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 concern about the impact of climate change increases, planners, elected officials, and community advocates are taking a fresh look at parks and their potential 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 info graphics and for usage instructions.
PHYSICAL BENEFITS

Nearly **HALF** of all adults in the U.S. have chronic health conditions, such as heart disease, diabetes and obesity.¹

About **1 in 3** children in the U.S. is either obese or overweight.²

People **EXERCISE MORE** if they have access to parks and other safe outdoor places. Physical activity can reduce or prevent serious health problems.³

MENTAL BENEFITS

**Mental illness** affects over **43 MILLION** adults in the U.S. according to the National Institute of Mental Health.⁴

PARKS SUPPORT MENTAL HEALTH THROUGH PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

People with access to parks are more likely to exercise. **Exercise reduces anxiety and depression and can help alleviate symptoms of a variety of mental health conditions, including dementia and Alzheimer's.**⁵, ⁶

COMMUNITY BENEFITS

Greening of vacant urban land has been shown to decrease crime.⁷

COST SAVINGS

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

- **OBESITY** $147 BILLION⁸
- **DIABETES** $245 BILLION⁹
- **HEART DISEASE** $108 BILLION¹⁰

PARKS HELP TO REDUCE THE COSTS OF HEALTHCARE

Maintaining a healthy weight saves **$1,500** per person in healthcare costs a year.¹¹
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.\(^\text{12}\)

**PARKS INCREASE PROPERTY VALUES**

Houses near parks or trails have 5–20% higher property values than those in the surrounding community.\(^\text{13, 14}\)

**PARKS INCREASE REVENUE FOR CITIES**

Property tax is one of the most important revenue streams for cities. Cities receive an increase in property tax revenue from people moving back to the cities.

Since 2000, the number of young, educated adults moving to livable, walkable urban neighborhoods has increased 37%. \(^\text{15}\)

**PARKS SPUR PRIVATE INVESTMENT, INCREASE JOB OPPORTUNITIES**

In Denver, $1.2 million in federal park grants galvanized over $2.5 billion in local public and private investments.\(^\text{16}\)

**PARKS LOWER INFRASTRUCTURE COSTS FOR CITIES**

Cities are creating and using parks as a green infrastructure approach to managing stormwater and preventing flooding.

Philadelphia is saving $14 BILLION by managing storm water and preventing flooding with parks and green infrastructure instead of new pipes and tunnels.\(^\text{17}\)

[City Parks Alliance website: cityparksalliance.org]
City Parks Provide Environmental Benefits

**PARKS CLEAN THE AIR**
Trees in urban parks remove toxins from the air, such as carbon monoxide, that can pose serious health risks to people.

**PARKS PROVIDE $3.8 BILLION IN AIR POLLUTION SAVINGS**
Urban trees in the U.S. remove 711,000 TONS of air pollution annually, at a value of $3.8 BILLION—saving money but also improving public health. 18

**PARKS CLEAN THE WATER**
Parks and green space filter rain which reduces water pollution, protects drinking water and decreases rates of waterborne illness. Parks improve environmental health and save communities money.

**PARKS MAKE CITIES MORE RESILIENT**
Nationwide cities are confronted with the impacts of climate change and increased flooding. 19

Hurricane Sandy caused up to $70 BILLION in damages to communities.

**PARKS KEEP CITIES COOLER**
Parks help to cool cities by reducing the heat island effect.

**PARKS SAVE MONEY ON INFRASTRUCTURE**
Cities are creating and using parks as a green infrastructure approach to managing stormwater and preventing flooding.

Using just one park and investing in green infrastructure instead of gray infrastructure, the City of Atlanta is saving at least $16 MILLION 20

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