
Because Everyone Deserves
A GREAT PARK



NRPA National Recreation
and Park Association

2017 Annual Report



The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) is the leading nonprofit dedicated to the advancement of public parks. Our work draws national focus to the far-reaching impact of successes generated at the local level. NRPA’s membership of park and recreation professionals and advocates are 60,000 strong and represent public spaces in urban communities, rural settings and everything in between. NRPA and its members improve communities through the Pillars of Conservation, Health and Wellness, and Social Equity – working to create a world where everyone has access to the many benefits of parks and recreation.

Table of Contents

- Message from the President and CEO.....1
- Enhancing Communities.....2
 - Green Stormwater Infrastructure.....5
 - Safe and Equitable Park Access.....6
 - Parks Build Community.....8
 - Healthy Aging in Parks.....11
- Raising Our Voice.....12
 - Leveling the Legislative Playing Field.....15
 - Park and Recreation Month.....16
 - The National Voice.....19
- Empowering Park Leaders.....20
 - Engaging Thought Leaders.....23
 - Validation Through Research.....24
- Looking Ahead.....26
- Our Partners.....28
- How You Can Help.....29
- Financial Health.....30
- Board of Directors.....31



A Message from the President and CEO

Entitlement. It's not a word typically associated with positive meaning – youth feeling entitled to the latest electronics, adults entitled to live beyond their means, co-workers feeling entitled to a raise or promotion.

But, I want to flip the script. There are things in this world we should be entitled to – like clean water, safe places to live, freedom from oppression and parks. Yes, parks.

Because everyone deserves a great park.

At NRPA, we know parks build communities. Not just through the innumerable research studies that say so, but from the work we do each and every day. Over the past year, I have seen first-hand the impact a park can have on the lives of people from all walks of life – the benefits are many and great.

Parks don't just make our communities stronger, they make our lives better. Local parks and recreation contribute to improved physical and mental health, economic vitality, community safety and so much more. This is the message we tout each and every day through our award-winning communications, federal advocacy work, special events and more.

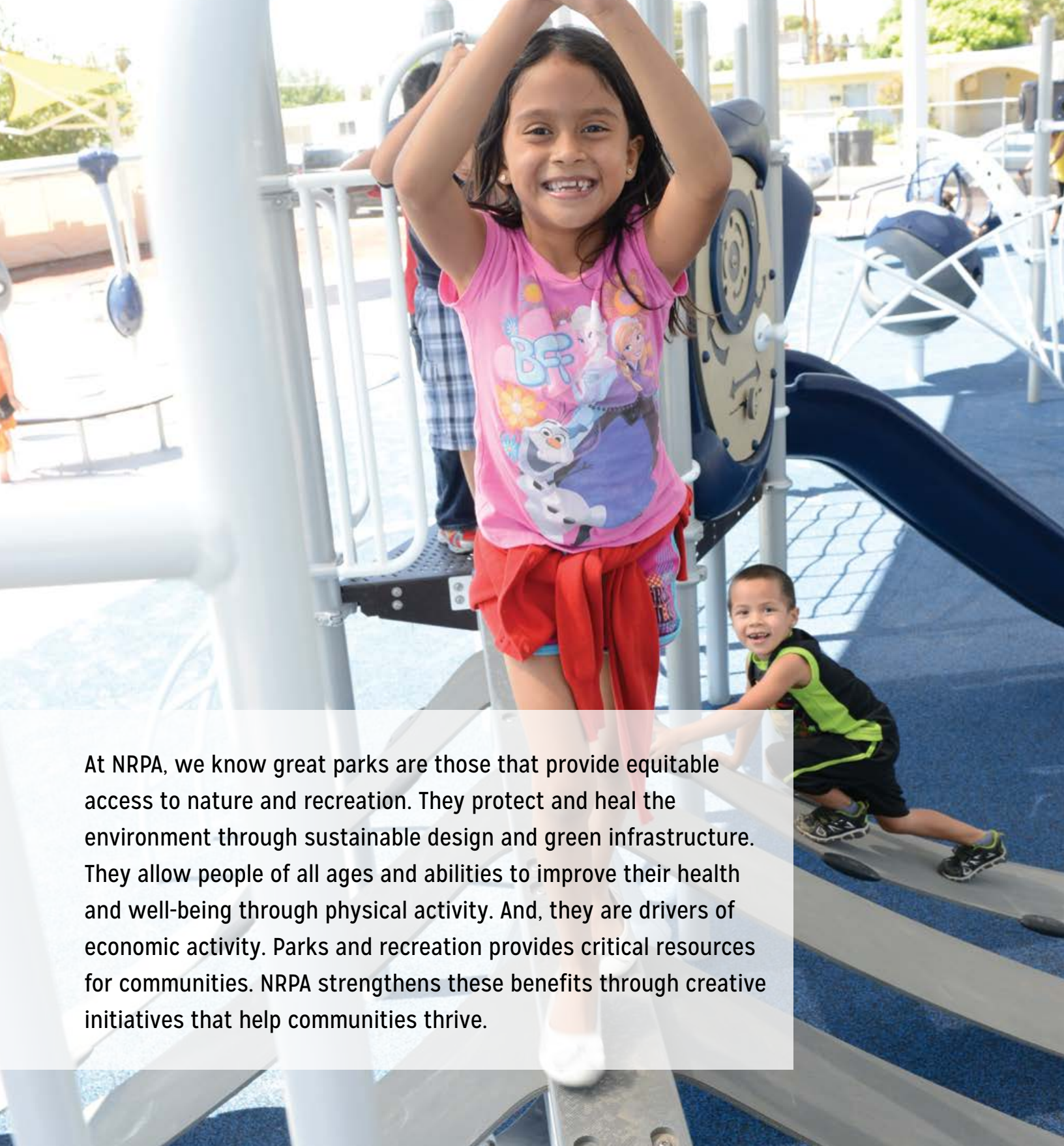
You're entitled to close-to-home, quality parks and recreation. And we're here to make sure you get it.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Barbara Tulipane". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Barbara Tulipane, CAE
President and Chief Executive Officer

ENHANCING COMMUNITIES



At NRPA, we know great parks are those that provide equitable access to nature and recreation. They protect and heal the environment through sustainable design and green infrastructure. They allow people of all ages and abilities to improve their health and well-being through physical activity. And, they are drivers of economic activity. Parks and recreation provides critical resources for communities. NRPA strengthens these benefits through creative initiatives that help communities thrive.

OUR IMPACT

1.4 MILLION PEOPLE
benefited from NRPA programs

929
COMMUNITIES
BENEFITED

\$5 MILLION
GRANT DOLLARS
AWARDED

17 MILLION
HEALTHY MEALS AND SNACKS
SERVED TO CHILDREN

462 THOUSAND
PEOPLE WITH INCREASED
ACCESS TO PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

59 THOUSAND
PEOPLE CONNECTED
TO NATURE

12 MILLION
GALLONS OF STORMWATER
DIVERTED

Historic 4th Ward Park in Atlanta, Georgia is a park that also serves as a stormwater retention system. Built in an area that has spurred much economic development, this park has become a model for others around the city and country.



Green Stormwater Infrastructure

Managing stormwater is a major challenge for cities across the country. As our cities' infrastructure ages, increasingly frequent extreme weather events overwhelm our sewer systems causing flooding, particularly in disadvantaged neighborhoods. These problems negatively impact our health, local economies and the environment, particularly in underserved communities. Green stormwater infrastructure can address these challenges by utilizing natural processes that protect and restore healthy waterways, reduce flooding and increase community resilience.

NRPA, through the Great Urban Parks Campaign, promotes and advances green stormwater infrastructure management projects within parks that improve environmental and social outcomes. Currently, NRPA is working in partnership with parks departments and community organizations in Baltimore, Atlanta, Pittsburgh and Denver to support large-scale green stormwater infrastructure demonstration projects that collectively divert, filter and clean over 11.5 million gallons of stormwater annually. The Great Urban Parks Campaign additionally focuses on creating evidence-based educational resources for park and recreation leaders and planners nationwide to ensure that green stormwater infrastructure is a practice readily adopted into park planning across the country.

Green Infrastructure in parks is a game changer for urban communities – especially those that are dealing with issues surrounding climate resiliency. It's an innovative approach that complements existing gray infrastructure while providing functional and beautiful park space for people.

- Na'Taki Osborne Jelks Ph.D,
Board Chair of West Atlanta
Watershed Alliance



Evans Parkway Park in Montgomery County, Maryland was retrofit with green infrastructure stormwater management techniques.

Safe and Equitable Park Access

More than 50 percent of our country's children living in cities do not have quality parks or green spaces within a half mile of their home. These children play in streets, alleys, vacant lots or they simply stay inside, eyes glued to a screen – a national crisis of inactivity that has contributed to epidemic levels of obesity, diabetes and depression. Yet, communities most in need may not have the resources to provide safe and universal park access.

NRPA, in partnership with Safe Routes to School National Partnership, addressed this growing need by creating the Safe Routes to Parks campaign which helps local park and recreation agencies implement

environmental and policy strategies that create safe and equitable access to parks for all people. The resources NRPA offers are solutions that help agencies assess, plan, implement and evaluate strategies to improve park access by engaging a cross sector of partners and the community at each step.

A major driver to people using our parks is not just the amenities in park spaces, but the ability of our citizens to walk to their neighborhood park from their home or business. If a citizen lives two blocks away from a park, but doesn't have a sidewalk to get there, that's a challenge.

– Douglas R. Kupper,
Director, Oklahoma City
Parks and Recreation



Parks Build Community

2016 marked the seventh year of one of NRPA's signature initiatives, Parks Build Community. Each year-long project, produced by NRPA, teams together corporate donors, nonprofit entities and municipal leaders in revitalizing parks and play spaces or building new parks from scratch in the host city of the NRPA Annual Conference. NRPA works to select project sites in neighborhoods that lack parks and green spaces or whose once well-loved parks have fallen into disrepair.

NRPA teamed up with Great Rivers Greenway in 2016 to create Trojan Park for the community of Wellston, Missouri. Once a vibrant shopping and manufacturing district, Wellston fell on hard times as businesses either moved out or closed their doors. Prior to the build-out of Trojan Park, the town of Wellston lacked a place for children to play and a central area for community events. The creation of the park not only filled a void for this community that had seen its share of loss, but also provided much-needed recreation facilities along Missouri's St. Vincent Greenway.

We have so much pride, dedication and commitment to our community. This park will change the culture of our city.

- Nate Griffin, Mayor of Wellston, Missouri



The community of Wellston celebrates the dedication of the 2016 Park Build Community project Trojan Park in Wellston, Missouri.



Healthy Aging in Parks

Evidence shows physical activity reduces the risk of falling, delays the effects of activity limitations, prevents worsening of arthritic pain and improves physical function by 40 percent. Despite this evidence, however, one in three older adults are still inactive.

Local parks and recreation are ideal places to offer health and wellness opportunities that help older Americans improve their quality of life and remain vital contributors to their communities. NRPA works to ensure all park and recreation professionals are equipped to serve this rapidly expanding demographic.

For the past year, NRPA has provided technical assistance and professional development that allowed park and recreation agencies to implement evidence-based physical activity programs for older adults with chronic conditions, such as arthritis and diabetes. Partnerships with healthcare systems and organizations, such as Walk with a Doc, have also been established so that parks and recreation is further embedded into the coordination of health and wellness services in their communities.

One of our participants has noticed a significant decrease in her aches and pain, has been able to walk two miles around our track, enjoy gardening, and has even lost a little weight.

- Va'Tenia Brown Fullilove
Tunica Parks and Recreation,
Tunica, Mississippi



Community members participating in Prime Time Seniors, the senior program at Maddox Park Pool in Atlanta, Georgia.



A woman competes in a pickleball tournament held at Wilson Memorial High School in Augusta County, Virginia.

RAISING OUR VOICE

NRPA serves as the national voice for park and recreation agencies across the country. This year, NRPA was able to tell our story and share the impact of local parks with more communities, public officials and city leaders.

Our reach is growing and our stories are being amplified as NRPA continues to partner with our local park agencies and dedicated corporate partners, such as The Walt Disney Company and many more.

OUR REACH

2 BILLION
*potential people reached through
print/online media*

30 MILLION
**PEOPLE REACHED
THROUGH TV/RADIO**



2 MILLION
**PEOPLE REACHED
THROUGH FACEBOOK**



2 MILLION
**PEOPLE REACHED
THROUGH TWITTER**

Leveling the Legislative Playing Field

At the federal level, NRPA speaks loudly to fight for funding and legislation that improves access to open space and recreational opportunities for all people. This includes the more than \$4 billion in federal funding that park and recreation agencies are eligible to receive.

Through our Park Champions initiative, NRPA empowers members to serve as year-round ambassadors for their community to elected officials. By inviting their elected officials to community events, local agencies are able to show them firsthand the difference our work makes and help them better understand the impact their vote has on their communities.

During NRPA's Summer Camp on Capitol Hill, children and staff from local park and recreation agencies spent the day engaging in activities with members of Congress and their staff – demonstrating the critical importance of federal funding that supports out-of-school time programming in area parks and recreation centers.

Building meaningful relationships with elected officials is critical to NRPA's advocacy work and to our ability to spread the word about the benefits of parks and recreation as widely as possible. By fostering a greater understanding of our work among members of Congress and their staff, NRPA helps ensure legislative prioritization of park and recreation goals.

Your ability to create a safe and welcoming space for all is commendable and I am glad to know a public steward such as yourself is at the forefront of this effort.

- Letter to Park Champion Som Subedi from U.S. Sen. Ron Wyden of Oregon



United States Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue visiting with kids enjoying a summer meal at a Park Champion event in Washington, D.C.



Representative Sheila Jackson Lee and NRPA's Kate Sims at NRPA's Summer Camp on Capitol Hill.



Representative Virginia Foxx, Chair of the House Education and Workforce Committee, and friends at a Park Champion Event in Mt. Airy, North Carolina.

Park and Recreation Month

Each July, NRPA serves as the catalyst for a nationwide discussion on the vital role parks and recreation plays in every single person's life. This annual campaign results in more people enjoying local parks and recreation.

In 2016, we spoke about how parks and recreation have superpowers to strengthen our community, and we showcased the superheroes who make it all happen. On a local level, NRPA empowered members to share with their communities the vital services they provide each and every day. As a result, mayors and city councils released official proclamations declaring July as Park and Recreation Month. On a national level, NRPA used Park and Recreation Month to share the innumerable benefits of parks and recreation.

Park and Recreation Month is the perfect opportunity to highlight the beauty of our open spaces, the importance of recreation facilities and the positive impact they have on our wellness and quality of life.

- Joseph DiVincenzo, Jr., Essex County Executive, New Jersey

NRPA's members find Park and Recreation Month to be a great resource for them as they theme and plan their summer activities. Most importantly though, the celebration is a grassroots campaign that brings communities together.

Summer campers from Grand Prairie, Texas' summer camp participate in healthy activities while celebrating Park and Recreation Month.



Notable National Media Coverage



The National Voice

The award-winning *Parks & Recreation* magazine, is only one of a cadre of publications, produced by NRPA, amplifying our powerful voice throughout this nation and beyond. Speaking to and on behalf of the thousands of influential professionals in the field of parks and recreation, we create the needed dialog to effectively navigate the pressing challenges of the times.

But our national voice doesn't stop there, journalists worldwide seek out our stories and our solutions on headline topics such as climate change, the Zika virus, homelessness and the opioid crisis. The opinions of our thought leaders are actively sought for articles in the Washington Post, the Los Angeles Times, The Chicago Sun, Outside magazine, Huffington Post and the New York Times.

Capitol Hill relies on us as an ally in drafting legislation and helping members of Congress and their staff understand park and recreation's role in broader legislation.

NRPA's stance on matters such as health, conservation and equity issues permeate the nation, laying the foundation for critical groundwork to be done. The end result – a nation united through parks and recreation.

EMPOWERING PARK LEADERS

OUR MEMBERS

60,000+

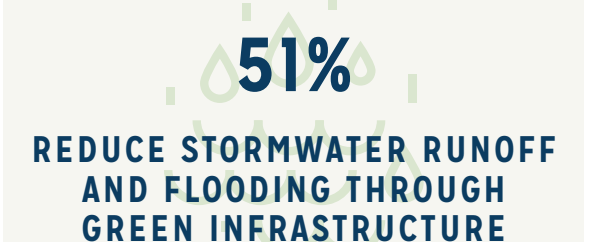
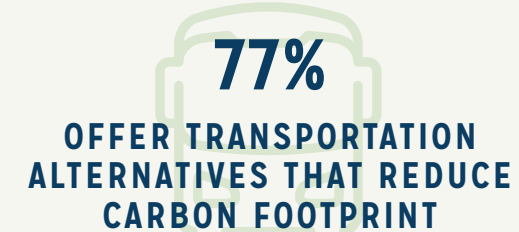
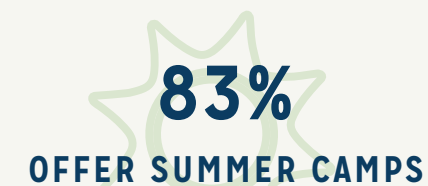
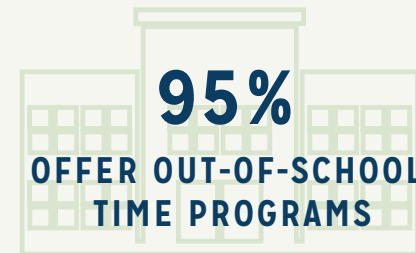
park professionals

serve more than

200 MILLION PEOPLE

in

IN ALL 50 STATES



Through research, honest conversation and on-the-ground experiences, NRPA gathers insight into the issues most pressing to park and recreation leaders to offer functional solutions. NRPA's commitment to producing research, training and thought leadership will provide more advanced tools for park leaders to continue their vital work.

Engaging Thought Leaders

Parks and recreation plays a vital role in not only making communities great places to live, but also solving emerging challenges affecting the health and wellbeing of those communities. As these challenges evolve, so must the solutions. The NRPA Innovation Labs bring together leaders from inside and outside parks and recreation to share best practices and brainstorm innovative solutions for issues facing our communities. The innovative ideas that come out of these labs provide park and recreation leaders with the knowledge and tools they need to face these emerging challenges, reduce costs and better serve the public.

NRPA hosted three labs that addressed social and racial equity, homelessness and the vital need to connect children to nature. Each event highlighted the ways parks play a role in making their community better and the innovative policies, programs and partnerships in place to do so.

Future Innovation Labs will explore how parks can make for more resilient communities, attract and retain businesses, and win over hearts, minds and voter support for parks and recreation.

Innovation Labs are a great formula to learn from each other, to share best practices and gather in-depth knowledge and experiential information that you can take home and implement in your city.

– Brian Albright,
Director, San Diego County Parks and Recreation



Manuel Compito (left), a Skid Row resident, and General Jeff Page (right), the “Mayor of Skid Row” speak about the benefits of parks to the homeless during the Los Angeles Innovation Lab.



Youth leaders from Camacho Activity Center talk about running adventure recreation programs during the Innovation Lab in Austin, Texas.

Validation through Research

NRPA conducts national research that helps park and recreation agencies better serve their communities, as well as provide critical information that can help park leaders make the case for greater and more stable funding.

Through timely surveys, including NRPA's Americans Engagement with Parks Survey, NRPA Park Pulse, periodic topic-specific surveys and economic impact analyses, NRPA has hard data to support the vital role parks play in all communities. We learned that in 2013 alone, park and recreation agency operations and capital spending was responsible for \$140 billion in economic activity and almost 1 million jobs.

This year's nationwide survey assessing general support for parks and recreation showed widespread enthusiasm for the field: seven in 10 Americans go to their local park; 83 percent of Americans feel they personally benefit from parks; and support for local parks is found in practically every demographic, from income level to political affiliation.

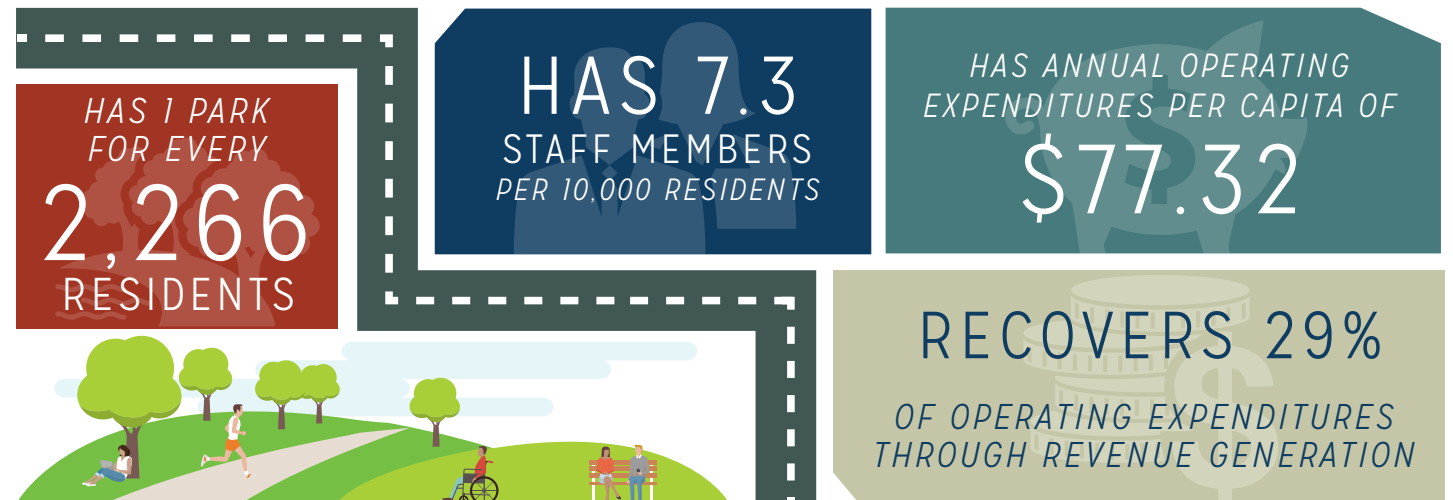
While public officials typically voice support for parks and recreation, they are apt to cut agency funding first – and by the greatest amount on a percentage basis – when the local government faces budgetary issues. We are studying how to narrow this gap by using the passion demonstrated by Americans for parks and recreation to ensure that funding is more stable and can grow.

NRPA Research Findings

75% of Americans support increased local government spending for park and recreation agencies

70% of Americans say they are more likely to vote for local politicians who make park and recreation funding a priority

THE TYPICAL PARK AND RECREATION AGENCY



9 IN 10 PARK AND RECREATION AGENCIES
DEDICATE FACILITIES, ACTIVITIES AND PROGRAMMING TO OLDER ADULTS

LOOKING AHEAD



Children connect with nature during the AmCan by the Bay Earth Day Event on the Napa River Bay Trail in American Canyon, California.

Future Initiatives

NRPA is adapting to a rapidly changing political landscape and environment while championing new ideas to lead our membership into the future.

Climate Resiliency

NRPA will continue its work to address climate resiliency and help our members bring green infrastructure, thoughtful design and integration of wild, natural areas to the communities they serve. This multi-year effort will not only examine the critical role parks and recreation plays, but will also elevate the impact our field has on building healthy, climate-resilient communities.

Park Access

NRPA will work with its partners, the Trust for Public Land and the Urban Land Institute, to launch a national campaign that will significantly increase the quantity and quality of parks accessible to residents within a 10-minute walk.

Out-of-School Time

Because NRPA knows nurturing a new generation of nature lovers and park stewards is critical to the survival of our field – not to mention the overall health of our communities – we will continue to champion out-of-school-time programming that supports healthy living and connections to nature and makes such educational opportunities available to children of all ages and socio-economic backgrounds.

OUR PARTNERS

NRPA relies on partnerships to help us expand our impact.

Our partners include:

Alliance for a Healthier Generation	National Park Service
American Planning Association	National Wildlife Federation
American Water Charitable Foundation	Niagara Bottling
CBS EcoMedia	Partnership for a Healthier America
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention	Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
Citi Foundation	Safe Routes to School National Partnership
The Coca-Cola Company	Southwest Airlines
The Coca-Cola Foundation	Target Corporation
The JPB Foundation	University of Phoenix
Low Impact Development Center	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Major League Baseball	Walmart Foundation

The Walt Disney Company | ABC | ESPN

HOW YOU CAN HELP

Why Partner with NRPA?

NRPA boasts more than 50 years of experience working with corporate and philanthropic leaders, municipal officials and dedicated individuals to:

- Impact local communities
- Reach into every community to make a national impact
- Expand evidence-based programs across communities of all sizes and demographics
- Offer opportunities for community and employee engagement
- Lead in facilitating community-oriented park improvement projects

To learn more about partnering with NRPA, contact Senior Vice President of Development Rebecca Wickline at 703.858.2163 or rwickline@nrpa.org.

Give to NRPA and Make a Difference

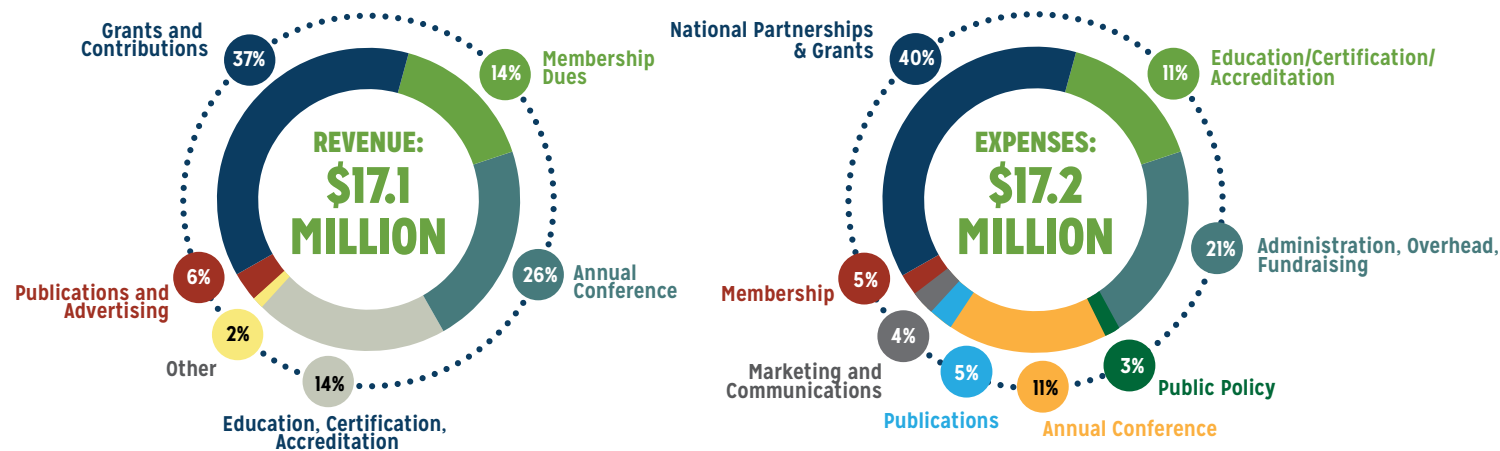
Public funding alone will never be enough to pay for the great parks our communities are entitled to. From improving childhood nutrition to creating healthy, sustainable communities, your gift to NRPA makes a difference:

- Provide summer meals and activities to children in low-income, underserved areas
- Enable communities to make much-needed park improvements and build new parks
- Provide scholarships and fellowships to park and recreation professionals and students
- Fund direct outreach on behalf of parks on Capitol Hill

**To contribute, visit:
www.nrpa.org/Donate**

FINANCIAL HEALTH

REVENUE	2017		2016	
Grants and Contributions	6,352,397	37%	7,227,081	41%
Annual Conference	4,523,834	26%	4,137,292	23%
Education/Certification/Accreditation	2,388,705	14%	2,146,894	12%
Membership Dues	2,421,040	14%	2,593,366	15%
Publications and Advertising	1,055,050	6%	1,059,494	6%
Other	396,603	2%	556,483	3%
TOTAL REVENUE	17,137,629	100%	17,720,610	100%
EXPENSES	2017		2016	
National Partnerships and Grants	6,835,800	40%	6,183,840	39%
Annual Conference	1,920,471	11%	1,786,417	11%
Education/Certification/Accreditation	1,826,252	11%	1,705,189	11%
Membership	910,626	5%	772,586	5%
Publications	820,782	5%	802,633	5%
Marketing and Communications	695,082	4%	631,727	4%
Public Policy	594,747	3%	514,981	3%
Total Program Serve Expenses	13,603,760	79%	12,397,373	78%
Administration/Overhead/Fundraising	3,611,130	21%	3,433,418	22%
Total Expenses	17,214,890	100%	15,830,791	100%
Pension Adjustment	(661)		(689,874)	
Change in Value of Investments	215,163		38,006	
NET ASSETS	2017		2016	
Change in Net Assets	137,241		1,237,951	
Net Assets Beginning of Year	9,318,989		8,081,038	
Net Assets End of Year	9,456,230		9,318,989	



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Chair

STEPHEN ECKELBERRY
Bartlett Park District
Carol Stream, IL

Chair-Elect

LEON T. ANDREWS, JR.
National League of Cities
Washington, DC

Past Chair

SUSAN TRAUTMAN, CPRP
The Great Rivers
Greenway District
St. Louis, MO

Treasurer

MICHAEL KELLY
Chicago Park District
Chicago, IL

Secretary

JACK KARDYS
Miami-Dade Parks,
Recreation and Open
Spaces Department
Miami, FL

President and CEO

BARBARA TULIPANE, CAE
National Recreation and
Park Association
Ashburn, VA

Directors

JESÚS AGUIRRE
Seattle Department of
Parks and Recreation
Seattle, WA

NEELAY BHATT
PROS Consulting
Indianapolis, IN

KEVIN COYLE
National Wildlife
Federation
Washington, D.C.

ROBERT GARCIA
The City Project
Los Angeles, CA

RICHARD GULLEY
Balboa Park Conservancy
San Diego, CA

ROSLYN JOHNSON
Maryland-National Capital
Park and Planning
Commission
Prince Georges County, MD

KAREN BATES KRESS
Park Advocate
Emigrant, MT

HERMAN PARKER
City of San Diego Park and
Recreation Department
San Diego, CA

MOLLY STEVENS
Westcave Outdoor Discovery
Center Central Texas
Austin, TX

WILLIAM "JOE" TURNER
Houston Parks and
Recreation
Houston, TX

DR. HOWEL WECHSLER
Alliance for a Healthier
Generation
New York, NY



22377 Belmont Ridge Rd
Ashburn, VA 20148
800.626.NRPA (6772)
www.nrpa.org

