CITY PARKS ARE A SMART INVESTMENT FOR AMERICA’S HEALTH, ECONOMY, & ENVIRONMENT
City parks play a vital role in the social, economic, and physical well-being of America’s cities and their residents. As cities become more densely populated and the impacts of climate change increase, planners, elected officials, and community advocates are using parks to help address critical urban infrastructure and public health issues. City parks provide access to recreational opportunities, increase property values, spur local economies, combat crime, and protect cities from environmental impacts. Parks are now recognized as powerful tools for urban communities and local economies.

Visit cityparksalliance.org to download infographic.
City Parks Improve Health and Reduce Costs

**PHYSICAL BENEFITS**

Over **HALF** of US adults have chronic health conditions, such as heart disease, diabetes, and obesity.

About **1 in 3** children in the U.S. is either obese or overweight.

People with access to safe **PARKS** and trails **EXERCISE MORE** and have lower rates of obesity, heart disease, and diabetes.

**MENTAL BENEFITS**

40% of Americans suffer from anxiety or depression.

People who live near parks and green spaces are **44% LESS LIKELY** to have a diagnosed anxiety disorder.

**20 MINUTES** in a park improved the concentration of children with attention deficits to a level comparable to those without attention deficits.

**COMMUNITY BENEFITS**

Greening of vacant urban land has been shown to decrease crime.

**COST SAVINGS**

The high costs of chronic diseases each year in the U.S. include:

- **OBESITY** $260 BILLION
- **DIABETES** $237 BILLION
- **HEART DISEASE** $216 BILLION

PARKS HELP TO REDUCE THE COSTS OF HEALTHCARE.

Maintaining a healthy weight **SAVES $1,861 per person per year in healthcare costs.**
PARKS KEEP CITIES COOLER

Extreme heat is the #1 WEATHER-RELATED KILLER in the U.S. and deadlier than all other weather-related causes combined.16

PARKS CLEAN THE AIR

Tree cover reduces asthma rates. Children in leafy neighborhoods are
3 TIMES LESS LIKELY to have asthma than children who live in neighborhoods with few trees.19

Urban trees in the U.S. remove 711,000 TONS OF AIR POLLUTION annually, at a value of $3.8 BILLION, saving money and improving health.20

PARKS CLEAN THE WATER

Stormwater and flooding threaten human lives and health by washing sewage, chemicals, and other contaminants into waterways and drinking water sources.21

Parks and green infrastructure slow stormwater and allow it to be absorbed into the soil, CLEANING the water as it infiltrates and reducing the risk of flooding.22

PARKS MAKE CITIES MORE RESILIENT

Extreme weather from climate change, such as heat waves, floods, and wildfires, in 2020 cost U.S. taxpayers $99 BILLION.23

The estimated value of stormwater management by urban parks in the 100 largest cities is $989 MILLION per year.24

Trees reduce heat 6–10 degrees,17 and large, shady PARKS REDUCE HEAT DEGREES.18
City Parks Provide Economic Benefits

PARKS ATTRACT RESIDENTS AND BUSINESSES

Nashville’s investment in downtown parks has contributed to a **50% increase** in the number of 25- to 34-year-olds with college degrees **moving to the city** over the last decade.\(^{25}\)

Since 2000 the number of **young adults** moving to livable, walkable urban neighborhoods has increased **37%**.\(^{26}\)

More than **80%** of corporate executives rated **quality of life** features as an important factor when choosing headquarters or facility locations.\(^{27}\)

PARKS INCREASE PROPERTY VALUES AND PROPERTY TAX REVENUE

Houses near parks or trails have **8–10 percent higher property values** than those in the surrounding community, resulting in **increased property tax revenue** for cities.\(^{28}\)

**+50%**

PARKS CREATE JOBS

In one year, local parks supported more than **1.1 MILLION JOBS**.\(^{29}\)

PARKS GENERATE ECONOMIC ACTIVITY

In one year, local parks generated **$166 BILLION IN ECONOMIC ACTIVITY**.\(^{30}\)

PARKS LOWER INFRASTRUCTURE COSTS FOR CITIES

Investing in parks and green infrastructure to manage stormwater is **15 – 80 percent less costly** than investing in grey infrastructure, such as pipes and tunnels.\(^{31,32}\)

Green infrastructure at Historic Fourth Ward Park **saved the City of Atlanta** **$16 MILLION** by managing stormwater and preventing flooding.\(^{33}\)

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