – Early Years, Modern Times, The Future* presentation which Paul Hennon, Community Services Director created. Rich Mueller distributed other cities master plan documents for information. These included the cities of Hillsboro, Lake Oswego, Tigard and Tualatin Hills Parks and Recreation District. Rich also included City of Palo Alto master plan process information and a document about master plan steps from the University of Delaware.

2. Parks Projects Update

Rich Mueller reviewed park improvement projects which are currently in construction or recently completed. The Tualatin Community Park off leash dog area shelter was completed in June with gravel still to be added under the unit in place of the chips. Replacement of the Tualatin High School stadium field is finished and open for youth sports organizations to use. Jurgens Park play equipment flood damage area is expected to open this week with the sub surface, ground surface and equipment to be renovated later this year.

**E. NEW BUSINESS**

1. Art Walk Update

Rich Mueller shared the new ArtWalk brochure which shows the Ice Age loop in Nyberg Rivers and on the new trail section. The new interpretive display boards and signs were reviewed.

2. National Water Trail Designation

The committee reviewed and discussed the Tualatin River Keepers application and request for support to designate the Tualatin River as a National Water Trail. The committee recommends that the City support the national Trail Designation resolution on a motion from Stephen Ricker, and second by Valerie Pratt, the members unanimously endorsed supporting a Council resolution.

3. August Meeting

The committee plans to move the regular meeting to August 23 and tour parks and trail facilities. The plan is to meet at the Community Services Administrative Office at 6:00 pm.

**F. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

**G. COMMUNICATIONS FROM COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

Krista Nanton mentioned that Pokémon game players are not aware of park rules such as no smoking as they visit park sites. Stephen Ricker brought up organic plant maintenance and ecological turf growth.

**H. ADJOURNMENT**

Dennis Wells adjourned the meeting at 7:38 pm, on a motion from Valerie Pratt, with second by Dana Paulino.



**DRAFT MINUTES**

**TUALATIN PARK ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**August 23, 2016 – 6:00 PM**

**COMMUNITY SERVICES ADMINISTRATION OFFICE**

**Tualatin Community Park**

**8515 SW Tualatin Road**

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**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Kay Dix, Krista Nanton, Dana Paulino, Valerie Pratt, Anthony Warren, Dennis Wells

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Stephen Ricker (excused)

**STAFF PRESENT:** Rich Mueller, Parks and Recreation Manager

**PUBLIC PRESENT:**

**OTHER:**

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The committee members and staff met at the administrative office located at Tualatin Community Park and took a field trip and tour of some trails, natural areas and park sites.

Sites visited included:

Tualatin River Greenway Trail project at River Ridge

Tualatin River Greenway Trail in Pony Ridge

Metro Heritage Pine Natural Area

Hazelbrook Road and Highway 99 boat launch area

Jurgens Park area

The trails field trip and tour lasted approximately two hours.

## **Parks & Recreation Master Plan**

### **Includes**

- Parks
- Recreation
- Library
- Shared Use Paths
- Trails
- Greenways
- Natural Areas
- Open Space
- Public Art

### **Purpose**

- Plan for Growth & Development
- Set Direction & Priorities
- Determine Funding Sources
- Meet Regulatory & Funding Requirements
- Reflect Community Needs and Desire
- Define Annual Capital Funding Requirements

### **Components/Chapters**

- Policies, Goals & Objectives
- Inventory & Existing Conditions
- Standards
- Service Areas
- Public Involvement
- Demand & Need Analysis (survey)
- Capital Improvement Program
- Plan Adoption

### **Goals**

- Follow City Strategic Vision, Plans & Initiatives
- Consistent with Department Mission & Values
- Document Meets Planning Purpose
- Has Community Support & Partner Consensus
- Extensive Public Involvement
- Effectively Manage Consultant

### **Deliverables**

- Plan Incorporates City & Department Principals
- Flexible Document with Specific Direction & Policy
- Has Staff, Stakeholder, Public & Partner Input & Consensus
- Completed in Established Time Frame
- Establishes Priorities
- Contains Funding Sources Options
- Includes Valid Needs Assessment
- Useful & Understandable
- Clear & Concise
- Ability to Implement

**Success Measures**

Make a Living Document  
Implement through Action Plan(s)  
Team Approach & Community Involvement  
Annual Goal Setting & Evaluation  
Performance & Outcome Measures  
Incorporate into Development Codes & Transportation Plan

**Benefits & Outcomes**

Enhance Quality of Life & Place  
Improve Health  
Reduce Crime  
Increase Economic Development  
Conserve & Protect the Environment

**Risks**

Inclusive (population, demographics)  
Resources (time, financial, other depts. & agencies)  
Special Interest Influence & Effect  
Amount of Detail  
Policy vs. Operations  
Survey (statistically valid)

**Reasons**

Coordinate Interests & Minimize Conflict  
Build Consensus & Buy In  
Prioritize Needs & Actions  
Respond to Trends  
Evaluate Successes  
Support Budget  
Ensure Direction as Officials Change  
Provide Public Involvement  
Communicate Information  
Help Make Decisions  
Be Efficient with Resources

## **PRIVATE SECTOR PARTNER AWARD**

*Nominations are due Friday, August 26<sup>th</sup>, 2016 by 4:00 PM*

### **About**

The ORPA Private Sector Partner Award recognizes an Oregon-based business entity, corporation or non-profit organization that has made a significant contribution to the park and recreation profession, either through an agency or the state association. Nominees may be recognized for their significant financial support, volunteer time, in-kind services, equipment, or other contributions to parks and recreation in Oregon. Nominees' actions should be made without concern for direct personal or corporate gain or profit. Organizations may only receive this award once every five years. Contributions must have been made prior to the nomination deadline. Nominees are not required to be a member of ORPA.

### **Please prepare the following info to submit online:**

1. Your Name, Title, Agency, Email, Phone and Relationship to Nominee.
2. Nominee's Business/Organization Name, Office location, Primary Contact, Title, Email, and Phone.
3. Is the nominee a for-profit or nonprofit organization?
4. Describe the general contributions that the nominee has made to the park and recreation profession. Describe the type of support provided; whether the nominee has affected parks and recreation at the local, regional, or statewide level; and how long the nominee has actively supported the field. (Responses limited to 2,000 characters.)
5. Describe the difference that the nominee's participation has made to the agency or its project(s) and the lasting outcomes of the nominee's support. (Response limited to 1,500 characters.)
6. Please list the specific contributions that the nominee has made, including direct financial support and amounts, in-kind support, expertise, loan or donation of land or equipment, etc. Where possible, please relate the total value, amount of time, or other measure of the contribution.. (Responses limited to 1,500 characters.)
7. Describe any significant obstacles or challenges related to the nominee's support, such as corporate approval challenging volunteer circumstances, difficulties in fund-raising, etc. (1,000 characters.)
8. Describe the ways in which the nominee motivated other private sector organizations to support parks and recreation. (Responses limited to 1,000 characters.)
9. Any other info about the nominee that you think should be considered (Responses limited to 1,000 characters.)
10. You must agree to submit a 2-3 minute video that highlights your nominee's achievements if they are selected.

### **How to nominate someone:**

Go to the following survey monkey link: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/privatesectorpartner>  
Submit all information that you have prepared (above)

Nominations and supporting materials are due by Friday, August 26<sup>th</sup>, 2016. ORPA will not accept any nominations past this date.

2-3 Minute videos for award winners are due by October 7<sup>th</sup>, 2016

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### Calendar more

- 9/15/2016  
Sports Turf Workshop
- 9/15/2016  
Sports Turf Workshop  
Exhibitor Registration
- 9/22/2016 » 9/23/2016  
2016 ORPA Admin Directors' Retreat
- 10/5/2016  
Recreational Sports Section Annual Meeting
- 10/13/2016 » 10/14/2016  
PMT Exhibitor Registration

## ORPA Annual Awards

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Each year, ORPA conducts an annual awards selection and ceremony to recognize and celebrate outstanding park and recreation projects, professionals, and partners. Award nominations are solicited from members each spring in eleven award categories, which are listed below. The annual awards are presented during the ORPA annual conference each fall.

**2016 award nominations MUST be submitted by Friday, September 2nd at 12:00 PM.**

*To make a nomination*, scroll down this page for links to the nomination preview document (see all questions) and to the online nomination form for each award category. The preview documents list each the questions and required information that can help you draft your nomination(s) before you access the online nomination site. You may want to draft your responses to the questions before you click the "make a nomination" link to access the online nomination form in each award category.

For a list of past award winners, beginning in 1963, [click here](#).

### ORPA Annual Awards Categories (scroll down to see all 11 award categories)

**David E. Clark Honor Award** | [see the nomination info outline](#) | [see selection criteria](#) | [make a nomination](#)  
Renamed in 2002 in recognition of the late Dave Clark, longtime leader in Oregon parks and recreation, this is the highest recognition ORPA can bestow. The award is presented to a professional ORPA member who has shown leadership, inspired others, and made noteworthy contributions over a period of time to the recreation and park profession. Nominees must have been active in the field a minimum of 15 years and ORPA history of membership for at least 10 years.

**Distinguished Service Award** | [see the nomination info outline](#) | [see selection criteria](#) | [make a nomination](#)  
The Distinguished Service Award recognizes an individual or agency that has shown dedication to the parks and recreation profession through a special project or effort, such as meaningful legislation, initiation of a significant project or donation to parks and recreation, or engaging others in significant a parks and recreation project. Results of these efforts must have lasting value or serve as a standard for other projects or programs.

**Outstanding New Professional Award** | [see the nomination info outline](#) | [see selection criteria](#) | [make a nomination](#)  
This award recognizes a park and recreation professional with less than 15 years of experience demonstrated leadership, initiative, innovation, and overall contribution to the park and recreation profession. Active service to ORPA is preferred.

**Legislative Advocacy Award** | [see the nomination info outline](#) | [see selection criteria](#) | [make a nomination](#)  
ORPA's Legislative Advocacy Award honors an individual or organization that has made a significant contribution to the parks and recreation field through legislative leadership and advocacy within the last five years. Individuals ad organizations may be honored for legislative leadership or advocacy at the local, county, regional, state, and/or federal level.

**Environmental Leadership Award** | [see the nomination info outline](#) | [see selection criteria](#) | [make a nomination](#)  
The Environmental Leadership Award recognizes a park and recreation professional or agency that has made an outstanding effort during the last five years to sustain and improve the environment and/or reduce the environmental impact made by a park and recreation agency.

**Asset Management Award** | [see the nomination info outline](#) | [see selection criteria](#) | [make a nomination](#)  
Recognizes an agency or team for its exceptional management, maintenance, enhancement, and/or programming of an existing park, trail, natural area, recreation, and/or aquatic facility over time. Recipients demonstrate the vision and leadership necessary to protect and enhance public assets and resources while providing public recreation opportunities.

**Planning Award** | [see the nomination info outline](#) | [see selection criteria](#) | [make a nomination](#)  
The ORPA Planning award recognizes outstanding planning practices and processes used in the development or rehabilitation of a public park, trail, recreation and/or cultural facility that has opened within the past five years.

**Design Award** | [see the nomination info outline](#) | [see selection criteria](#) | [make a nomination](#)  
The Design Award recognizes superior architectural and/or landscape design and design processes for new or renovated parks or facilities (buildings, parks, park components, trails, etc.) whose construction was completed in the last five years.

**Private Sector Partner Award** | [see the nomination info outline](#) | [see selection criteria](#) | [make a nomination](#)  
The Private Sector Partner Award recognizes an Oregon-based entity, corporation, or non-profit organization that has made a significant contribution to the park and recreation profession, either through an agency or the state association. Nominees may be recognized for their significant financial support, volunteer time, in-kind services, equipment, or other contributions to parks and recreation in Oregon.

**Volunteer Service Award** | [see the nomination info outline](#) | [see selection criteria](#) | [make a nomination](#)  
This award honors an individual or organization whose efforts as a volunteer have made a significant contribution to parks and recreation in Oregon. Nominees may include individuals, businesses, nonprofit organizations, ad hoc groups or others whose time, expertise, and/or labor is donated or unpaid.

**SDIS Safety Excellence Award** | [see the nomination info outline](#) | [see selection criteria](#) | [make a nomination](#)  
Sponsored by Special Districts Insurance Services (SDIS), this award honors an individual, organization, or program that has demonstrated a unique commitment to improving or enhancing safety in park and recreation facilities or activities.



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## Award Categories & Selection Criteria

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Click on the award title to see a description of the award and selection criteria used to evaluate nominations in that award category.

- [Dave E. Clark Professional Honor Award](#)
- [Distinguished Service Award](#)
- [Outstanding New Professional Award](#)
- [Legislative Advocacy Award](#)
- [Environmental Leadership Award](#)
- [Outstanding Asset Management Award](#)
- [Planning Award](#)
- [Design Award](#)
- [Private Sector Partner Award](#)
- [Volunteer Service Award](#)
- [SDIS Safety Excellence Award](#)

Calendar [more](#)

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Annual Meeting
- 10/13/2016 » 10/14/2016  
PMT Exhibitor Registration

### Dave E. Clark Professional Honor Award

Named in honor of the late Dave E. Clark, longtime leader in Oregon parks and recreation, the Dave Clark Professional Honor Award is the highest recognition ORPA can bestow. The award is presented to an ORPA member park and recreation professional who has demonstrated leadership, inspiration to others, and has made noteworthy and special contributions over a period of time to the recreation and park profession. The nominee has a proven record of service to the community and providing voluntary service on behalf of Parks & Recreation. Nominees must have been active in the field a minimum of 15 years, have maintained a high level of professional integrity and have been a member of ORPA for at least 10 years.

#### Selection Criteria

##### Demonstrated Leadership (40%)

- Has a track record of initiative and creation of a compelling vision and purpose within agencies they have served
- Has performed noteworthy or special contributions and achievements within the community or profession
- Active in the field for at least 15 years
- Demonstrated a high level of professional integrity throughout their career
- Has shown commitment to continuing education and professional development, including professional certifications

##### Inspiration to Others (30%)

- Readily shares information or education about parks and recreation, for example as a speaker for city, county, state or national program, writing articles or publishing research or promotional topics relative to parks and recreation
- Mentors others new to the profession
- Has successfully engaged the public and private sectors in improving parks and recreation

##### Degree of Service (20%)

- Has served on board(s), task force(s), committee(s), or other recognized allied organization(s) that benefits/further parks and recreation interests
- Length of time in service as a volunteer related to parks and recreation
- Overall impact or effect of their service

##### ORPA Membership (10%)

- Nominee has been a member of ORPA for at least 10 years

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### Distinguished Service Award

The Distinguished Service Award recognizes an individual or agency that has shown outstanding dedication to the parks and recreation profession or field through a special project or effort. Examples of distinguished service projects or efforts include leadership in meaningful legislation at the local, state or national level; initiation of a significant project or donation of land, facilities, art or collection of monies; or the ability to motivate private enterprise, service organizations, or the community to assist in bringing a project to fruition. Results of these efforts must serve as a standard for other projects or programs and have lasting value and long-term impact upon the parks and recreation movement in the State of Oregon. The recipient must have made outstanding contributions to enrich the lives of individuals or groups of individuals in neighborhoods, communities, or the State of Oregon.

## Selection Criteria

### Project & Project Results (60%)

- What results were achieved by the nominee's efforts?
- In what way did the effort meet a specific clear and compelling purpose?
- Was the effort or project unique in any way?
- Was the project or effort transformational and display a passion for a greater good?
- What was the relative significance of the project to the community being served?
- Did the individual effort or project include community involvement and partnerships?

### Degree of Difficulty (30%)

- What were the challenges or problems that the nominee encountered?
- How complex was the project or effort that the nominee worked on?
- How challenging was the work done by the nominee?
- How much actual time/money/gift value was generated (if applicable to nomination)?

### Long-Term Impact on Parks & Recreation (10%)

- How significant was the impact of the nominee's efforts?
- Will the effort have a long-lasting impact and/or be sustainable over time?
- Did the actions or leadership of the nominee encourage others to become involved with the project or effort or to volunteer to assist parks and recreation in some other way?

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## Outstanding New Professional Award

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The Outstanding New Professional Award recognizes a park and recreation professional with less than 15 years of experience in the field and who possesses the qualities and skills of an emerging leader. The nominee demonstrates outstanding leadership, initiative, innovation, and contribution to the park and recreation profession in Oregon. Within his/her career, the nominee has shown steady career advancement, a commitment to ongoing professional development, recognition and respect from coworkers and colleagues as an emerging leader, and engagement with community and/or professional organizations. Active involvement in ORPA is preferred. Selection

### Selection Criteria

#### Leadership (35%)

- Describe the ways in which the individual has demonstrated leadership qualities and characteristics.
- Is the nominee generally recognized by coworkers and colleagues as an emerging leader?
- How has the nominee engaged with other community and/or professional organizations?

#### Innovation & Initiative (20%)

- How has the nominee demonstrated initiative and the ability to be a self-starter?
- What innovations have resulted directly from the nominee's efforts?

#### Contribution to Parks and Recreation (20%)

- How has the nominee improved/affected parks and recreation in his/her community?
- How has the nominee improved/affected parks and recreation beyond the agency/community in which she/he has worked?

#### Career Advancement & Professional Development (15%)

- Has the individual held progressively more responsible positions/titles in his/her work?
- Has the nominee actively pursued professional development opportunities?

#### ORPA Service (10%)

- Priority will be given to nominees who have a proven record of service in ORPA.

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## Legislative Advocacy Award

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ORPA's Legislative Advocacy Award honors an individual or organization that has made a significant contribution to the parks and recreation field through legislative leadership and advocacy within the last five years. Individuals and organizations may be honored for legislative leadership/advocacy at the local, county, regional, state, and/or federal level. Example outcome(s) of their work may include but are not limited to

- Public policy work that supports parks and recreation in general;
- Legislative/advocacy work that creates new funding, resources, or programs for parks and recreation agencies;
- Defeat or repeal of legislation that is harmful to parks and recreation programs or activities; and/or
- Efforts that increase elected officials' awareness of and/or support for parks and recreation.

Nominees for the Legislative Advocacy Award may be an elected public official at the federal, state, county or local level; a volunteer member of a public board or commission; a private citizen or organization; or professional staff of a parks and recreation agency. Nominees need not be ORPA members.

### Selection Criteria

#### Degree of impact (50%)

- What difference did the activity of effort make?
- How widespread was the impact.
- How lasting was the impact?

#### Degree of effort (30%)

- How difficult was the legislative/advocacy activity?

- How much time and effort did the nominee contribute?

#### **Inspiration to Others (20%)**

- Did the actions of the nominee encourage others to actively advocate on behalf of the parks and recreation field?

#### **ORPA Membership (10%)**

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### **Environmental Leadership Award**

This award recognizes a park and recreation professional or agency who has made an outstanding effort during the last one to five years to sustain and improve the environment and/or reduce the environmental impact made by the agency. Nominees' environmental efforts may include but are not limited to the following categories:

- Community and/or employee environmental education, including subjects such as water/energy conservation, climate change science, habitat conservation, etc.
- Implementation of sustainable operations, including resource reduction, changing to more environmentally-friendly products, use of alternative energy sources, etc.
- Environmental improvements at natural and built facilities, including conservation, restoration, materials re-use or use of greener materials, etc.
- Mobilization of grassroots efforts or community partnerships to address environmental issues and improvements.
- Creating and providing environmental stewardship opportunities, including habitat restoration, natural resources conservation, etc.

#### **Selection Criteria**

##### **Degree of impact (50%)**

- What environmental improvements resulted from the nominee's efforts, how widespread was the impact (e.g. single facility, agency-wide, community-wide, etc.).
- To what degree did the effort encourage others to be more environmentally-aware and environmentally-friendly?

##### **On-Going Impact (30%)**

- How lasting is the impact of the effort or project?
- Has the nominee done something that can be carried on and will continue to provide environmental benefits in the future?

##### **Degree of Effort (20%)**

- How difficult was it for the nominee to conduct environmental improvements?
- Were there significant challenges to be overcome?
- What resources were required, including time, funding, and materials?

##### **Sustainability (10%)**

- How environmentally-friendly were the methods and materials used by the nominee in their efforts?

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### **Outstanding Asset Management Award**

ORPA's Outstanding Asset Management Award recognizes an agency or team for its exceptional management, maintenance/enhancement, and programming of an existing park, trail, natural area, recreation, and/or aquatic facility over time. Recipients demonstrate the vision and leadership necessary to protect and enhance public assets and resources while providing public recreation opportunities. Exceptional management may be demonstrated through quality maintenance and operations, efforts to retain and enhance the resource over time, creative problem-solving in the areas of budget, staffing, physical and/or environmental constraints to ensure the continued operation and availability of the asset(s) and/or introduction of new programs or activities that ensure continued use and optimization of the asset.

#### **Selection Criteria**

##### **Demonstration of Asset Management Best Practices (60%)**

- Strategic direction or plan for use and protection of the asset
- Maintenance schedule/plan to retain/enhance asset
- Creative problem-solving to overcome challenges of budget, staffing, physical and/or environmental constraints
- Innovative programming that introduces new/expanded use of the asset
- Collaborations and partnerships with public or private sector groups to the asset and leverage agency resources.
- Marketing/education efforts that maintain/promote usage of the asset or protect/conserves the asset
- Does the management effort serve as a model for other assets and/or agencies?

##### **Staff Engagement & Leadership (25%)**

- How did staff develop and implement a vision of how to best manage the asset?
- What leadership and initiative was shown by agency personnel to manage the asset
- Did staff pursue education or professional development to address management of the asset in a new way?

##### **Management Outcomes (25%)**

- What were the measurable outcomes that resulted from the management effort over time, IE: increased usage, habitat restoration, environmental protection, reduced hazards, etc.

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### **Planning Award**

The ORPA Planning Award recognizes outstanding planning practices and processes used in the development or rehabilitation of a public park, trail, recreation, and/or cultural facility that has opened within the past five years. Nominations are evaluated on planning practices used in the project, including community involvement; unusual or unique challenges and regulations encountered in the planning process; innovative techniques used to engage the community and partners; incorporation of

operational and maintenance concerns; the resulting project's quality, aesthetics, usability and accessibility; and impact of the plan and resulting project on the agency and community.

#### ***Selection Criteria***

##### **The Planning Process (70%)**

- Community and partner engagement in the planning process
- Unusual/unique challenges encountered in the planning process
- Innovative community engagement techniques
- Timeline from concept to development
- Agency/Consulting principals involved in the planning process
- Planning budget

##### **Impact (30%)**

- How the planning process affected the project and use of the resulting facility
- Increased or improved capacity to deliver services as a result of the plan
- Provided a substantial community benefit or noticeable positive change

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## **Design Award**

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The Design Award recognizes superior architectural and/or landscape design and design processes for new or renovated parks or facilities (buildings, parks, park components, trails, etc.) whose construction was completed in the last five years. Nominated design projects should demonstrate inclusiveness and be responsive to community needs and show a high level of overall design quality and innovation. Award criteria includes the design's integration of site characteristics and challenges; consideration for maintenance and energy efficiency; budget; community involvement; innovative funding or other partnerships in the design process; uniqueness of the design, efficient use of resources, and overall aesthetic appeal.

#### ***Selection Criteria***

##### **Quality of Design (60%)**

- Overall aesthetic appeal
- Integration of site characteristics and challenges
- Consideration for maintenance, energy efficiency, and sustainability;
- Responsive to community needs
- Uniqueness of the design
- Response to challenging environmental, cultural or site constraints

##### **Overall Design Process (20%)**

- Community involvement;
- Inclusiveness
- Innovative partnerships
- Design budget

##### **Outcomes of the Design Change (20%)**

- Increased or improved capacity to deliver services as a result of the design
- Provided a substantial community benefit or noticeable positive change

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## **Private Sector Partner Award**

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The ORPA Private Sector Partner Award recognizes an Oregon-based business entity, corporation or non-profit organization that has made a significant contribution to the park and recreation profession, either through an agency or the state association. Nominees may be recognized for their significant financial support, volunteer time, in-kind services, equipment, or other contributions to parks and recreation in Oregon. Nominees' actions should be made without concern for direct personal or corporate gain or profit. Organizations may only receive this award once every five years. Contributions must have been made prior to the nomination deadline.

#### ***Selection Criteria***

##### **Degree of impact (50%)**

- What difference did the contribution make?
- How widespread was the impact?
- How lasting was the impact?

##### **Degree of Effort (30%)**

- Has the nominee made contributions consistently over time?
- Was the value of the contribution significant to the nominee in terms of monetary value, time, delivery of resources, etc.
- Were there significant obstacles or challenges related to the nominees' contribution, ie, process, approvals, permitting, etc.
- Was the contribution made without concern for gain?

##### **Inspiration to Others (20%)**

- Did the actions of the nominee advance the profession and recreation field?

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## **Volunteer Service Award**

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This award honors an individual or an organization whose efforts as a volunteer made a significant contribution to parks and recreation in the state of Oregon. Nominees may include individuals, businesses, nonprofit organizations, ad hoc groups or others whose time, expertise, and/or labor is donated and unpaid. Nominations may be made in recognition of the nominee's

cumulative service or for their efforts on a single project or activity that has created benefit for parks and recreation at the local, regional, or statewide level. Examples of significant volunteer contributions to parks and recreation in Oregon may include, but are not limited to, direct service to parks and recreation agencies or facilities; enhancement of a park and recreation facility or site; creation of a program or event that benefits parks and recreation; fund-raising for parks and recreation programs or facilities, or efforts to recruit other volunteers to engage in service to parks and recreation.

#### **Selection Criteria**

##### **Degree of Impact of Nominee's Contribution (40%)**

- Did the nominee's efforts achieve a result
- How significant and lasting was the impact of the nominee's efforts?

##### **Degree of Effort of Nominee's Contribution (30%)**

- How challenging was the work done by the nominee?
- What were the challenges or problems that the nominee encountered?
- How complex was the project or effort that the nominee worked on?

##### **Inspiration to Others (20%)**

- Did the actions or leadership of the nominee encourage others to become involved with the project or effort or to volunteer to assist parks and recreation in some other way?

##### **Amount of Time Given by the Nominee (10%)**

- How much actual time has been donated by the nominee?

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## **SDIS Safety Excellence Award**

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Sponsored by Special Districts Insurance Services (SDIS), this award honors an individual, organization, or program that has demonstrated a unique commitment to improving or enhancing safety in park and recreation facilities or activities. Individuals or agency safety efforts and safety programs may be nominated in the following categories:

**Individual:** In recognition of personal commitment and achievement in the area of park and recreation safety. Individuals who serve as staff, volunteers, or partners to an Oregon park and recreation organization are eligible to be nominated for the SDIS Safety Excellence Award in the Individual category.

**Organizational:** In recognition of outstanding commitment or significant contribution by an organization in the area of park and recreation safety. Any Oregon park and recreation organization is eligible to be nominated for this award.

**Program:** In recognition of programs that provide innovative or significant contributions to safety among Oregon's park and recreation entities. Programs eligible to be nominated for this award may be internal to a park and recreation agency or offered by another public or private organization.

#### **Selection Criteria**

##### **Demonstration of Best Practices in Safety (55%)**

- Description of the safety effort - how did it improve parks & recreation safety
- Goals of the safety effort or program
- Innovative approaches to safety
- Program budget & resources
- Demonstration/support of safety best practices

##### **Outcomes & Impact (20%)**

- Immediate and longer-term safety results
- Achievement of safety goals
- Safety impact/outcomes as compared to budget

##### **Engagement of Others in the Safety Effort (15%)**

- Who was involved
- What partnerships were utilized/developed
- Were any external resources used

##### **SDAO & ORPA Membership (10%)**

- Priority will be given to nominees who are members of Special Districts Association of Oregon (SDAO) and/or ORPA

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Oregon Recreation & Park Association  
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## STAFF REPORT

### CITY OF TUALATIN

TO: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

THROUGH: Sherilyn Lombos, City Manager

FROM: Richard Mueller, Parks and Recreation Manager  
Paul Hennon, Community Services Director

DATE: 09/12/2016

SUBJECT: Consideration of **Resolution No. 5299-16** Authorizing Application and Acceptance of a Community Development Block Grant to Design and Renovate the Kitchen at the Juanita Pohl Center

---

#### ISSUE BEFORE THE COUNCIL:

Council will consider authorizing staff to submit an application and if awarded, accept a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) to design and renovate the kitchen at the Juanita Pohl Center.

#### RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends adoption of the attached resolution authorizing application and acceptance.

#### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The Washington County Office of Community Development is accepting proposals for the Community Development Block Grant Program 2017-18 funding cycle. The City of Tualatin can benefit from this grant program. A Council resolution authorizing an application for Community Development Block Grant funds is required to submit an application.

If Council approves the submittal of the grant application, and the City's project is selected for funding, it would allow for kitchen design and renovation at the Juanita Pohl Center.

The Juanita Pohl Center provides nutritional meals to vulnerable older adults. The Center opened in 1982 and much of the equipment is original and is in need of replacement. Proposed improvements include items such as cooking equipment, food storage equipment and food preparation counters. This project would provide higher food safety standards, improve access and function, and comply with current health and energy efficiency standards.

The Meals on Wheels People serve meals at the center and delivers meals to home bound older adults in Tualatin. As the primary user of the kitchen facility, this project would greatly benefit Meals on Wheels People's mission and they support the project.

The Juanita Pohl Center Advisory Committee and Tualatin Parks Advisory Committee also

support the proposed project application for a Community Development Block Grant.

The tentative schedule established by the Washington County Policy Advisory Board (PAB) for the CDBG application process is as follows:

- Grant applications due - October 7, 2016
- Sponsor presentations - January 2017
- PAB rating of projects - January 2017
- Award letters distributed - February 2017
- Project funding available - July 1, 2017
- Projects completed - June 30, 2018

#### FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

The scope of the project includes public information to affected user groups, design, permitting, bidding and construction. The total project cost is estimated to be approximately \$234,300. Funding would be through a \$206,300 Community Development Block Grant application, \$16,000 local cash match and \$12,000 local in-kind match (staff time). If awarded the CDBG project would be included in the fiscal year 2017-18 annual budget.

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Attachments:     [Resolution No. 5299-16](#)

RESOLUTION NO. 5299-16

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING APPLICATION AND ACCEPTANCE OF A  
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT TO DESIGN and RENOVATE  
THE KITCHEN AT THE JUANITA POHL CENTER

WHEREAS, the Washington County Office of Community Development is accepting proposals for the Community Development Block Grant Program 2017-2018 funding cycle; and

WHEREAS, the City of Tualatin desires to participate in this funding program to the greatest extent possible as a means of improving nutrition programs at the Juanita Pohl Center for the benefit of the Tualatin area income-qualified population; and

WHEREAS, the City Council has identified enhancing the quality of life and ensuring that people are healthy, active and safe in the community as priorities in the City Council 2020 Vision; and

WHEREAS, this project will provide higher food safety standards, improve access and function, and comply with current health and energy efficiency standards.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF TUALATIN, OREGON, that:

**Section 1.** The City Manager is authorized to apply for, and if awarded, accept Community Development Block Grant funding from the Washington County Office of Community Development to design and renovate the kitchen at the Juanita Pohl Center.

**Section 2.** The City Manager is authorized to execute any and all documents related to the grant application and to effectuate the award.

**Section 3.** This resolution is effective upon adoption.

Adopted by the City Council this 12th Day of September, 2016

CITY OF TUALATIN, OREGON

BY \_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor

APPROVED AS TO FORM

BY \_\_\_\_\_  
City Attorney

ATTEST:

BY \_\_\_\_\_  
City Recorder





# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

# OREGON

## BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN PLAN



An element of the Oregon Transportation Plan  
Oregon Department of Transportation  
Public Review Draft - November 2015



# Acknowledgement & Information

The Oregon Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan was prepared by the Oregon Department of Transportation in coordination with multiple state, regional, and local partners. This project was funded in part by the Federal Highway Administration, U.S. Department of Transportation.

## Policy Advisory Committee

The Oregon Department of Transportation would like to thank the Policy Advisory Committee for their time and insights over the course of the project. A special thanks goes to Oregon Transportation Commissioner Tammy Baney, who chaired the Policy Advisory Committee. Please see Appendix B for a complete list of the Policy Advisory Committee.

Additional thanks to state, regional, and local partners who participated in the plan Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) or in stakeholder interviews and provided their comments during plan development. ODOT would also like to thank everyone who provided public comment at the Policy Advisory Committee meetings and during the Public Review Period.

## ODOT Project Team

Savannah Crawford, Amanda Pietz, Sheila Lyons, Talia Jacobson, Stephanie Millar, Brooke Jordan, Mac Lynde, Jerri Bohard, and Erik Havig, ODOT Transportation Development Division

## Consultant Team

Lead: Toole Design Group

Supported By: JLA Public Involvement, Cambridge Systematics, and Kittelson & Associates

## Information

Copies of the Oregon Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan and supporting materials can be found at the project website: <http://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/TD/TP/pages/bikepedplan.aspx>

To obtain additional copies of this document contact:

Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT)  
Transportation Development Division, Planning Section  
555 13th Street NE, Suite 2  
Salem, OR 97301-4178  
(503) 986-4121

# Executive Summary

The Oregon Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan creates a policy foundation for the state, supporting decision-making for walking and biking investments, strategies, and programs. Under the Oregon Transportation Plan (OTP), and parallel to associated mode and topic plans like the Oregon Highway Plan, the walking and biking direction established in this plan helps to bring about an interconnected, robust, efficient, and safe transportation system for Oregon. The plan solidifies the walking and biking infrastructure and culture Oregon has built and expands upon it to recognize and influence key outcomes like safety, equity, and health. It establishes the role of walking and biking within the context of the entire transportation system and emphasizes these modes as essential for travel and beneficial to the people and places in Oregon. The policies and strategies in the plan direct the work of the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) and regional and local jurisdictions must be consistent with them. As a whole, the plan envisions a well-connected and safe walking and biking system that meets the diverse needs of its users and the state.

## Specifically by 2040, the Plan envisions that:

“ In Oregon, people of all ages, incomes, and abilities can access destinations in urban and rural areas on safe, well-connected biking and walking routes. People can enjoy Oregon’s scenic beauty by walking and biking on a transportation system that respects the needs of its users and their sense of safety. Bicycle and pedestrian networks are recognized as integral, interconnected elements of the Oregon transportation system that contribute to our diverse and vibrant communities and the health and quality of life enjoyed by Oregonians. ”

## THE VISION

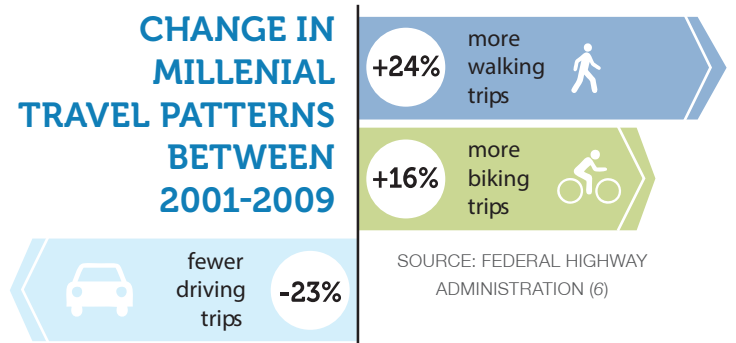
### Walking and Biking are Essential Modes of Travel

Oregon has some of the most heavily used walking and biking routes in the nation, with a high proportion of people using these modes for all or part of their trip. Everyone in Oregon walks (using a mobility device or strolling), whether for their entire trip, from their car to the store, or from home to the bus stop. Biking is an energy and cost efficient means of travel utilized by some who do not have other options, but by many who prefer it as a more reliable, environmentally friendly, and physically active means of getting around. Businesses also rely on walking and biking routes, which help get workers to their jobs and shoppers to their stores.

The demands on the walking and biking system and needs for increased connectivity will continue and grow in the future. Many youth rely on these modes of travel to safely get to school, and are likely to continue to walk or bike as they age. As a whole, younger generations are showing increased interest in walking and biking as their primary means of travel and older generations are often dependent on walking to reach medical services, daily amenities, and other

destinations. In addition, Oregon has a growing bicycle tourism industry, catering to thousands of visitors each year who come to access Oregon’s urban and rural areas by bike.

Not only is interest in walking and biking growing, the potential utilization of these modes for short distance trips is also high. According to national travel data, two out of every five trips total three miles or less. Having more of these trips taken by foot or bike could help to alleviate congestion, improve air quality and achieve other personal and societal benefits important to Oregonians.



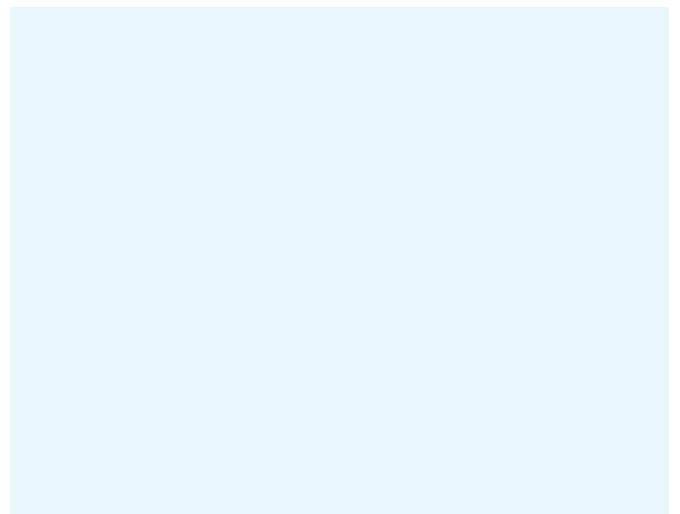
# Benefits of Walking and Biking Investments

Walking and biking are vital to Oregon's transportation system, providing travel choices that support people, places, and the economy. Investing in walking and biking can help create a safer, more connected, and accessible transportation system. These investments have broader benefits that vary across the state according to their context, including contributing to economic vitality, healthy communities, and tourism.

- **Economic growth** – Walking and biking can contribute to a healthy economy. Benefits range from relatively direct impacts for users, such as reductions in travel costs, to more indirect impacts, such as growth in businesses related to the bike industry. Additional economic benefits include reductions in travel costs, job creation, tourism, access to jobs, and increased ability to attract and retain employees.
- **Health** – Walking and biking modes are often collectively referred to as “active transportation,” because people who walk or bike are engaging in physical activity. Investing in pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, supporting educational and encouragement programs, and supporting active transportation options helps to encourage physical activity for better health and are likely to reduce health care costs by decreasing rates of chronic disease, improve personal health and increase life expectancy. In addition to walking and biking, connections to transit are also essential to health, as access to transit is critical in helping those who cannot or choose not to drive reach needed health services such as medical care.
- **Environment** – Walking and biking are zero emission modes that play an important role in reducing fuel consumption, air and noise pollution and carbon emissions. Increasing biking and walking for transportation is a key strategy in helping Oregon achieve its greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction goals. As transportation is one of the

highest emitting sectors, approaches for reducing transportation-related emissions are essential.

- **Mobility** – For pedestrians and cyclists, high levels of mobility result from safe and appropriate facilities that offer direct connections to destinations and routes, and provide end-of-trip accommodations such as bicycle parking. Improving or preserving ease of movement on walking and biking networks also promotes accessibility to key destinations and improved connectivity to other modal systems, such as public transportation. The availability, quality, and connectivity of walking and biking facilities is especially important for older adults and people with disabilities. These individuals may not drive due to issues of poor health, limited physical or mental abilities, concerns with safety, or because they have no car. To ensure pedestrians' mobility, the transportation system requires frequent crossings and short distances between desirable origins and destinations. For cyclists, enhanced mobility may result from dedicated bike lanes, bicycle parking, and other transit-oriented amenities that make it easier to integrate a bicycling trip with use of public transportation, which can be essential in making longer trips.



# Decision-Making Support

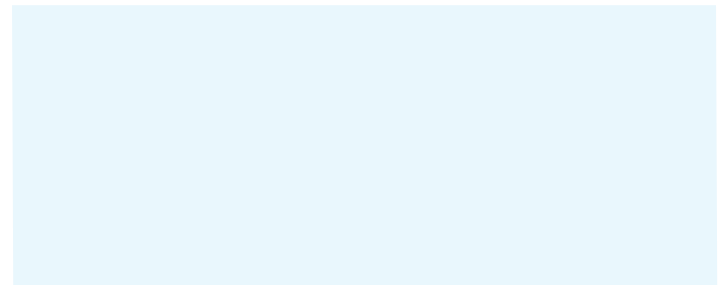
The goals, policies, and strategies of the Oregon Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan provide direction for what needs to be achieved in the next 25 years and how. The nine goals of the plan, described below, reflect statewide values and desired accomplishments, and refine and expound upon the broad goals of the OTP. The next level down from the goals are policies and strategies. Policies and strategies describe how to bring about each goal through a variety of deliverables, decisions, or investments, depending on contexts. They span all levels of decision making, including planning, investing, constructing, and maintaining the walking and biking system. Most are written to be jurisdictionally blind and set statewide decision-making support. Those specific to a single authority, such as ODOT, are called out as such. In this way, the goals, policies and strategies of the Oregon Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan are comprehensive and inclusive. The following summary captures each of the plan goals and a sampling of key policies and strategies.

## Goal 1: Safety

*Eliminate pedestrian and bicycle fatalities and serious injuries, and improve the overall sense of safety of those who bike or walk.*

Safety is a primary goal in all of the Oregon's mode and topic plans and is a key driver in decision making. The safety goal of this plan is written to align with "Vision Zero" and other federal and local initiatives that target the elimination of the most serious safety issues. Associated policies and strategies are comprehensive of all aspects of safety, including comfort and security and they are designed to bring about an overall safer system.

Policies and strategies call for, among other things, engineering approaches, such as a multimodal look at roadway cross-sections, updating design guidance to identify the most appropriate walking or biking facility depending on context (such as physical separation),



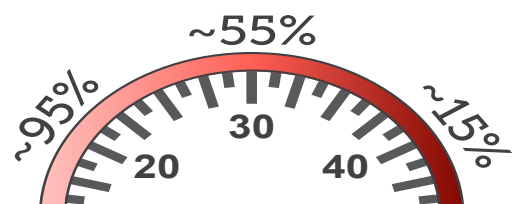
more visible pedestrian crossings, and examination and consideration of lower speeds where appropriate.

Policies and strategies also focus on safe operations on the walking and biking system through education and encouragement. They more broadly recognize the need to educate all roadway users. Those policies and strategies touching on comfort and security help to encourage more users to the system by increasing their sense of safety.

Relating to enforcement, the Plan recognizes the role of law enforcement agencies in assuring that rules of the road are followed and safe operations occur. In addition, the strategies call for assuring local codes are enforced so that mailboxes or foliage do not impede pedestrian travel, for example.

Lastly, policies and strategies focus on evaluation, an assessment of the system to determine safety issues. Policies and strategies specify more robust data collection and sharing, as they relate to safety and other needs.

## Pedestrian survival rate by speed



## Goal 2: Accessibility and Connectivity

*Provide a complete bicycling and pedestrian network that reliably and easily connects to destinations and other transportation modes.*

It is recognized that there are gaps in sidewalks and bike lanes and that Oregon does not have a fully connected network. This goal targets making walking and biking accessible in areas where it is currently not, filling in gaps, and connecting to other modes. Policies and strategies call for such things as system inventories to identify gaps and prioritize walking and biking needs, retrofitting existing facilities to accommodate pedestrians and cyclists, wayfinding signage, bike share, and enhancing connections to other modes, especially public transportation. In addition, strategies hit upon trails and paths, and policy foundation is laid for prioritizing Regional Paths that serve as important off-system connection points across a region and for the state.

## Goal 3: Mobility and Efficiency

*Improve the mobility and efficiency of the entire transportation system by providing high quality walking and biking options for trips of short and moderate distances. Support the ability of people who bike, walk, or use mobility devices to move easily on the system.*

Mobility and efficiency focuses on assuring that pedestrians and cyclists can move freely and easily on the existing system. The goal is inclusive of how walking and biking impacts the mobility of other modes, such as reducing motor vehicle congestion. Policies and strategies seek to reduce physical barriers that may impede movement, hit on maintenance practices, seek to assure movement through or around construction zones, and touch on design elements such as signal timing and bicycle detection, among other issues.



## Goal 4: Community and Economic Vitality

*Enhance community and economic vitality through walking and biking networks that improve people's ability to access jobs, businesses, and other destinations, and to attract visitors, new residents, and new business to the state, opening new opportunities for Oregonians.*

Both land use and tourism are included under this goal area. Specifically, the land use policy framework identifies the need for model code assistance, siting schools and government buildings so they are accessible to walking and biking, considering land use attractors to assure safe connections, bicycle parking, and prioritizing employment centers and main streets as critical connection points that serve the community and economy. Tourism policies and strategies focus on partnerships, collaboration opportunities and disseminating information as ways to encourage pedestrian and bicycle recreational travel.

## Goal 5: Equity

*Provide opportunities and choices for people of all ages, abilities, and incomes in urban, suburban, and rural areas across the state to bike or walk routes to reach their destinations and to access transportation options, assuring transportation disadvantaged communities are served and included in decision making.*

The equity goal focuses on making walking and biking options equally available to all. Assuring access to underserved areas, and more specifically transportation disadvantaged populations, is called out. The policies and strategies under this goal are designed to understand the issues that may prevent certain portions of Oregon’s population from walking and biking, such as looking at census data, conducting research, and doing network gap analysis that looks at demographics. They also focus on integrating equity criteria and considerations into decision making, locating and prioritizing transportation disadvantaged populations, and helping to close the gap between areas served and not served.

### Goal 6: Health

*Provide Oregonians opportunities to become more active and healthy by walking and biking to meet their daily needs.*

Walking and biking require physical activity to get from origin to destination and is inextricably linked to personal and public health. This goal seeks to be more overt about that linkage. Policies and strategies call out such things as integrating health criteria in transportation decision making and conducting analysis when appropriate, engaging health professionals

## HEALTH FACTS

25-33% of Oregon adults have chronic disease preconditions and over 40% of Oregon adults do not meet CDC physical activity recommendations.  
SOURCE: OREGON HEALTH AUTHORITY (27)

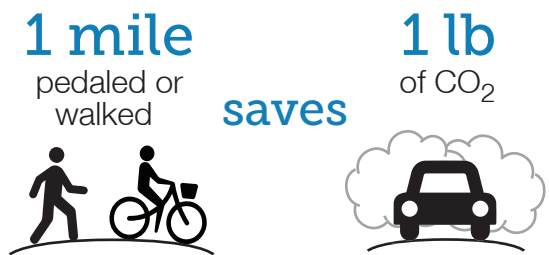
A 2011 study estimated that Portland, OR could see between \$388 and \$594 million in health cost savings attributable to new bicycle infrastructure and programs by 2040. Every \$1 invested in bicycling yields \$3.40 in health care cost savings. When the statistical value of lives is considered, every \$1 invested yields nearly \$100 in benefits.  
SOURCE: ALLIANCE FOR BIKING & WALKING, GOTSCHI (7,23)

and strengthening partnerships, and improving data collection and sharing.

### Goal 7: Sustainability

*Help to meet federal, state and local sustainability and environmental goals by providing zero emission transportation options like walking and biking.*

In recognition of the environmental benefits of walking and biking, the sustainability goal highlights the impacts these zero emission modes can have on helping the state to reduce Greenhouse Gas emissions, have cleaner air and water, and be generally low impact. Strategies promote encouragement, and innovations such as electric bikes or scooters, which may attract more people to use those modes.



SOURCE: ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY (28)

### Goal 8: Strategic Investment

*Recognize Oregon’s strategic investments in walking and biking as crucial components of the transportation system that provide essential options for travel, and can help reduce system costs, and achieve other important benefits.*

The contribution that walking and bicycling facilities make to the entire transportation system is recognized in this goal. In looking at walking and biking issues and opportunities, available funding is likely to fall short of investment needs. Therefore a strategic approach is needed to spend existing resources on the highest need and greatest value investments, leverage what is available, and to identify additional funding sources. Policies and strategies address these issues and create an investment prioritization framework. The framework lays out priorities as follows: protect the existing system



(e.g. maintenance and preservation) and address significant safety issues; add critical connections (defined in the Plan) and address other safety issues; complete the system (e.g. separation, and bicycle parking); and elaborate the system (e.g. pedestrian and bicycle only bridges). Strategies also cover such actions as pedestrian and bicycle project lists in Transportation System Plans and other relevant planning documents, being opportunistic in acquiring right-of-way for future facilities, pursuing local funding mechanisms and sources, and leveraging funding opportunities.

## Goal 9: Coordination, Cooperation, and Collaboration

*Work actively and collaboratively with federal, state, regional, local and private partners to provide consistent and seamless walking and biking networks that are integral to the transportation system.*

There are many different jurisdictions that own and operate walking and biking facilities, which means that a single route is likely to cross different authorities. With an interest in creating an integrated and seamless system, this coordination, cooperation and collaboration goal seeks to assure communication between entities in decision making. Policies and strategies call for a checklist of communication needs, guidance for coordinating with transportation agencies and utilities companies, for example, and local capacity building.

## Implementation

The Oregon Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan is a modal element of the OTP, the state's multimodal policy plan. The policies and strategies in the Plan direct the work of ODOT and impact transportation decisions of local jurisdictions through their Transportation System Plans (TSPs) and other planning efforts, which must be consistent with statewide policy plan direction. Region and local plans refine policies and strategies to the appropriate context and identify projects and programs, which are then prioritized for investment. Implementation then continues through Project Development and Delivery, Maintenance, and Education, Outreach and Training.

Effective Plan implementation requires coordination among multiple agencies and organizations. The walking and biking networks cross multiple state highways, county roads, city streets, parks and other lands. The patchwork of facilities and ownership necessitates the collaboration among the various agencies and organizations responsible for the myriad of facilities across the state. To achieve the Plan's vision, the policies and strategies need to be implemented by a variety of partners, including state, regional, and local governments and the private sector.

### Key Initiatives

Key Initiatives are foundational activities that need to occur following Plan adoption in order to achieve the Plan vision. These initiatives are anticipated to be of significant effort that begin in the near term and require coordination among entities like ODOT, other state agencies, and local jurisdictions, as appropriate, to ensure future implementation.

*Defining the Network* - This key initiative is an early concept recognizing stakeholder interests in a better definition for the walking and biking network in order to inform design and help with system inventories, needs, and project priorities. At a high level, this key initiative recognizes that while the motor vehicle network has

been defined by state functional classifications to distinguish how different parts of the system are used as well as how they should be designed and function, the biking and walking network does not have a consistent approach for such definition. Further work is needed to understand what the best approach is to define the biking and walking network but this initiative aims at identifying a way to differentiate the walking and biking system and provide clarity on appropriate infrastructure, design, and treatments given unique contexts, such as: vehicle speed, roadway characteristics and constraints, planned land uses, key destinations, walking and biking uses and users, and latent demand. This would provide further direction in prioritizing needs (both infrastructure and funding), identifying system gaps, developing criteria for differentiation of facility type, and refining design guidelines to support multimodal system and user needs.

*Data* - Data is needed to support efficient and effective decision-making. Use, availability, and quality of data vary across the state. This key initiative provides an opportunity to focus on finding ways to collect and standardize data that relates directly to decision making, identified Plan performance measures, and those program level performance measures to be identified in plan implementation (described in the key initiative below).

*Program Level Performance Measures* - While performance measures have been identified to track progress on achieving the Plan vision, more specific performance measures may be needed to assess needs, system condition, and program performance. Prioritization performance measures are important in order to employ appropriate data to support decision-making for network development and maintenance. This key initiative focuses on developing program-level performance measures that can be used in project prioritization as it relates to public investment in walking and biking. Indicators used to “define the network” may

be used in prioritization performance measures, such as network connectivity, potential demand, or safety.

## Performance Measures

The Plan will help to shape the future of walking and biking options in Oregon over the next 25 years. To understand how this plays out in achieving the Plan vision, performance measures are needed to track and monitor implementation progress. At the Plan level, performance measures focus on ways to gauge statewide success or to help inform decision making to achieve the Plan vision. While performance measures are often specific in nature, Plan level performance measures need to be high-level, all-encompassing, and few in total number in order to be applicable and informative statewide.

In the development of the Plan, several performance measures were explored. Those selected and outlined below represent performance areas that could be measured today because sufficient data exists, a methodology for how to measure has been established, and they can be evaluated statewide. The performance measures indicate if safety is improving, use of the system is increasing (assumed through overall improvements to the network) and that data needs are being understood and data collected for more robust performance measures in the future:

- *Number of pedestrian and bicycle fatalities (five-year average)*
- *Number of pedestrian and bicycle serious injuries (five-year average)*
- *Perceived safety of walking and biking*
- *Utilization of walking or biking for short trips*
- *Identifying data needs for pedestrian and bicycle performance measures*
- *Pedestrian access to transit*



# 2016 NRPA Field Report

Park and Recreation Agency Performance Benchmarks



National Recreation  
and Park Association



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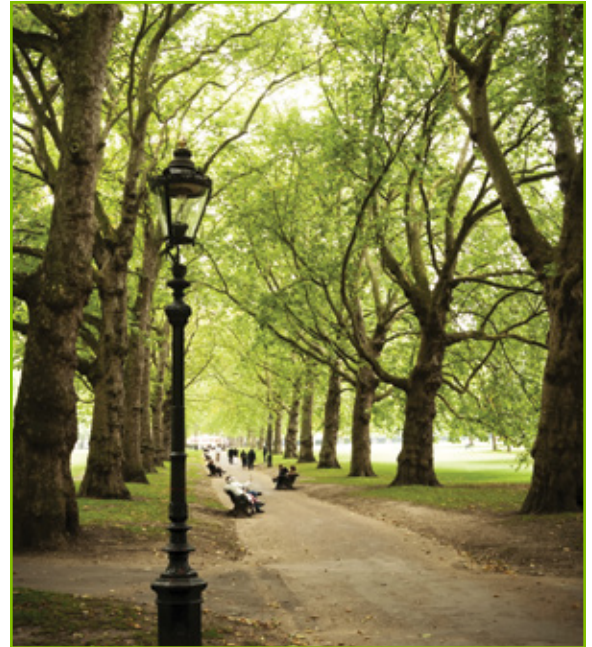
# Executive Summary

Welcome to the *2016 NRPA Field Report*, the most comprehensive resource of data and insights for park and recreation agencies in the United States. The *2016 NRPA Field Report* contains data and key insights from PRORAGIS, NRPA's benchmarking tool that assists park and recreation professionals in the effective management and planning of their operating resources and capital facilities.

**Why is the 2016 NRPA Field Report an important resource to park and recreation agencies?** There is no other resource that provides park and recreation professionals and other key stakeholders with this wealth of valuable benchmarks and insights that informs on the state of the industry. These insights help:

1. Show the prevalence of expanded activities and offerings of agencies throughout the nation.
2. Provide guidance to park and recreation professionals to evaluate the performance of their agencies. Do their agencies provide as much open space, recreation opportunities and programming as their peers? Is the agency properly staffed? Sufficiently funded?
3. Make informed decisions on the optimal set of service and facility offerings based on the demographics and, therefore, the needs of a specific community while also providing comparative agency data from other communities/agencies.

**So, is the information in the 2016 NRPA Field Report the final answer in terms of decision making for local park and recreation agencies?** No. Instead, park and recreation leaders should use findings from this report to start the conversation with internal colleagues, external consultants and partners, and policymakers. Data is only a tool — albeit a very valuable tool — to help determine the best decisions for an agency.



Consider that no two park and recreation agencies are the same. They serve different residents with different needs, desires and challenges and have different access to funding. For example, just because an agency may have more workers per 1,000 residents relative to “typical” park and recreation agencies does not mean that agency should shed staff. It is possible that the agency with more staff offers more hands-on programming because of the unique needs of the population it serves.

A successful agency is one that tailors its services to meet the demands of its community. Knowing who uses your agency's resource and who may use it in the future (including age, race, income trends) are also factors in shaping the optimal mix of facilities and services to be offered. Every park and recreation agency and the public it serves are unique. Communities look different and so too should their park and recreation agency. It is this reason why NRPA no longer publishes “National Standards.”



Consequently, the *2016 NRPA Field Report* should be used in conjunction with other resources, including those that are proprietary to an agency, from NRPA and from outside sources. The following are some NRPA resources to consider:



**PRORAGIS:** The information contained in the NRPA Field Report comes from PRORAGIS, NRPA's park and recreation benchmarking resource. Whereas the NRPA Field Report provides data for "typical" agencies, you can customize key metrics with PRORAGIS to compare the characteristics of your agency to its peers. This may include filtering by agency type, size and geographic region. The experience is further enhanced when you enter your agency's data into PRORAGIS, which allows the reports to compare your agency's data with the key metrics of agencies throughout the United States.



**NRPA Facility Market Reports:** These customized reports offer key census and marketing data and insights about the market served by your agency's facilities. Your agency will gain a greater understanding of the residents served by a park, aquatic center, recreation center or any other facility, with a particular focus on their habits and interests.



**NRPA Connect:** There may be no better resource to answer your park and recreation questions than your peers. NRPA Connect is an online professional networking tool that connects you with like-minded park and recreation professionals from across the country and is a valuable resource to receive information, ask industry questions and get insight into trends in the field.



**Economic Impact of Local Parks:** This study finds operations and capital spending at America's local and regional park agencies was responsible for approximately \$140 billion in annual economic activity and nearly 1 million jobs in 2013. The report also includes estimates of the economic impact of operations and capital spending at local and regional park agencies for all 50 states and the District of Columbia.



**Americans' Broad-Based Support for Local Recreation and Park Services:** This survey of more than 1,100 Americans affirms their passion for their local public parks. In fact, virtually all Americans agree that their communities benefit from their local public parks, *even if they themselves are not regular park users*. The support for local public parks crosses nearly every demographic segment of Americans (including age, income, household formation and political affiliation) and has gone unabated for the past 25 years even as our nation and the ways we interact and entertain each other have dramatically evolved.



**Parks & Recreation magazine:** No other publication covers trends and issues affecting the industry like NRPA's monthly flagship magazine. Each issue features content on a number of topics, including conservation, health and wellness, social equity, advocacy, law review and operations.

*All of these resources can be found at [www.nrpa.org](http://www.nrpa.org)*

## How to Read the 2016 NRPA Field Report

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The 2016 NRPA Field Report presents most of its data with medians, along with data responses at both lower-quartile (lowest 25 percent) and upper-quartile (highest 25 percent). The data presentation provides insight as to where your agency stands compared not only to typical agencies (i.e., those at the median values), but also to the full spectrum of agencies at both the high and low quartiles of values. Many metrics presented include the top-line figures as well as certain cross tabulations of jurisdiction population or population density. A more comprehensive set of cross tabulations of the data presented in the following pages is available as a set of interactive tables at [www.nrpa.org/2016-Field-Report](http://www.nrpa.org/2016-Field-Report).

As noted above, we encourage you to use the *2016 NRPA Field Report* as a first step and then turn to the reporting tools available in PRORAGIS to get more in-depth statistical cuts of the metrics you care about the most. Your agency can receive even more valuable insights when it updates and completes its PRORAGIS profile and therefore is eligible to receive an Agency Performance Report. This report specifically addresses the metrics for your agency as it relates to statistically similar agency characteristics such as population or density.

The *2016 NRPA Field Report* contains data from more than 950 park and recreation agencies across the United States as reported between the years 2013 and 2015. Note: Not all agencies answered every survey question.

# NRPA FIELD REPORT AT A GLANCE

*The Typical Park and Recreation Agency...*

**Has 9.5 acres of park land**  
*per 1,000 residents*

Has operating expenditures  
per capita of

**\$76.44**



Has

**7.4**

staff members  
*per 10,000 residents*



Recovers  
**29%**

of operating expenditures  
through revenue generation

ADMIT  
ONE

*Has 1 Park for every*  
**2,277 residents**



**80% of agencies**  
offer summer camps



**50% of agencies**  
offer afterschool programs





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# Key Findings

## Park Facilities

America's local and regional park agencies differ greatly in size and facility offerings. Whereas the typical agency participating in PRORAGIS serves a jurisdiction (e.g., a town, city, county and/or region) of 40,800 people, there are agencies that serve an area of just a few hundred people while others are a primary recreation resource for millions of people. Naturally, the offerings of these agencies vary as much as do the markets they serve. The typical agency has 19 parks under its watch comprising a total 400 acres. Adding in non-park facilities, the median number of parks and non-park facilities rises to 24 comprising 490 acres.

**At the typical agency, there is one park for every 2,277 residents.** The number of people per park rises as the population of the town, city, county or region served by the agency increases. At agencies located in jurisdictions with less than 20,000 residents, there is one park for every 1,335 residents. The ratio rises to one park for every 2,396 residents in jurisdictions with 50,000 to 99,999 people and one park for every 6,250 people at agencies serving areas with more than 250,000 people.

**The typical park and recreation agency has 9.5 acres of park land for every thousand residents in the jurisdiction.** So, which agencies offer the most park land acreage per 1,000 residents? The smallest and largest agencies: those serving fewer than 20,000 residents typically have 10.6 acres per 1,000 residents compared to 12.5 acres per 1,000 residents at jurisdictions serving more than 250,000 people. At the same time, agencies serving jurisdictions between 100,000 and 250,000 people have 7.4 acres of park land per 1,000 residents.

Figure 1

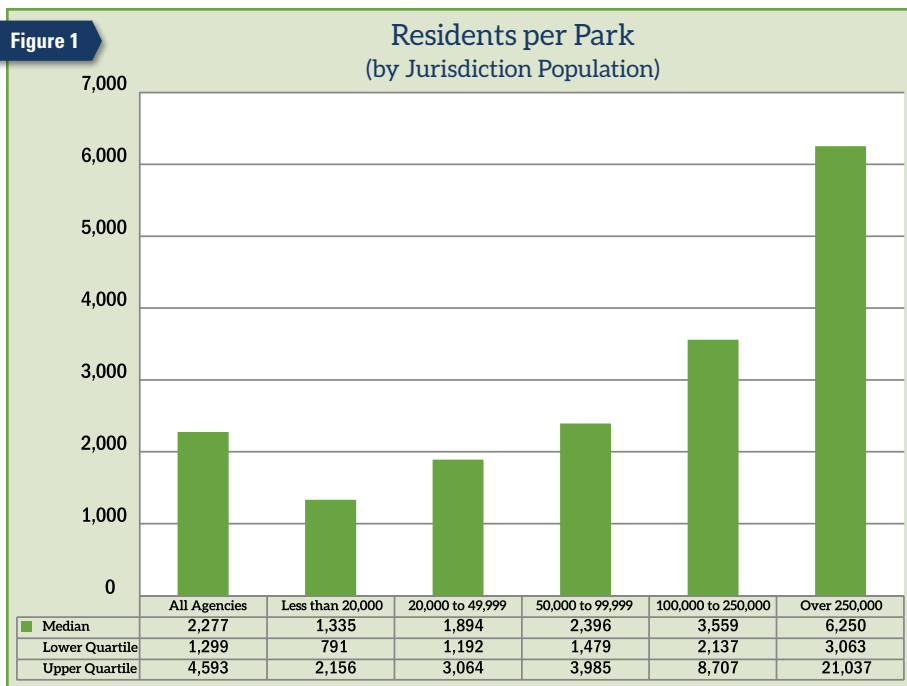


Figure 2

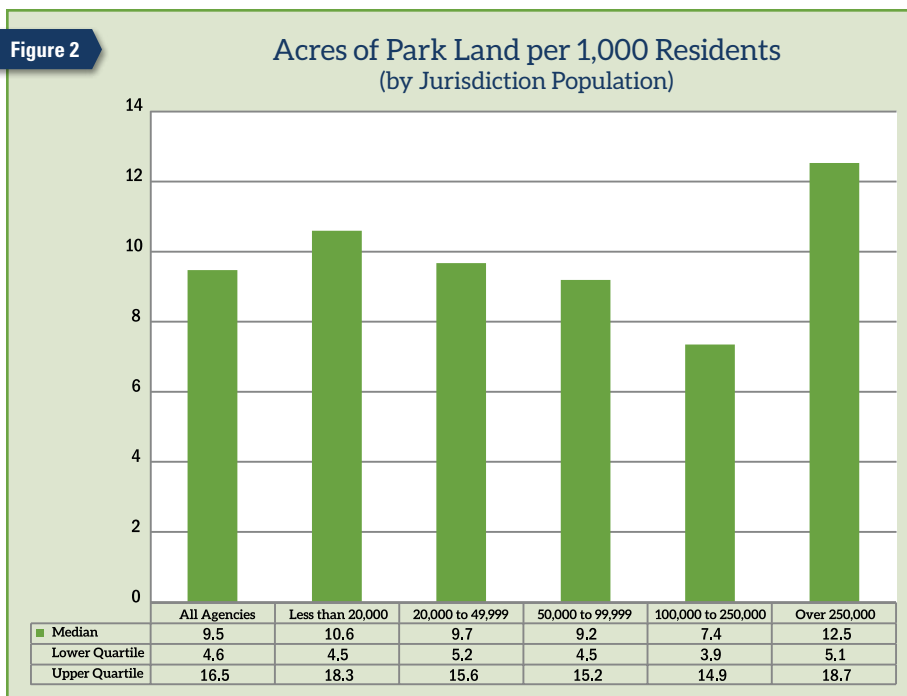


Figure 3

## Outdoor Park and Recreation Facilities

Outdoor Facility	Agencies Offering this Facility	Median Number of Residents per Facility
Playgrounds	91%	3,560
Basketball courts	85%	7,000
Diamond fields: softball fields - adult	65%	12,463
Tennis courts (outdoor only)	61%	4,295
Diamond fields: softball fields - youth	59%	9,687
Diamond fields: baseball - youth	58%	6,599
Swimming pools (outdoor only)	54%	34,686
Rectangular fields: multipurpose	50%	8,060
Community gardens	47%	32,376
Tot lots	45%	12,112
Dog park	41%	43,183
Diamond fields: baseball - adult	39%	19,694
Rectangular fields: football field	38%	25,523
Rectangular fields: soccer field - youth	37%	6,671
Rectangular fields: soccer field - adult	34%	12,365
Diamond fields: tee-ball	28%	12,771
Multise courts -basketball, volleyball	25%	13,736
Ice rink (outdoor only)	21%	16,572
Rectangular fields: lacrosse field	7%	26,639
Rectangular fields: cricket field	6%	199,199
Multipurpose synthetic field	5%	34,915
Rectangular fields: field hockey field	3%	22,767
Overlay field	3%	7,257

Park and recreation agencies offer a wide variety of facility types and features. **An overwhelming majority of park and recreation agencies have playgrounds (91 percent) and basketball courts (85 percent) in their portfolio of outdoor assets.** Further, a majority of agencies have diamond fields for baseball and/or softball, tennis courts, outdoor swimming pools and multipurpose rectangular fields.

In addition, the typical park and recreation agency that manages or maintains trails for walking, hiking, running and/or biking has 11.0 miles of trails in its network. Agencies serving more than 250,000 people in their area have a median of 90.1 miles of trails under their purview.

Park and recreation agencies also offer a number of indoor facilities for their residents. **A majority of agencies offer recreation centers and gyms, while at least two in five agencies offer community centers, senior centers and fitness centers.** Figure 4 provides median populations served by the following facility and/or activity area.

Figure 4

## Indoor Park and Recreation Facilities

Indoor Facility	Agencies Offering this Facility	Median Number of Residents per Facility
Recreation centers	69%	26,650
Gyms	63%	26,418
Community centers	45%	30,000
Senior centers	43%	49,500
Fitness center	40%	39,765
Performance amphitheater	28%	45,817
Nature centers	27%	114,620
Stadiums	15%	57,051
Ice rink	15%	28,500
Teen centers	9%	62,700
Indoor track	7%	49,715
Arena	5%	57,637

*Note some of these facilities may be included as a part of another facility. For example, a fitness center may be a part of a recreation center.*

## Programming

Park and recreation agencies may have thousands, if not millions, of interactions with their residents and visitors each year. **The typical park and recreation agency has a quarter million contacts per year.** An agency at the 75th percentile has 811,816 annual contacts while one at the 95th percentile has more than 4.3 million contacts each year.

So what is a contact? These can be visits to a local park, running or biking on a local trail, visits to the local recreation center or any other interaction with any of the agency's park and recreation facilities. And to be clear, a person can have more than one contact; for example, a person who visits their local aquatic center ten times and runs on the local trail five times would be counted as 15 contacts.

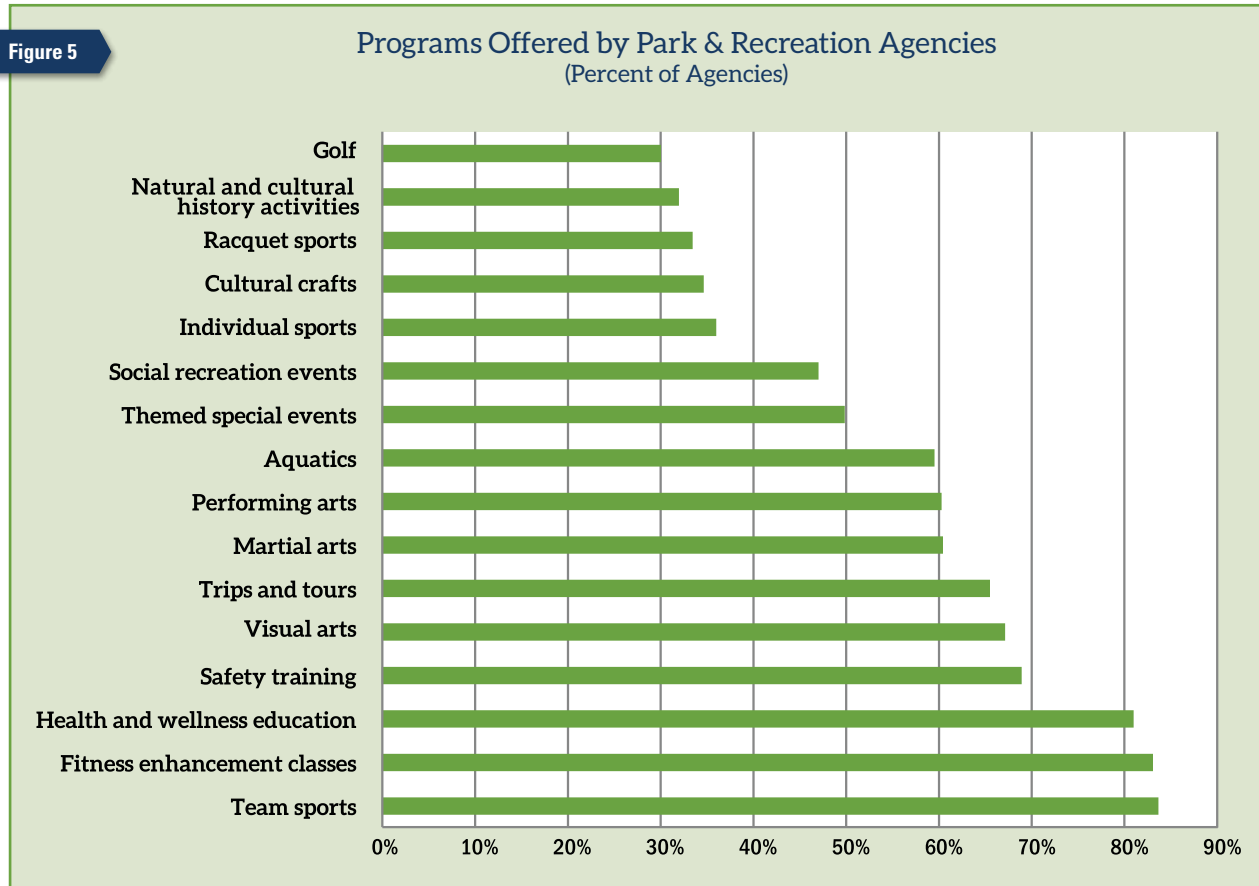
Programming is a key outreach method to drive usage of park and recreation facilities and, when associated with registration fees, also happens to be the largest non-tax revenue source for most agencies. The typical agency generates more than 23,000 contacts from its free and fee-based programming events, with annual contacts rising to more than 100,000 at the 75th percentile agency and surging to more than a half million contacts arising from both free and fee-based park and recreation programming at the 95th percentile agency.

Programming spans across many differing types of park and recreation activities, with many touching one or more of NRPA's Three Pillars of Conservation, Health & Wellness and Social Equity. Key programming activities offered by at least 60 percent of park and recreation agencies include:

- Team sports (84 percent)
- Fitness enhancement classes (83 percent)
- Health and wellness education (81 percent)
- Safety training (69 percent)
- Visual arts (67 percent)
- Trips and tours (66 percent)
- Martial arts (60 percent)
- Performing arts (60 percent)
- Aquatics (60 percent)

Agencies serving larger populations are more likely than agencies serving smaller towns to present a number of programming offerings, including:

- Health and wellness education
- Aquatics
- Golf
- Cultural crafts
- Performing arts
- Natural and cultural history activities
- Trips and tours
- Visual arts



**Figure 6** Targeted Programs for Children, Seniors and People with Disabilities (Percent of Agencies, by Jurisdiction Population)

	All Agencies	Less than 20,000	20,000 to 49,999	50,000 to 99,999	100,000 to 250,000	Over 250,000
Summer camp	80%	73%	81%	83%	85%	87%
Before school programs	31%	22%	24%	38%	35%	46%
After school programs	50%	44%	36%	64%	62%	66%
Preschool	34%	25%	36%	41%	31%	38%
Full day care	9%	2%	7%	12%	12%	18%
Specific teen programs	60%	44%	59%	74%	73%	68%
Specific senior programs	73%	62%	75%	88%	80%	72%
Programs for people with disabilities	58%	39%	55%	72%	69%	78%

Park and recreation agencies are leaders in providing services and programming for children, seniors and people with disabilities. Larger agencies are more likely to offer programming for children, whether in the form of a summer camp or before and after school care and full day care. Four in five agencies offer summer camps to their residents. This rises to 87 percent at agencies serving jurisdictions with more than 250,000 people. Similarly, agencies serving jurisdictions with more than 250,000 residents are more likely to offer before and after school care and day care.

In addition, 78 percent of park and recreation agencies in larger jurisdictions offer programming designed for people with disabilities versus fewer than two in five agencies serving less than 20,000 residents.

## Responsibilities of Park and Recreation Agencies

Park and recreation agencies take on many responsibilities for their communities, beyond their “traditional” roles of operating parks and facilities and providing recreation programming and services. In addition to those two functions, the top responsibilities for park and recreation agencies are as follows:

- Operate and maintain indoor facilities (92 percent)
- Conduct major jurisdiction-wide special events (73 percent)
- Have budgetary responsibility for their administrative staff (54 percent)
- Administer or manage tournament/event-quality outdoor sports complexes (54 percent)
- Operate, maintain or manage trails, greenways and/or blueways (TGB) (44 percent)
- Manage major aquatic complex (43 percent)
- Administer community gardens (40 percent)
- Operate, maintain or manage special purpose parks and open spaces (38 percent).

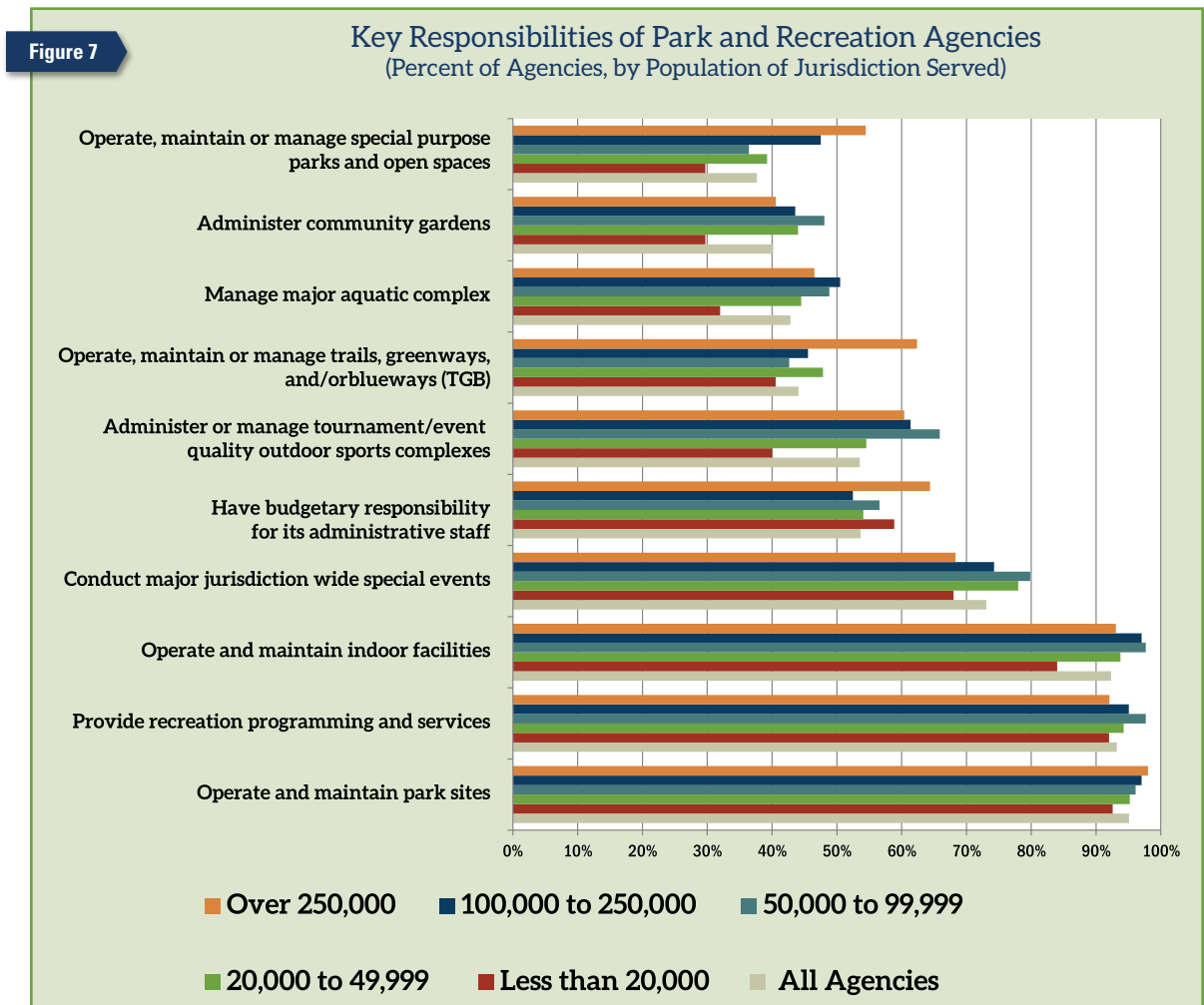


Figure 8

### Other Responsibilities of Park and Recreation Agencies (Percent of Agencies)

Operate and maintain non-park sites	37%
Include in its operating budget the funding for planning and development functions	35%
Operate, maintain or contract water parks	30%
Operate, maintain or contract golf courses	29%
Operate, maintain or contract other attractions or facilities	27%
Manage large performance outdoor amphitheaters	24%
Operate, maintain or contract tennis center facilities	24%
Administer or manage tournament/event-quality indoor sports complexes	22%
Administer or manage farmer's markets	19%
Maintain, manage or lease indoor performing arts center	18%
Operate, maintain or contract campgrounds	16%
Operate, maintain or contract tourism attractions	14%
Administer or manage professional or college-type stadium/arena/racetrack	10%
Operate, maintain or contract indoor swim facility	8%
Manage or maintain fairgrounds	5%

## Staffing

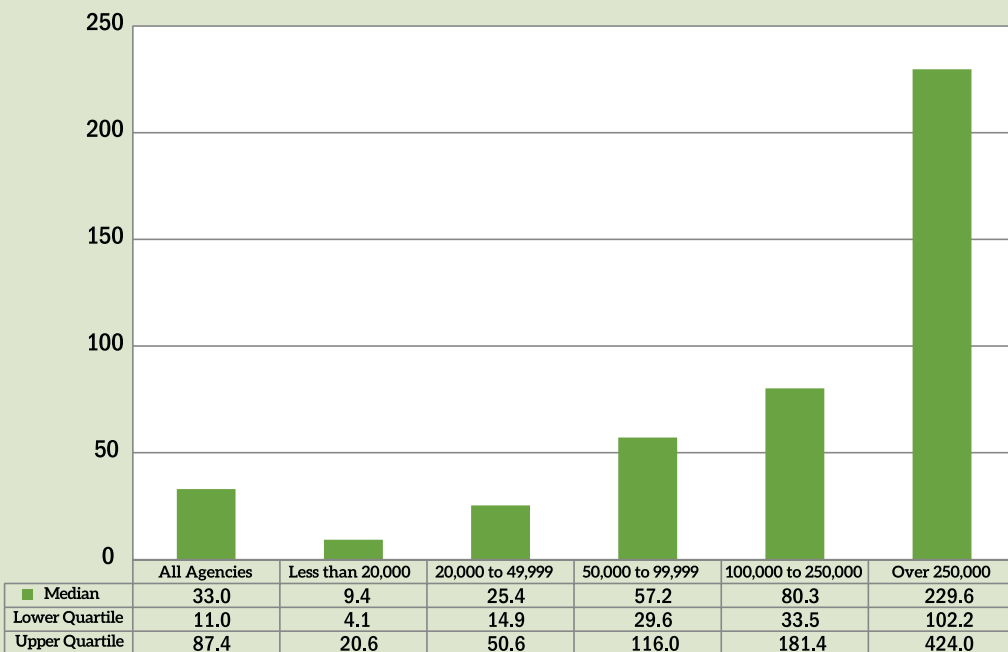
The typical park and recreation agency is staffed with 33 full-time equivalents (FTEs) that include a mix of full-time and part-time staff. But, the size of the staff expands exponentially as the size of the jurisdiction served by the agency expands. Park and recreation agencies serving jurisdictions with less than 20,000 people have a median of 9.4 FTEs on staff. Agencies serving areas with 50,000 to 99,999 people have a median of 57.2 FTEs, while those serving areas with more than 250,000 have a staff with a median of 229.6 workers.

Median counts of FTEs on staff also positively correlates with:

- Number of acres maintained – 250 or less acres: 13.9 FTEs versus over 3,500 acres: 266.1 FTEs
- Number of parks maintained – Less than 10 parks: 11.0 FTEs versus 50 or more parks: 200.3 FTEs
- Operating expenditures – Less than \$500,000: 3.2 FTEs versus over \$10 million: 201.4 FTEs.
- Population served by agency – Less than 500 people per square mile: 14.4 FTEs versus more than 2,500 people per square mile: 56.9 FTEs.

Figure 9

### Park and Recreation Agency Staffing: Full-Time Equivalents (by Jurisdiction Population)



One way to view agency staffing is to measure it relative to the population of the area that the agency serves. **The typical park and recreation agency has 7.4 FTEs on staff for each 10,000 residents living in the jurisdiction served by the agency.** Agencies tend to have fewer FTEs on staff when located in more populated areas. Agencies serving jurisdictions with less than 20,000 people have 9.3 FTEs for each 10,000 residents, with this measure falling to 3.9 FTEs for 10,000 residents in areas with more than 250,000 people.

Agencies also tend to have more FTEs per residents when they serve areas with greater population density. Agencies operating in areas with less than 500 people per square mile have 4.2 FTEs per 10,000 people served versus 9.7 FTEs per 10,000 residents in areas with more than 2,500 people per square mile.

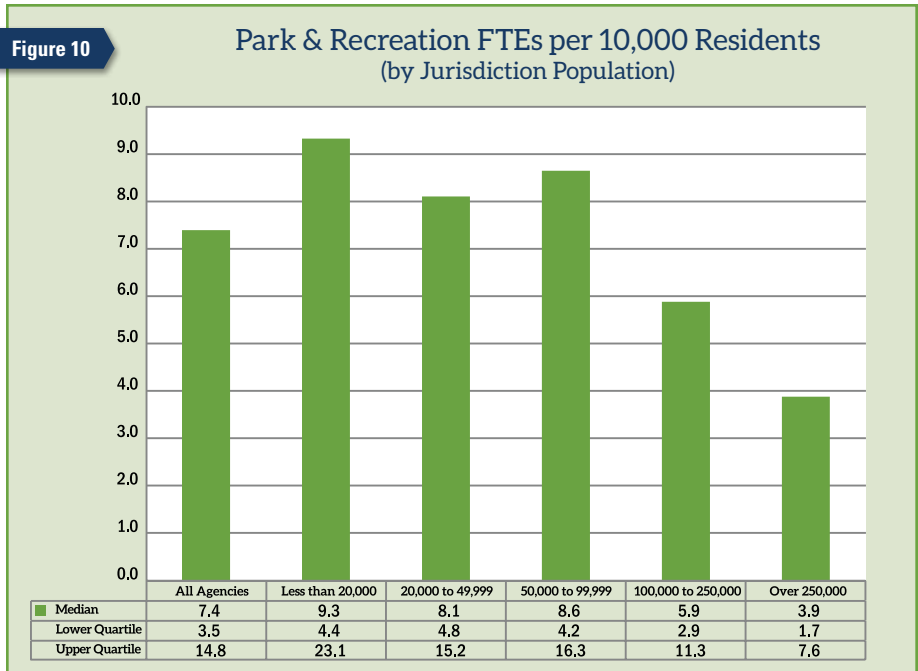
There are many responsibilities covered by an agency's park and recreation professionals. Park and recreation staff members have duties that span across many functional areas:

- Maintenance (30 percent)
- Operations (27 percent)
- Programming (22 percent)
- Administration (18 percent)

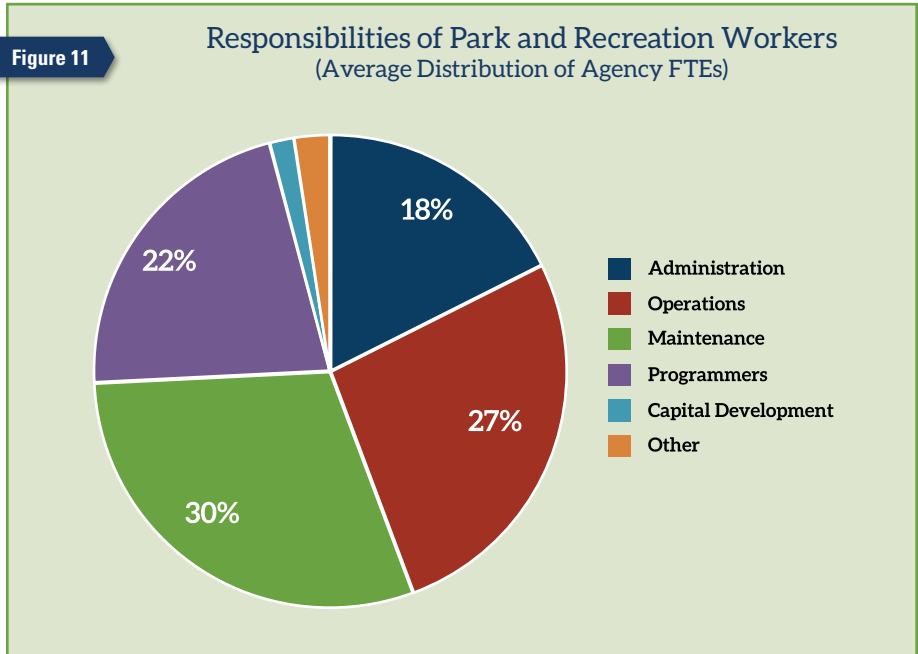
**Just over a third of park and recreation agencies (35 percent) have workers that are covered by collective bargaining.** Union members are more likely to be part of an agency's park and recreation staff at agencies that:

- Have larger staffs – 21 percent of agencies with staffs of less than 10 FTEs versus 52 percent of agencies with 100 or more FTEs.
- Serve larger populations – 21 percent of agencies in jurisdictions with less than 20,000 people versus 53 percent of agencies in jurisdictions with more than 250,000 people.
- Have more parks – 13 percent of agencies with less than 10 parks versus 61 percent of agencies with at least 50 parks.
- Maintain more park land – 27 percent of agencies that maintain 250 or less acres of parkland versus 59 percent of agencies that maintain more than 3,500 acres of parkland.

**Figure 10**



**Figure 11**





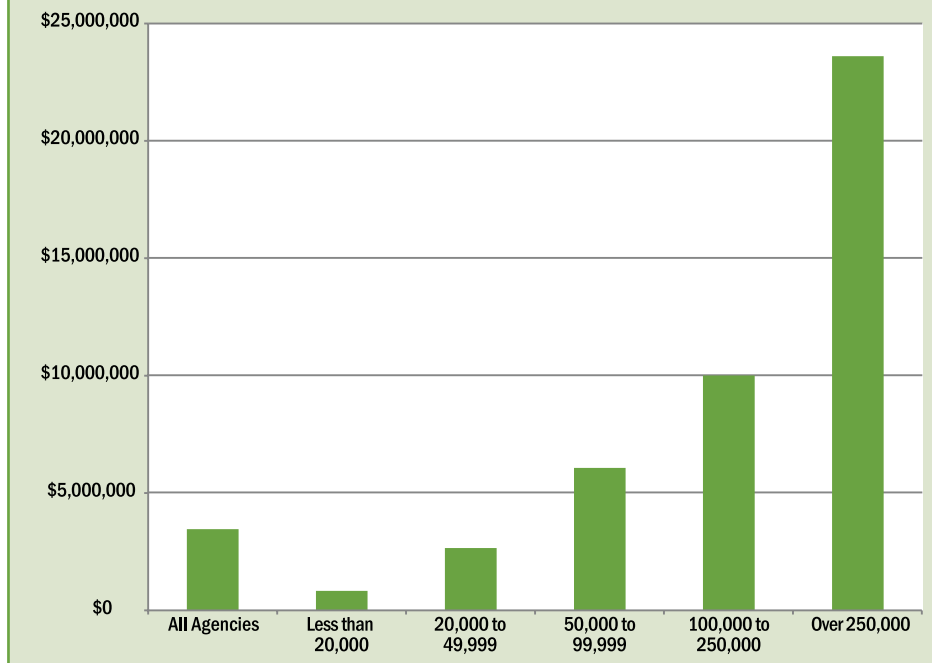
## Budget

How does the funding at your park and recreation agency compare with funding levels at other agencies? Does your agency have access to the same level of funding as its peers? As noted in the NRPA report, [The Economic Impact of Local Parks](#), local and regional park agencies had operations expenditures of \$32.3 billion in 2013. This amount is split across the thousands of park and recreation agencies throughout the nation with **the typical park agency having annual operating expenditures of \$3,459,846**.

But, the size of an agency's operating expenditures varies dramatically by the size of the agency (e.g., in terms of park and non-park acres managed and the population of the jurisdiction), the mission and responsibilities of the agency, and so forth. One way to start the comparison is to normalize operation expenditure data by the size of the agency.

Figure 12

Annual Operating Expenditures  
(by Jurisdiction Population)



As shown in Figure 13, **the typical park and recreation agency has annual operating expenses of \$76.44 on a per capita basis**. The denser the population served by the agency, the higher per capita operating expenses, with the typical agency serving a jurisdiction with less than 500 people per square mile having per capita operating expenses of \$37.84 and one serving an area with more than 2,500 people per square mile with median operating expenses rising to \$100.63 per resident. At the same time, per capita operations spending is *inversely* related to the population of the area served: agencies serving jurisdictions with less than 20,000 people have median operations spending of \$85.84, which drops to \$42.69 per resident for agencies serving jurisdictions with more than 250,000 people.

Figure 13

Operating Expenditures per Capita  
(by Population Density per Square Mile)

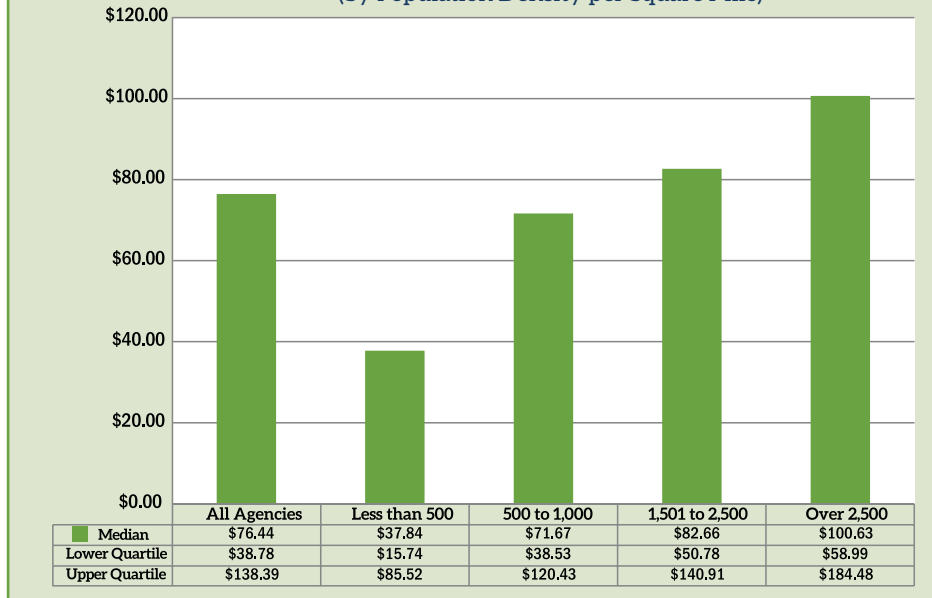
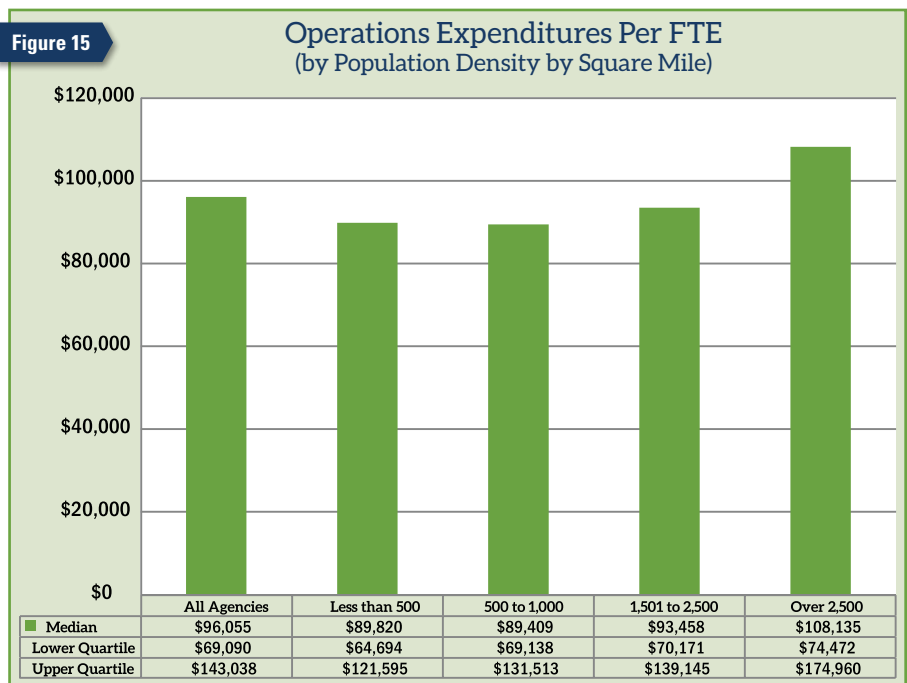
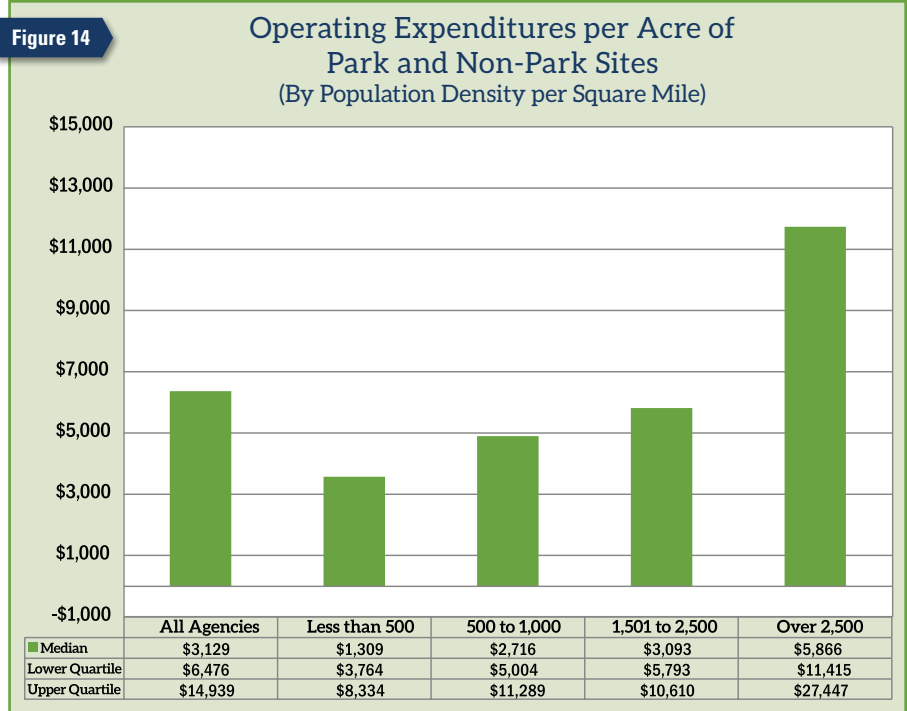


Figure 14 shows that **the median level operating expenditures is \$6,476 per acre of park and non-park sites managed by the agency.** Non-park sites are defined as public spaces (such as lawns at a city hall) that are not designated as parks but are budgeted for maintenance and/or operation by the park and recreation agency. The typical operating expenditures rise with population density. For example, the typical agency serving a jurisdiction with fewer than 500 people per square mile spends \$3,764 per acre of park and non-park sites. The median rises to \$11,415 per acre at agencies serving a jurisdiction with a population density greater than 2,500 per square mile.

Park and recreation agencies serving larger populaces tend to have lower operations expenditures than do agencies serving smaller and medium-sized jurisdictions. The typical park and recreation agency serving a jurisdiction with less than 20,000 people spends a median of \$7,644 per acre of park and non-park sites. The median slips slightly to \$7,547 per acre for agencies serving jurisdictions with between 50,000 and 99,999 people and then falls rapidly to \$3,533 per acre managed at agencies serving jurisdictions greater than 250,000 people.

**The typical park and recreation agency has \$96,055 in annual operations expenditures for each employee** (as measured by full time equivalents, or FTEs). The denser the jurisdiction served by the agency, the higher the operations expenditures for each FTE. Agencies serving jurisdictions with less than 500 residents per square mile have median operations expenditures of \$89,820 for each FTE. The median rises to \$108,135 per FTE for agencies serving areas with more than 2,500 residents per square mile. Similarly, the measure rises from \$88,056 for agencies with less than 10 parks to \$100,995 for agencies with 50 or more parks.

**At the typical park and recreation agency, personnel services represent 55 percent of the operations budget.** This includes expenditures for all salaries, wages and benefits for both full-time and non-full-time personnel along with contracted individuals. Another 37 percent of operations expenditures are dedicated to operations of the agency, including operational support for force accounted employees where the capital fund repays the operating budget; all enterprise funds; interdepartmental transfers; and, in some cases, the capital debt service. Another six percent of the operations spending includes capital expenses not included in the agency's capital improvement plan (CIP). This includes expenditures for capital equipment (e.g., computers, vehicles, large area mowers, tractors, boats, etc.), some periodic cyclical maintenance (carpets, conference chairs, push mowers, etc.) and, perhaps, debt services paid from the agency's operating funds.



## Agency Funding

On average, **park and recreation agencies derive three-fifths of their operating expenditures from general fund tax support**, although the percentage of funding from general fund tax support tends to be lower at agencies with larger operating budgets. The next biggest source of revenue for most agencies is earned/generated revenues, responsible for an average of 25 percent of operating expenditures. Many agencies depend on special dedicated taxes for part of their budget. Many park and recreation districts obtain the majority of their funding from tax levies that are approved in referendum by citizens for specified park and recreation purposes.

**The typical park and recreation agency generates \$795,500 in non-tax revenues on an annual basis**, although this can vary greatly based on agency size, services and facilities offered by the agency and mandate from leadership and policy-makers. Agencies with annual operating budgets under \$500,000 typically derive \$74,414 in non-tax revenues while those with annual budgets greater than \$10 million generate a median of \$6.469 million from non-tax revenue sources.

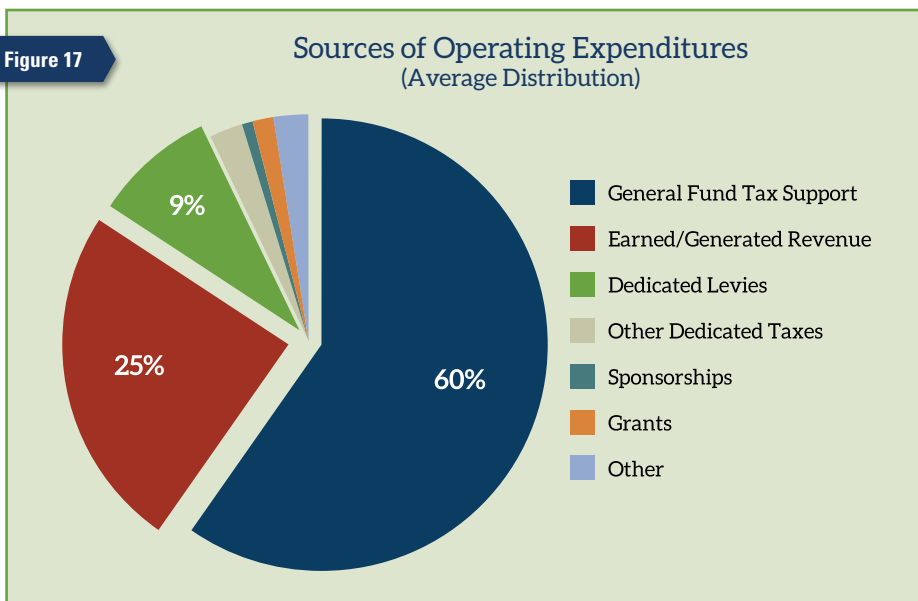
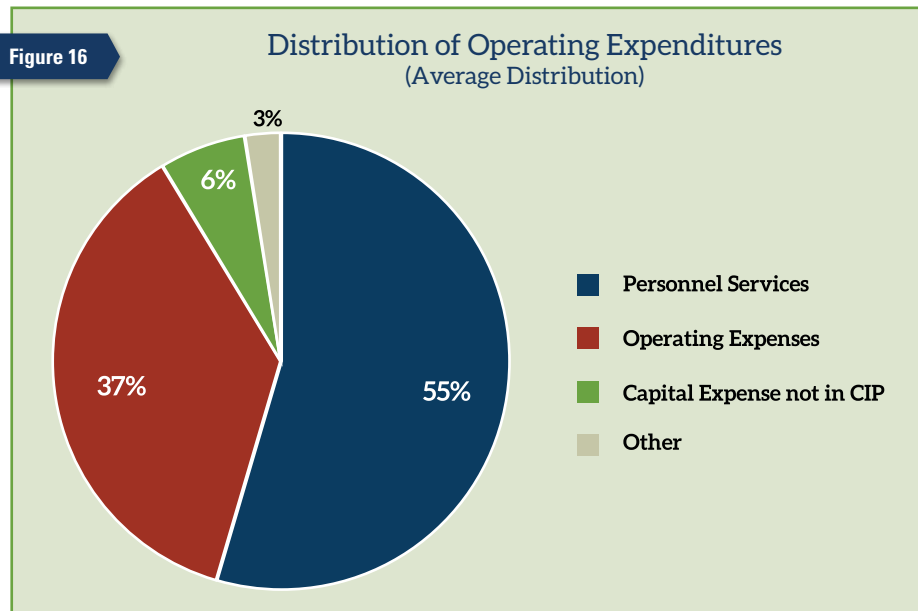
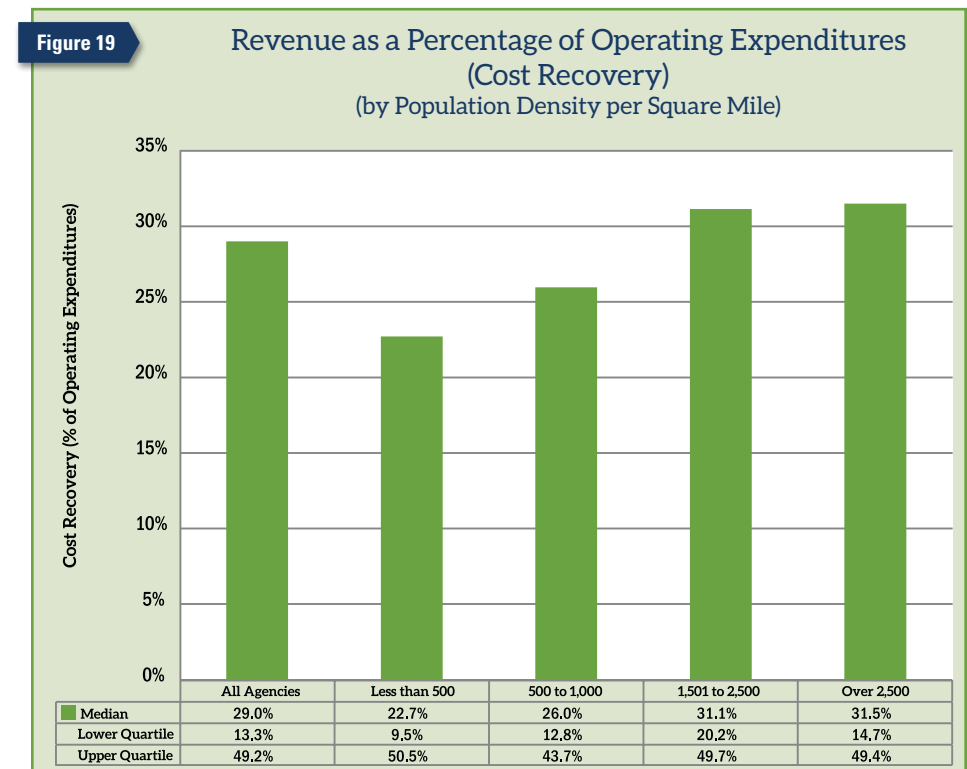
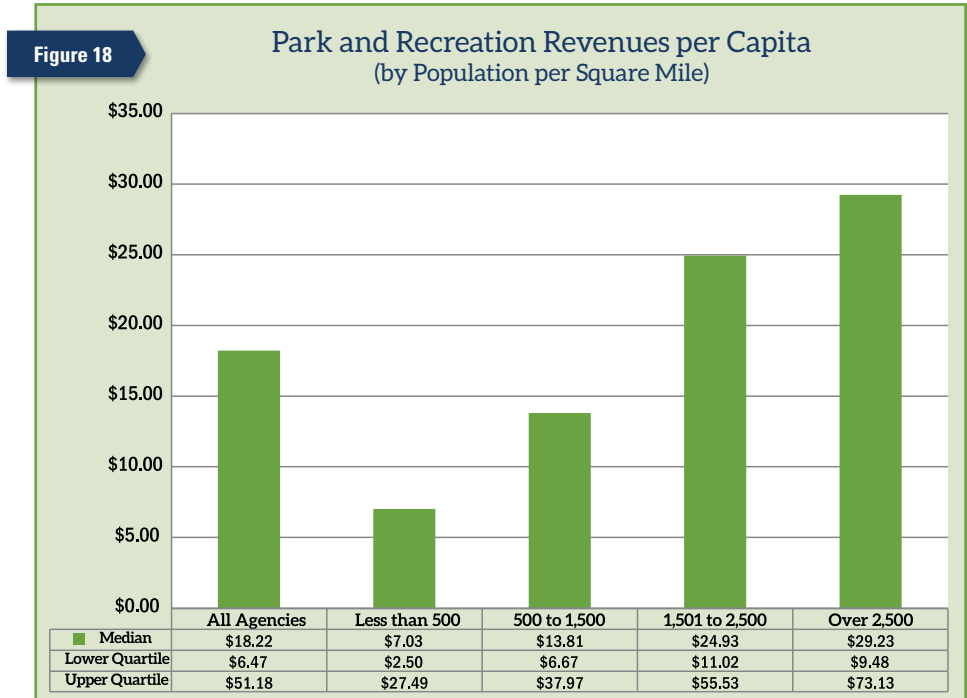


Figure 18 shows that **the typical park and recreation agency generates \$18.22 in revenue annually for each resident living in the jurisdiction it serves.** Agencies operating in less population-dense areas generate less revenue than those in greater populated areas. The typical agency, operating in a jurisdiction with less than 500 people per square mile, generates \$7.03 in revenue on a per capita basis per year compared to a median of \$29.23 for agencies serving a jurisdiction with more than 2,500 people per square mile.

Medium-sized agencies generate more revenue on a per capita basis than small and large park and recreation agencies. Agencies serving jurisdictions with between 50,000 and 99,999 people generate a median of \$29.57 in revenue per resident each year versus \$21.85 in per capita revenue in jurisdictions with less than 20,000 people and \$9.04 per capita from agencies serving jurisdictions with more than 250,000 people.

Another way to look at the revenues is in the form of cost recovery as a percentage of operating expenditures. **The typical agency recovers 29.0 percent of its operating expenditures from non-tax revenues.** The amount of cost recovery differs greatly from agency to agency based on the agency's portfolio of facilities and programming, the demographics of the populace served, agency mission and possible revenue mandates from their governing jurisdictions.

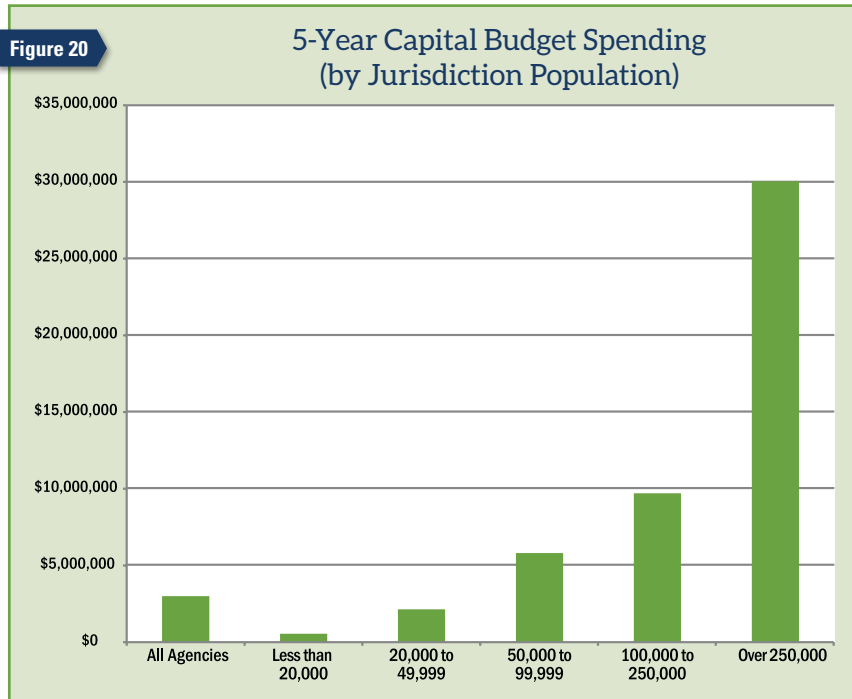
At the same time, agencies serving more population-dense jurisdictions tend to have higher percentages of cost recovery. Agencies serving an area with less than 500 people per square mile have a median percentage of cost recovery of 22.7 percent. Cost recovery rises to 31.5 percent of operating expenditures for agencies serving jurisdictions with more than 2,500 people per square mile.



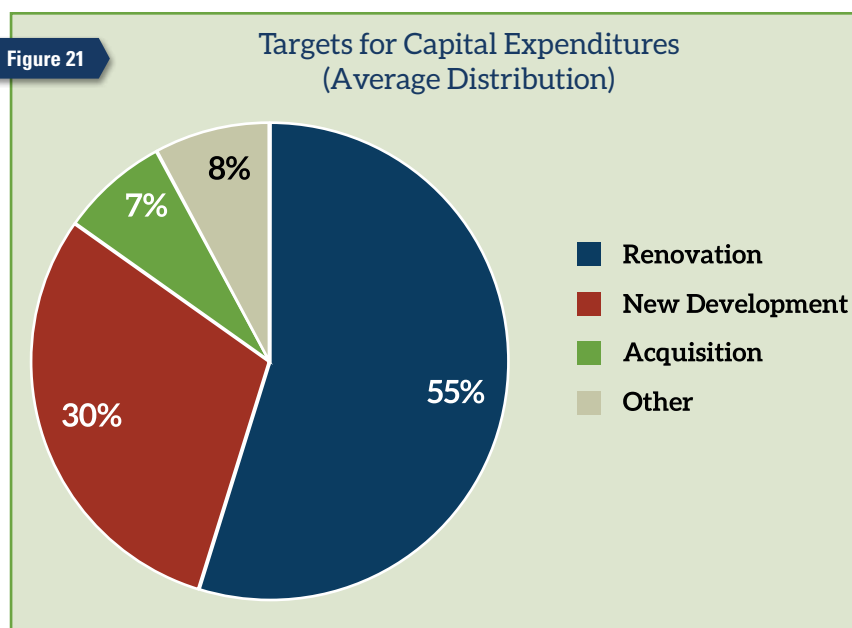
Beyond day-to-day operations, **park and recreation agencies have a median of \$2.981 million in capital expenditures budgeted over the next five years.** Not at all surprising is that the larger the agency, the larger the size of the five-year capital budget. The typical park and recreation agency serving a jurisdiction with less than 20,000 people has a median five-year capital budget of \$547,000. This five-year capital budget expands to \$5.8 million at agencies serving jurisdictions with 50,000 to 99,999 people and to \$30 million to agencies in areas with more than 250,000 residents.

Also, the following are positively related to the size of five-year capital budgets:

- The number of parks maintained – Less than 10 parks: \$859,059 versus 50 more parks: \$22.247 million
- Acreage of parks maintained – 250 or less acres: \$1 million versus more than 3,500 acres: \$36.759 million.
- Operating budgets – Annual operating budgets less than \$500,000: \$253,598 versus annual operating budgets greater than \$10 million: \$24.811 million.
- Population density – Less than 500 people per square mile: \$1.546 million versus more than 2,500 people per square mile: \$4.843 million.



So, where are park and recreation agencies designating these capital expenditures? **On average, just over half of the capital budget is designated for renovation while 30 percent is geared toward new development.** At larger park and recreation agencies, new development is the focus of a greater percentage of capital budgets. At agencies serving jurisdictions with more than 250,000 residents, 37 percent of capital budgets are for new development while 48 percent are for renovating current properties.



# Looking Forward: A Perfect Storm?

*Whereas most of the 2016 NRPA Field Report focuses on current performance benchmarks, a look at current challenges and future trends also should be a part of park and recreation professionals' future decision making. We asked William Beckner, President of CEHP, Inc., for his insights.*

In 1991, Baltimore Mayor Kurt Schmoke made the opening remarks at that year's NRPA Congress. At the time, America's cities were in the midst of the largest recorded violent crime epidemic in American history. Baltimore was experiencing a murder-rate that had the entire city on edge, unemployment was astronomical for minorities, and citizens were seeking answers. The same was true for many cities across the nation. Mayor Schmoke said that in all this turmoil it was the parks that made it possible to have conversations with the residents. The violent crimes epidemic eventually eased, beginning in 1995. But as we know, all is not well.

The challenges many of our cities now face represent opportunities for park and recreation departments to play a significant role in their community. But to be successful, they will require a steady hand and courage in the face of enormous waves in the forms of social equity, finance, global warming, safe play issues and community engagement.

## Social Equity/Environmental Justice

As parks are a very visible measure of equitable public service, the community park and recreation departments may be front and center in the public perception of inequitable treatment. Social Equity, one of the three NRPA Pillars, is beginning to merge with social and environmental justice that is part of a rising tide of sentiment for equal and just treatment.

What are the park and recreation department opportunities?

- Ensure that all residents have access to facilities and services that are of similar quality
- Listen to your customers' complaints about unfair treatment
- Use your park and recreation advisory or policy board as an early warning system of issues at hand
- Program speakers and events to address issues that seem important

## Capital and Operating Finance

The recently completed NRPA Study, "[Americans' Broad-Based Support for Local Recreation and Park Services](#)" clearly shows the significant public support from Americans for their parks. But, that study's results and NRPA's research findings that local parks create significant economic activity for their communities do not mean the funding for renovation, new development or operation and maintenance will suddenly be easy to obtain. Instead, park and recreation professionals and supporters need to focus their energies on promoting the value of parks to our communities.

## Infrastructure Priorities

In his 2016 State of the Union address, President Obama proposed one trillion dollars be spent by the federal government and matched by state and local governments to take on the decaying infrastructure that threatens our safety and our economy. But, where are the dollars coming from to sustain and improve our parks? Opportunities include:

- Getting to the table early; be in place when the deals are made
- Focusing on trails and corridor-type facilities
- Looking to multiple-use such as storm detention basins and rectangular fields
- Constructing in-ground water storage or flood drainage facilities that also provide spaces for athletic facilities
- Creating partnerships with foundations and other third-party groups
- Being flexible and creative

## Global Warming and Natural Disasters

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The need for infrastructure investment is also exacerbated by the early effects of global warming. Rising seas, higher incidence of catastrophic floods and natural disasters, including drought and fire, can be linked to rising sea temperatures. The increasing volatility of climatic conditions affects park and recreation departments in numerous ways, including:

- Financing infrastructure such as sea walls
- Rising maintenance costs for beaches and other lands subject to flooding
- Costs related to replacement of facilities destroyed in natural events
- Staff becoming the caregivers when park and recreation facilities are the only community resources left standing

## Operating Budgets

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The federal budget constraints have truncated the economic recovery of state and local governments in much of the country. In turn, many states responded to these tight budgets by pushing the costs of services to the cities and municipalities, making it even more challenging to properly finance park facilities and services. Park and recreation professionals who have the facts and the credibility with budget decision makers are the most likely to prosper. They must:

- Know what it costs to provide the services their agency offers, including for its facilities and programs
- Create a quarterly reporting system that demonstrates accountability in meeting their budget goals
- Define their core services that need to be subsidized
- Partner as appropriate with nonprofit or private sector providers to expand opportunities

## Safe Play

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Not all of the challenges are external to the park and recreation field. Going forward, the issue of safety is becoming a challenge for traditional team sports. Certainly, football is now in a precarious position with many studies beginning to show that cumulative hits are as impactful as a single violent hit. Some experts are suggesting prohibiting preteens from playing tackle football. Concussions are not isolated to just football as they also appear to be a problem in ice hockey, soccer and other sports. It is not solely a youth issue but can impact any sports programs run by your department. What are the opportunities for park and recreation agencies to encourage safe play?

- Do not make unilateral decisions
- Form committees to address the issues
- Identify knowledgeable resources to educate interested parties about the issues
- Consider alternatives that reduce the concussion potential, such as flag football for ages under 13

What are the implications of a switch to flag football? Your agency may see an increased interest in the sport of flag football with as much demand for fields as before. This scenario would cost less since expensive equipment would not be needed. Another future advantage is that flag football, like soccer, can be played at any age.

## Community Engagement

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The Internet is filled with stories about youth undertaking community projects. With each reported success, it seems more ideas are emerging. They usually start as volunteer projects and then sometimes morph into an entrepreneurial opportunity. This phenomenon is a result of the desire in many of Generation Z (Born after 2000) to make a difference in their community. There are numerous examples. One compelling example is the 10-year-old who began collecting restaurant cooking oils for use as heating fuels (<http://www.upworthy.com/her-dad-thought-her-clean-energy-idea-was-just-a-kids-project-he-was-wrong?c=upw1>). As of last year, she was able to accumulate enough supply to heat 400 homes of economically disadvantaged folks in the community. If the youth in your community have a strong inclination toward community service, you might consider investigating ways to facilitate their dreams and interests for the benefit of the community.

## Conclusion

As shown in the *2016 NRPA Field Report*, park and recreation agencies are as diverse as the towns, cities and counties that they serve. Agencies not only differ in size and service offerings, but also in what their core mission is when serving their communities. It is for that reason the data presented in this report are a valuable tool in the planning and operating of park and recreation agencies.

Beyond comparing one's agency to that of the "typical" agency, we challenge all park and recreation professionals to enter their agency's data in PRORAGIS so they can gain a more detailed analysis of their agency's performance against its peers through the United States. Linking the insights contained in this report and PRORAGIS with other NRPA reports and resources will arm all park and recreation professionals with the tools needed to tell their agency's story and to make the case for further investments in the future.



### How Can Your Agency's Data be Included in this Report?



#### 2016 NRPA Field Report

Park and Recreation Agency Performance Benchmarks



The NRPA Field Report is dependent on the data shared by hundreds of agencies every year. By sharing your agency's performance data, not only will you help NRPA create a more comprehensive Field Report, you will be able to access custom reports specific to the information you shared. With access to both of these resources, your agency will be able to gain more support, improve operations, and better serve your community.

NRPA's new streamlined Agency Performance Survey in PRORAGIS allows you to easily input information about your agency's performance, without requiring a lot of time or effort, and get back two extremely useful resources you can't find anywhere else.

**To compare your agency's performance today, visit [www.nrpa.org/PRORAGIS](http://www.nrpa.org/PRORAGIS)**

A more comprehensive set of cross tabulations of the data presented in this report is available as a set of interactive tables at [www.nrpa.org/2016-Field-Report](http://www.nrpa.org/2016-Field-Report)



The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) is a national not-for-profit organization dedicated to advancing park, recreation and conservation efforts that enhance quality of life for all people. Through its network of more than 50,000 recreation and park professionals and citizens, NRPA encourages the promotion of healthy and active lifestyles, conservation initiatives and equitable access to parks and public space.

NRPA brings strength to our message by partnering with like-minded organizations including those in the federal government, nonprofits and commercial enterprises. Funded through dues, grants, registrations and charitable contributions, NRPA produces research, education and policy initiatives for our members that ultimately enrich the communities they serve.

NRPA places great importance on research to understand and improve various aspects of the park and recreation field. Research is vital to ensure park and recreation professionals have the resources to make informed decisions. At NRPA, the development of current research via empirical studies and literature reviews for our members and the public is a key priority.

## The Value of Parks and Recreation

**Conservation**—Public parks are critical to preserving natural resources and wildlife habitats, which offer significant social and economic benefits. Local park and recreation agencies are leaders in protecting open space, connecting children to nature, and providing programs that engage communities in conservation.

**Health and Wellness**—Park and recreation departments lead the nation in improving the health and wellness of communities. From fitness programs, to well-maintained, accessible, walking paths and trails, to nutrition programs for underserved youth and adults, our work is at the forefront of providing solutions to these challenges.

**Social Equity**—We believe universal access to public parks and recreation is fundamental to all, not just a privilege for a few. Every day, our members work hard to ensure all people have access to quality parks and programs, and in turn, make our communities more livable and desirable.





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# Americans' Broad-Based Support for Local Recreation and Park Services:

Results From a Nationwide Study



National Recreation  
and Park Association



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# INTRODUCTION

Americans cherish their local public park and recreation services, seeing them as valuable features of their communities, towns and cities. A large majority of Americans use their local public parks, playgrounds and other open spaces with an even larger percentage saying they personally benefit from public parks. Furthermore, Americans almost unanimously agree that their communities benefit from local public parks, even if they themselves are not regular park users. This passion for local public parks has remained consistent over the past quarter century even as our nation and the ways we interact and entertain each other have dramatically evolved.

A reason for this fervent and unflinching support for local parks is the consistent delivery of services and programming focused on conservation, health and wellness and social equity. Americans agree local public parks are well worth the tax dollars used to operate and maintain these facilities, with many willing to increase these investments to build on the success public parks have had in their communities. Finally, the enthusiasm for local recreation and park offerings is practically universal, spanning across a wide range of demographic groups, including age, income, household formation and even political affiliation.

These are the key highlights from a nationwide study commissioned by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) on Americans' perceptions of local park and recreation services. These conclusions confirm that Americans do not see public parks as luxuries, but rather as critical infrastructure worthy of full and consistent investment. The findings further inform park and recreation professionals, policymakers and other stakeholders about the support for park and recreation investments to address the many challenges facing local communities.

NRPA has long known the importance of understanding the public's support of parks and the physical and social amenities they provide. Back in 1992, NRPA commissioned a study to better understand the benefits and value of local park and recreation services as perceived by the American public. That study, conducted by Pennsylvania State University, found that most Americans indicated they had personally benefited, as did their community as a whole, from their local recreation and park services (Godbey, Graefe, & James, 1992).

In the time since that study's release, much has changed in the United States. Today, America is older, better educated, more racially/ethnically diverse and more urbanized. Technology has also altered how we communicate, interact and entertain ourselves in ways unimaginable a quarter of a century ago.

To understand how these demographic and societal changes may have affected Americans' view of local public parks, NRPA engaged Dr. Andrew Mowen and his Penn State colleagues Drs. Geoffrey Godbey and Alan Graefe and Mr. Austin Barrett to update the 1992 study. Working in cooperation with NRPA researchers and Left Brain Concepts, Inc., these researchers surveyed more than 1,100 Americans asking many of the same questions/topics from the 1992 study, including:

- Americans' proximity (walking distance) to local parks, playgrounds and/or open space
- Americans' personal and household use of local parks and participation in recreation activities
- Americans' perceptions of park/program benefits for themselves, their family and for their community
- Americans' view of the key priorities for their local park and recreation agencies; namely, their support of NRPA's Three Pillars – conservation, health and wellness and social equity
- Americans' willingness to pay for local park and recreation services through tax dollars

As detailed in the pages that follow, the survey findings show Americans are as enthusiastic in their support for public parks as they were 25 years ago, and this passion resonates with the public across almost every demographic group throughout the United States.



# Support for local parks is widespread, spanning:



AGE GROUPS



HOUSEHOLD TYPES



INCOME STRATA



POLITICAL AFFILIATION



**7 IN 10 AMERICANS**

*GO TO THEIR LOCAL PARK*

**83%**  
of Americans  
**personally benefit**  
from local parks

**92% of Americans**



say their  
**communities benefit**  
from local parks

**4 in 5**  
agree that local  
parks are  
**worth the tax dollars**  
spent on them

Americans see NRPA's 3 Pillars as the  
**chief priorities for local parks**



CONSERVATION



HEALTH & WELLNESS



SOCIAL EQUITY

# KEY FINDINGS

## Use, Value and Benefits of Local Parks

### *A majority of Americans live within walking distance of a park.*

A major factor for why Americans go to their local park on a regular basis is proximity. Two-thirds of survey respondents say there is a park, playground or some other type of open space within walking distance of their home. Note that the survey did not specifically define what constitutes a “walking distance,” but instead allows the survey respondent to decide what is meant by being “nearby.” This is important as it is the perception of what is near that determines whether or not a local park is used frequently.

Roughly three-quarters of Americans who say they live in large, medium-sized or small cities/towns say they live within walking distance of a park. Those who say they live in a rural area have less access — slightly more than half of these survey respondents indicate they live near a local park.

### *A large majority of Americans use their local parks.*

Local park and recreation systems are an integral part of most Americans’ lives. Seven in ten survey respondents indicate that they go to their local park areas, including athletic fields, playgrounds and other open spaces in the community. Slightly more than a quarter of respondents use local parks “frequently” (26 percent) while another 44 percent do so “occasionally.” This level of use is essentially unchanged from that reported in 1992. In the previous study, three-quarters of respondents reported using their local park and recreation areas for any purpose, including 24 percent saying they used parks frequently.

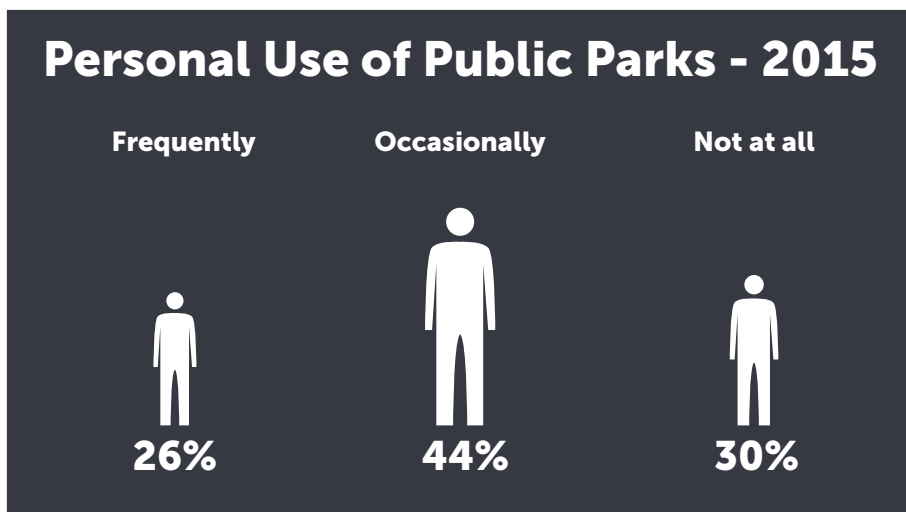
Park usage is broad based, with strong majorities of most demographic groups indicating that they visit their local parks.

Who is more likely to go to their local park? Those who are:

- Younger: 79 percent of survey respondents who are between the ages of 21 and 35 versus 57 percent of respondents between the ages of 65 and 75
- Wealthier: 80 percent of respondents earning more than \$80,000 per year versus 66 percent of respondents that earn less than \$40,000 per year
- Live in larger households: 87 percent of respondents living in homes with five or more people versus 60 percent of respondents who live by themselves

Not only do respondents visit their local parks, they also report that local parks, playgrounds and other open spaces play an important role in the lives of other members in their household. For example, 76 percent indicate that other members of their household — a spouse, children, relatives and other housemates — use local park areas. Twenty-nine percent of the respondents say that other members of the household “frequently” use parks, and 47 percent of other household members “occasionally” use parks. These results are consistent with household use of parks in 1992.

**7 in 10 Americans go to their local park.**

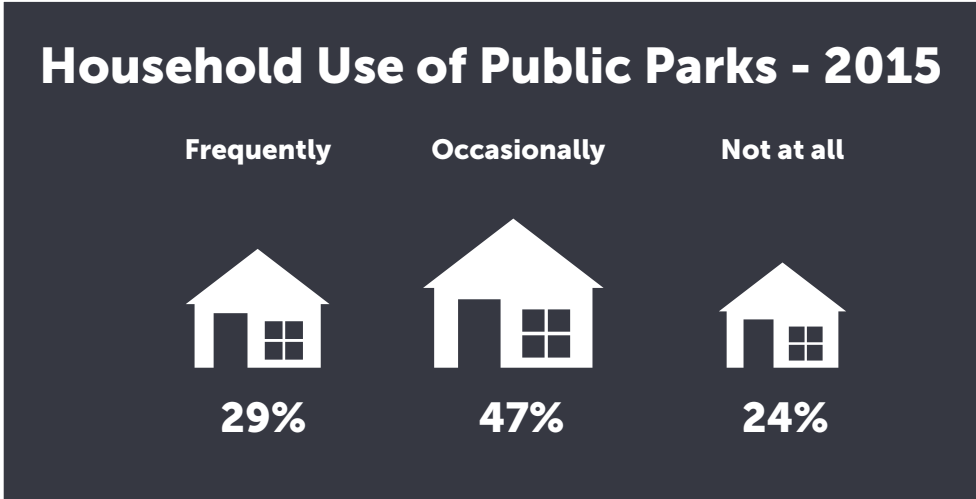




*Americans' perceptions of the benefits from local parks have increased significantly during the past quarter century.*

The positive outcomes or benefits derived from parks is a frequent message of the profession and was a key finding of the 1992 survey. Today, Americans see themselves benefiting from their local park areas, regardless of whether they themselves actually take advantage of the offerings available at their local park and recreation system. Even more remarkable, however,

is that people place a greater value on their local parks today than they did a quarter century ago.



**76% of respondents say household members use local park areas.**

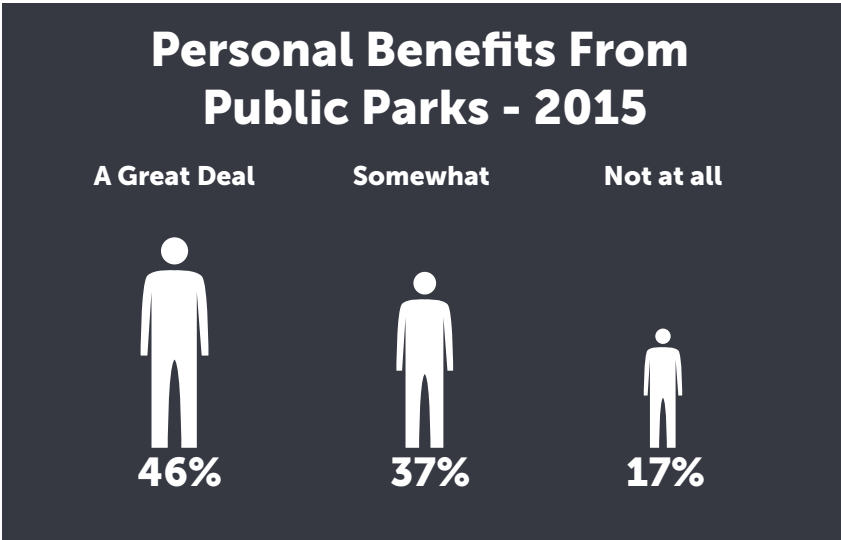
Five in six survey respondents indicate they personally benefit from their local park areas (83 percent). Almost half of people report that

they personally benefit “a great deal” from local park areas (46 percent) while another 37 percent report “somewhat” gaining personal benefits from local parks.

The personal benefits arising from local parks are greater today than they were in the 1992 study. While the percentage of Americans indicating that they personally benefit from public parks is virtually unchanged from that reported a quarter century ago, survey respondents are more likely today to report that they benefited “a great deal” from local parks than they did in 1992. In the 1992 survey, 84 percent of survey respondents reported gaining benefits from their local parks, but only 37 percent of people felt they personally benefited a “great deal” from their local park areas. Whereas in 2015, 46 percent felt they benefited a “great deal.”

As we saw with park usage, the likelihood of someone gleaning benefits from their local park spans across most demographic groups (with strong majorities of members of most demographic cohorts indicating so). Nevertheless, the survey respondent is more likely to indicate “a great deal” of benefits from local parks when s/he:

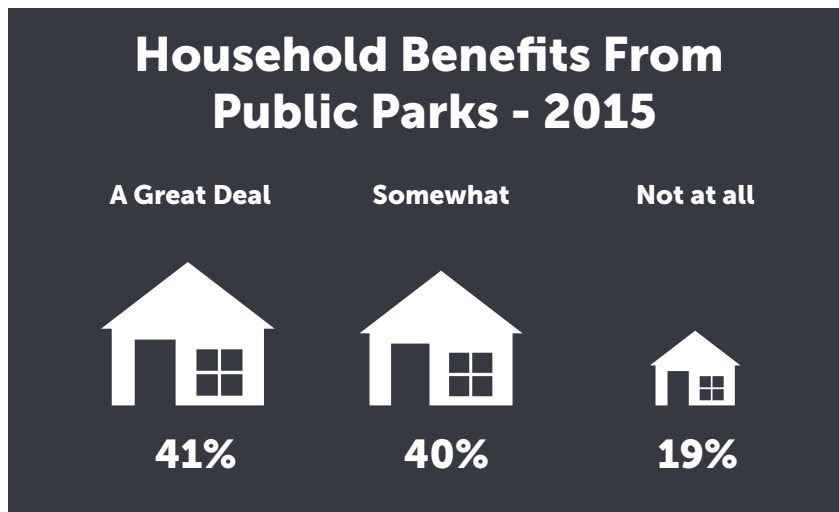
- Is younger: 52 percent of survey respondents between the age of 21 and 35 say they benefit “a great deal” from their local park areas versus 37 percent of respondents between the age of 66 and 75 who indicate the same.
- Earns a higher income: 56 percent of survey respondents earning more than \$80,000 per year report benefiting “a great deal” from their local parks versus 41 percent of respondents that earn \$40,000 or less annually who indicate the same.
- Lives outside of a rural area: Roughly half of survey respondents living in a city or town of any size derive “a great deal” of benefits from their local parks versus 36 percent who live in a rural area.



The benefits of local parks also resonate with other members of the survey respondents' households. Eighty-one percent of survey respondents say members of their households benefit from local park areas, essentially unchanged from the 79 percent of survey respondents who indicated the same in 1992. Almost equal percentages of survey respondents in 2015 say their households benefited "a great deal" (41 percent) or "somewhat" (40 percent) from their local park areas. This is an improvement from the 1992 study where only 31 percent of survey respondents indicated that other members of their household had benefited "a great deal" from their local park system.

*Americans agree their communities benefit greatly from local parks.*

The passionate support for local parks goes well beyond the survey respondents, their families and friends. A vast majority of Americans also agree that their community as a whole benefits from its local parks, with most seeing a large benefit to the area where they reside. In fact, Americans are more likely to perceive a higher level of community benefit than personal benefit from local park areas.

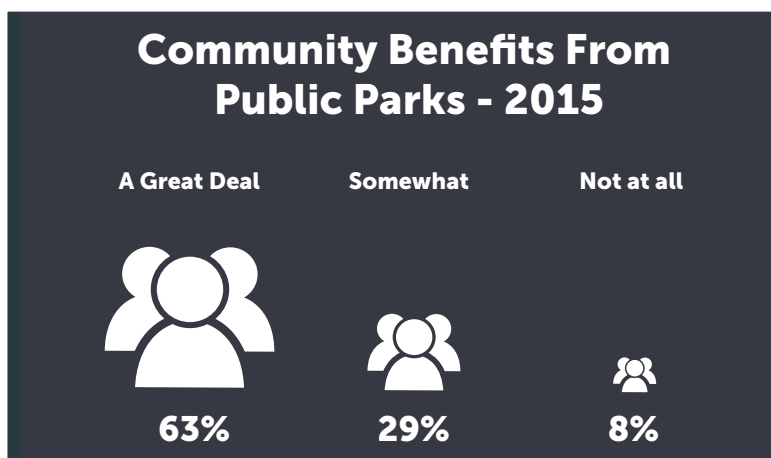


Ninety-two percent of respondents say that their community benefits from local park areas. Even more impressive is that 63 percent of respondents indicate their local park areas provided "a great deal" of benefit to the village, town or city in which they reside. This is not a new phenomenon. Americans attributing great community benefits from their local parks is essentially unchanged from how they felt a quarter century earlier. Ninety-four percent of participants in the 1992 study said their communities benefited from their local parks, of which 61 percent said their local community benefits "a great deal."

*Americans say they personally benefit from having parks in their community, even if they themselves do not visit them.*

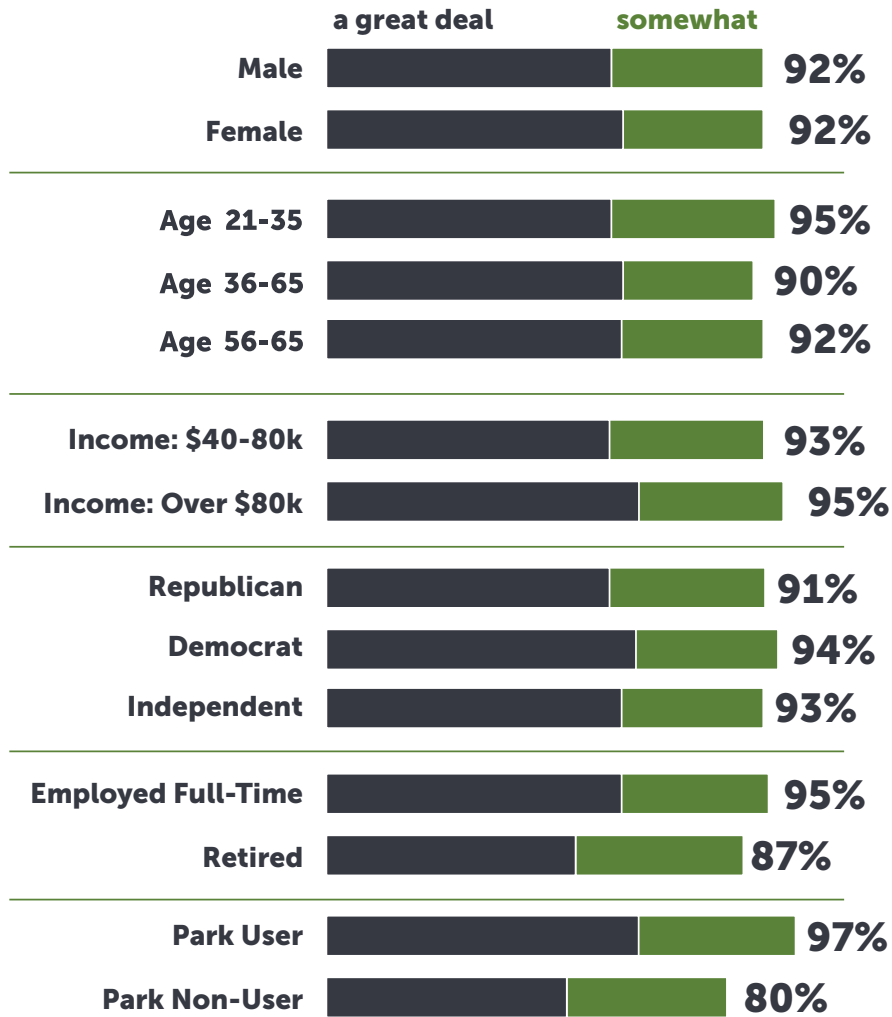
It is not surprising that 97 percent of respondents who use their local parks report that they benefit from those areas. What is remarkable is that people who do not use local park areas nevertheless see local parks providing a high level of personal, household and community benefits. For example, 56 percent of non-park-users believe that local park areas provide a personal benefit to them. Fifty-three percent of non-users perceive local parks provide a benefit to other members of their household.

Even more striking is that 80 percent of non-park-users say that local park areas provide benefits to their community, with 48 percent indicating local park areas provide "a great deal" of benefit. These findings show that respondents do not have to directly use local park areas to believe that they, other members of their household, and especially the community at large benefit from having local parks in their area.



**80 percent of non-park-users say that local park areas provide benefits to their community.**

## Public Perception of Community Benefits of Parks



Beyond the local park user/non-user distinction, it is noteworthy that overwhelming majorities of Americans see their local park areas benefiting their communities regardless of their age, gender, level of education, income, marital status, political affiliation, household formation and employment status. The figure above illustrates this strong belief across a variety of demographic variables.

*A majority of Americans have participated in organized recreation activities and services (e.g., programs) at some point in their lives.*

Americans also value the organized activities provided by local recreation and park services. Thirty-two percent of respondents say they had used local recreation and park services during the previous year. Of those who had not participated in the past 12 months, 41 percent report that they participated in these services at some time in the past. When these two groups were combined, almost 60 percent of the respondents indicate that they used local recreation and park services at least once in their lives.

*People say they personally benefit from organized recreation activities even if they do not participate in these activities.*

Among those who did not use local recreation and park services during the past 12 months, 60 percent of respondents say that they received a personal benefit simply from the fact that their community had such services. Written another way, a person does not have to personally participate in local recreation services to believe that they received benefits from those activities, programs and services.

*Americans profit from their local parks and organized recreation programs, with exercise/physical activity/fitness being the most frequently mentioned benefit.*

So, how do Americans describe the specific benefits they receive from their local parks and organized recreation programs? According to the open-ended responses received in the 1992 and 2015 surveys, these benefits can take many different forms, including:

- Personal benefits – exercise, health, relaxation, fun/entertainment, enjoying being outdoors
- Environmental benefits – nature, aesthetics, fresh air, open space, wildlife
- Social benefits – sense of community, family-time togetherness, a safe place to take children, a place to meet people
- Economic benefits – availability, bringing business activity to community, influence on property values
- Facility/activity oriented benefits – recreation, sports, place to play, place to exercise pets

Exercise is frequently mentioned as the most important personal, household and community benefit derived from local parks. It was also identified as the most important personal and household benefit of organized recreation activities (i.e., programs).

These things were true in the 1992 study, and they remain true today. The specific type of benefit that Americans ascribed to recreation and parks is physical activity and health. These perceptions support the notion that parks are an important component of our nation’s health system.



**Americans see local park and recreation services as an important part of healthy living.**

# THE PRIORITIES OF LOCAL PARKS: NRPA'S THREE PILLARS

*Americans agree that conservation, health and wellness and social equity are important priorities for local recreation and park services.*

The evolving U.S. population, with new needs and desires, has presented a number of challenges for the nation that also impact local recreation and park services. These challenges span from a sedentary lifestyle that leads to obesity and other health problems to environmental and economic sustainability. Park and recreation agencies are a critical part of the solution because they provide their communities and their residents with a number of essential services and benefits.

NRPA summarizes the key priorities for local park and recreation agencies into its Three Pillars:

- **Conservation**

Parks are critical in the role of preserving natural resources for communities. Local parks are the leaders, and often the only voice in communities, for protecting open space, connecting children to nature, and providing education and programming that helps communities engage in conservation practices.

- **Health and Wellness**

Local parks lead the nation in improving the overall health and wellness of communities. They are essential partners in preventing and combating some of the most complicated and expensive challenges our country faces — poor nutrition, hunger, obesity, chronic disease and physical inactivity.

- **Social Equity**

Universal access to public parks and recreation is a right, not just a privilege. Local park and recreation agencies work hard to ensure that all members of their communities have access to their resources and programming.

But it is not just NRPA and its more than 50,000 members who agree the NRPA Pillars represent the critical role local and regional parks play in their communities. The NRPA Pillars also are the priorities on which Americans want their local parks to focus their resources.

Americans are almost in full agreement that the top priorities for their local and regional parks are associated with conservation, health and wellness and social equity. At least three-quarters of respondents (and, in some cases, upwards of six in seven) state that the following priorities should be “important” or “extremely important” for their local park and recreation agency:



**Americans agree that the top priorities for their local parks are tied to Conservation, Health & Wellness and Social Equity.**

# THE ECONOMIC VALUE OF PARKS

*Americans agree that local park and recreation services are worth the average amount of tax revenues invested in them...if not more.*

In the current fiscal and political environment, local, state and federal governments face the challenge of meeting their broad mandates with constrained budgets. Local park and recreation agencies, too, have to do more with fewer resources, even though park agency spending leads to substantial economic activity in their communities and throughout the United States. The NRPA study *The Economic Impact of Local Parks* found America's local and regional public park agencies generated almost \$140 billion in economic activity and supported almost 1 million jobs from their operations and capital spending alone in 2013.

Local and regional park agencies are able to serve their constituencies — and generate significant economic activity — at a relatively modest cost to the taxpayers. According to data collected in NRPA's benchmarking tool PRORAGIS, Americans currently pay an average of \$70 per person per year in local taxes to support park and recreation activities.

Four in five Americans agree that the services offered by their local park and recreation agencies are worth the average amount of \$70 per person spent each year. Support for local parks and recreation through taxes increases with age (at least through the working years), education level, income and (not surprisingly) whether the person has ever participated in a park and recreation activity. Interestingly, tax support for local park and recreation funding was unassociated with political affiliation and sex/gender. Furthermore, two-thirds of people who never visited parks or participated in organized programs agree that these services are worth the \$70 per person collected in local taxes each year.

More so, two in five Americans are willing to pay even more than the 2015 U.S. average of \$70 per person in local taxes to support their local and regional park systems. The support for increased funding of local parks is greater with males, those who are middle-aged, those with higher incomes, those who are Democrats and (not surprising again) those who have participated in local recreation services.

## Agreement That Park and Recreation Services Are Worth \$70, per Household Member, per Year

Male **78%**

Female **79%**

Age 21-35 **77%**

Age 36-65 **82%**

Age 56-65 **84%**

Income: \$40-80k **82%**

Income: Over \$80k **86%**

Republican **78%**

Democrat **80%**

Independent **80%**

Program User **87%**

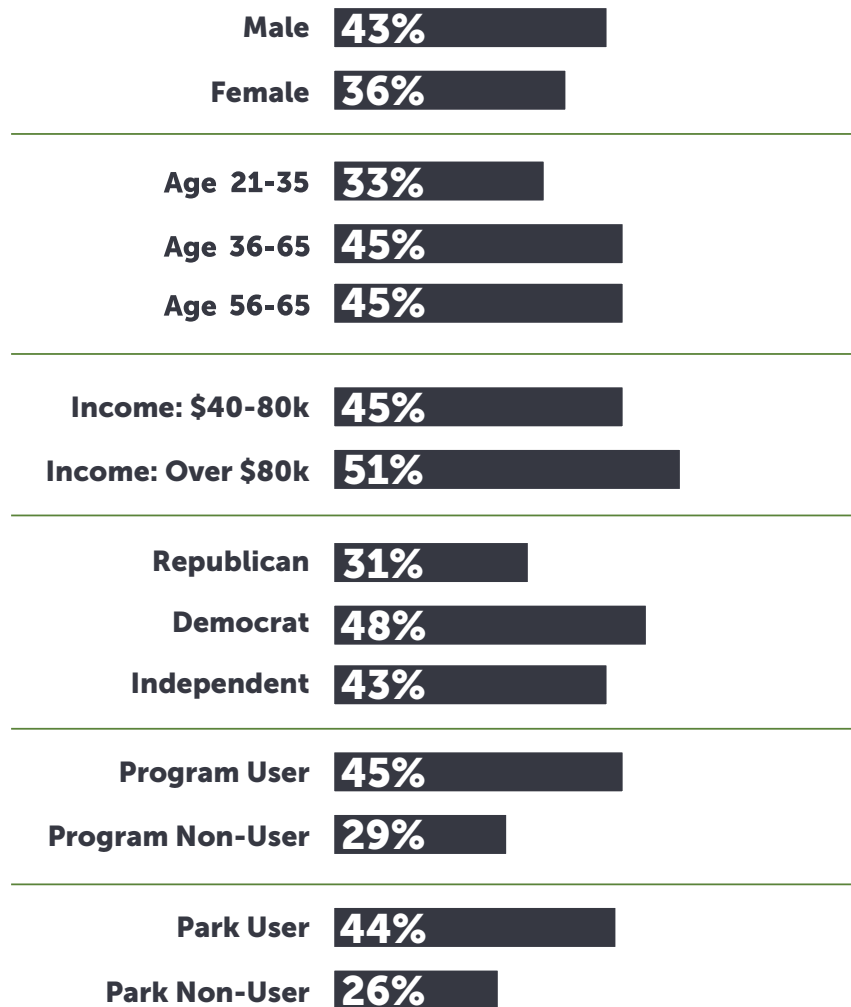
Program Non-User **67%**

Park User **84%**

Park Non-User **67%**

**4 in 5 Americans say their local parks are well worth the average annual spending of \$70 per person.**

## Percentage of People Willing to Pay More Than \$70/Person Annual to Support Local and Regional Parks



So, who are these people who feel parks are worth more than the national average taxation bill of \$70 per person? Of Americans who support increased taxation to support their local park and recreation agency

- 73 percent live near a park.
- 83 percent use parks, including 37 percent who do so on a frequent basis.
- 92 percent report a personal benefit from local parks.
- 92 percent report someone else in their household benefits from local parks.
- 97 percent believe their communities benefit from local parks.
- 55 percent have participated in a recreation activity at a local park at least once.

**Even non-park users see tax spending on local parks as a good investment.**

# CONCLUSIONS AND LOOKING FORWARD

Much as they had a quarter of a century ago, a majority of Americans use local park and recreation services and believe that they are a great benefit to their communities. The support is strong among virtually every segment of our society, regardless of age, income, household formation and even political affiliation. Further, Americans are united in seeing their local parks as leaders in conservation, health and wellness, and social equity.

The fact that support for local parks is as strong today as it was 25 years ago is most telling. In the time since this study was last conducted, much has changed in our society. For example, America has become an older, better educated, more racially/ethnically diverse and a more urbanized nation. Social interaction and entertainment options have also grown exponentially during this time period, with the advent and widespread adoption of the Internet, social media, 500-channel cable TV and on-demand media. These developments have broadened the definition of recreation beyond what could have been imagined a quarter of a century ago.

So why have Americans remained passionate about local parks even with the demographic shifts, technological advancements, economic pressures, new forms of recreation and the changing face of leisure? Local parks remain at the core of what defines a healthy, prosperous and connected community, and nothing related to technological advances and demographic shifts has altered that view.

If anything, the demographic, societal and technological changes have heightened the need for the many benefits of parks; namely, being an important contributor to health and wellness, being a communal place where people

of all ages and social strata can interact with each other, and being a place that protects and preserves high-priority conservation areas. Finally, unlike virtually every other form of recreation, access to local parks is ubiquitous and not subject to high entrance fees or other qualifications.

The implications of these findings are clear. Despite the tight fiscal environment, Americans agree that local, state and national leaders need to dedicate financial resources to support, sustain and expand local park and recreation agencies. As indicated by their strong support, Americans do not view their local park and recreation system as a luxury, but instead as a vital part of what makes their neighborhood a vibrant, dynamic community.

Americans' strong support for local parks is magnified further when considering the fact that local and regional public parks contribute significant economic activity to their communities. As demonstrated in the recently released NRPA report, *The Economic Impact of Local Parks*, local and regional park agency spending generated almost \$140 billion in economic activity and almost 1 million jobs in 2013. Investment in public parks aids in the progress for greater conservation, health and wellness, and social equity while also bringing economic prosperity to towns, cities and regions throughout the United States.





## About the Study

This report is a follow up to the landmark study *The Benefits of Local Recreation and Park Services: A Nationwide Study of the Perceptions of the American Public*, by Geoffrey Godbey, Alan Graefe and Stephen James. That study was published by NRPA in 1992 using survey data that had been collected in 1991.

In 2015, NRPA commissioned Andrew Mowen, Alan Graefe, Austin Barrett and Geoffrey Godbey to follow up on the 1992 study. Using a 24-question survey instrument that closely followed the questions, wording and order of the 1992 survey, the 2015 study is based on responses from 1,144 randomly selected U.S. adults. The data collected from the telephone study was weighted to reflect the average age distribution of the U.S. adult population. The results presented in this report are subject to a margin of error of +/- 3 percent.

This report is a summary of key highlights from the full study report titled, *Americans' Use and Perceptions of Local Recreation and Park Services: A Nationwide Reassessment*. Please review the full report for greater detail on the study findings and survey methodology, along with a profile of the survey respondents. Find the full study report and interactive tools at [www.NRPA.org/americans-support-parks](http://www.NRPA.org/americans-support-parks).

Recommended Citation – Mowen, A. J., Graefe, A. R., Barrett, A. G., Roth, K., & Godbey, G. C. (2016). *Americans' Broad-Based Support for Local Recreation and Park Services: Results From a Nationwide Study*. Ashburn, VA: National Recreation and Park Association.

The authors would like to acknowledge the importance of several individuals who made valuable contributions to this study: William Beckner, Jeff Haugen and Travis Smith.



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