



# Greener Parks for Health

Green Infrastructure as a Strategy for  
Improving Equity and Community Well-Being

## Communications Toolkit

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This communications toolkit was informed by research, including a literature review and landscape assessment around the connections between parks, green infrastructure and health. Summaries of this research can be found by visiting NRPA's [Parks and Green Infrastructure for Health webpage](#).

This resource guide was prepared by the Willamette Partnership and Blue Stocking Strategy for the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA).

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# INTRODUCTION

With a fast-warming planet, every level of government can make a difference in the fight against climate change's damaging effects on human health, well-being and quality of life. As we wait for global and national leaders to make far-reaching change, local governments are increasingly stepping up on behalf of the people they serve. The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) recognizes that many of today's park and recreation professionals are at the forefront of these efforts, even as they continue building broader buy-in and support. That's why we've created this toolkit: to offer a strong case for increasing green infrastructure in parks, so every person has the opportunity to live the healthiest life possible through access to greener parks.

## What do we mean by “greener parks”?

Parks serve important functions for recreation and green space in communities, but incorporating green infrastructure into parks can help boost their overall benefit to community through increased health, environmental, social and economic benefits. That's why we're referring to parks with green infrastructure features as “greener parks” in this messaging platform.

## The Communications Toolkit

The Greener Parks for Health Communications Toolkit is divided into three parts. In the first part we lay out the evidence for you, as park and recreation professionals, of the impact of climate change on our most vulnerable communities. This part also establishes a shared understanding of green infrastructure's many health and well-being benefits and how green infrastructure can mitigate against the negative effects of climate change.

Throughout, we emphasize the importance of using an equity lens in this critical work; recognizing that legacies of racism and prejudice have shaped decades of policy decisions around parks and neighborhood improvements. While we have come a long way as a country, we must be deliberate in our efforts to undo these past injustices.

The second and third parts of this toolkit are intended for you to use with those in your community: from elected officials and other local agency staff to businesses and individual community members. You'll notice a distinct change in language and tone between part one and parts two and three: that's because we've crafted parts two and three for you to use as part of your public-facing outreach and engagement efforts. Drawing from best practices in communications and messaging on issues such as race, equity and environmental justice, we use clear, action-based, outcome-oriented language; our purpose is to help equip you with information to use to shift attitudes, behaviors and beliefs. We are not prescribing this language or suggesting you use it as a script; we want you to have a plug-and-play resource to draw from.

To create a campaign highlighting the benefits of a greener park, the third part of the toolkit provides sample social media posts you can use to spread the word and encourage others to advocate for greener parks in your community.

This toolkit was created by synthesizing evidence from existing research literature<sup>1</sup> as well as stakeholder interviews and media analysis. We hope you use and return to this resource as you create greener parks to advance green infrastructure, public health and social equity in your community.

[ 1 ] Robison, B. and Viray, A. (2019). *Green Infrastructure and Health: A Literature Review*. Retrieved from <https://www.nrpa.org/contentassets/0aa1178a2d944cbc8cb6fbc5ce31b266/green-infrastructure-health-literature-review.pdf>

# WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT HEALTH, EQUITY AND GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE IN PARKS

## Key Definitions

Before we provide key facts, statistics and messaging that will help you advocate for greener parks, we share the following definitions of terms that come up in conversations related to parks, health and green infrastructure. These definitions are modified throughout the toolkit to help you communicate the key concepts in a way that everyone can understand.

### → Green Infrastructure

Green infrastructure is “the natural and built green spaces that use nature and natural processes to manage a variety of challenges, including water quality, reducing flood risk, providing wildlife habitat, improving air quality, and now, improving human health.”<sup>1</sup> Often seen as an alternative to traditional “gray” infrastructure, green infrastructure uses natural features and specialized materials like green roofs, trees, rain gardens and permeable pavement to help treat stormwater where it falls, bringing additional environmental, health, social and economic benefits to surrounding communities.

### → Gray Infrastructure

“Gray infrastructure refers to constructed structures such as treatment facilities, sewer systems, stormwater systems or storage basins. The term ‘gray’ refers to the fact that such structures are often made of concrete.”<sup>2</sup>

### → Community Benefits

Green infrastructure in parks can provide a community, with diverse improvements for the environment, public health and social and economic development. These multiple benefits are especially critical for low-income communities and communities of color, who lack adequate resources to prepare for and recover from extreme weather, who historically have had less access to nature-based education and play and who are more likely to live in neighborhoods that face unjust disinvestment and neglect.

### → Equity

“When we talk about equity, we’re talking about encouraging behaviors, systems or policies to ensure fair and just treatment of all community members, regardless of race, background, ability, income or beliefs. We know that one size does not fit all and that every individual starts on a different playing field. Creating opportunities that meet individuals where they are and address their unique needs is key to ensuring that all members of society are entitled to the same positive health outcomes. A community that prioritizes equity works to ensure that all community members HAVE access to what they need to be successful, and that resources are distributed based on need.”<sup>3</sup>

### → Inclusion

“Inclusion efforts aim to build a culture of belonging by actively inviting the contribution and participation of all people. We believe every person’s voice adds value and creating environments in which all people can gain access to facilities and participate in programs where they feel safe, welcome, and respected creates balance, growth and opportunity in the community. A community that prioritizes inclusion works to ensure that all community members FEEL that they can access what they need to be successful.”<sup>3</sup>

### → Environmental Justice

Environmental justice is the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin or income, with respect to the development, implementation and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations and policies. This goal will be achieved when everyone enjoys:

- The same degree of protection from environmental and health hazards
- Equitable access to the decision-making process to achieve a healthy environment in which to live, learn and work<sup>4</sup>

[ 1 ] Cochran, B., Henke, E. and Robison, B. (2018). *Green Infrastructure & Health Guide*. Retrieved from [http://willamettepartnership.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Green-Infrastructure\\_final\\_7\\_12\\_18\\_sm.pdf](http://willamettepartnership.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Green-Infrastructure_final_7_12_18_sm.pdf)

[ 2 ] NGICP and IGICP. (2019). “Glossary definition: gray infrastructure.” Retrieved from <http://ngicp.org/glossary/gray-infrastructure/>

[ 3 ] National Recreation and Park Association. (2019). *Parks for Inclusion: Guidelines for Developing an Inclusion Policy*. Retrieved from <https://www.nrpa.org/siteassets/Inclusion-Guidelines-for-Developing-Policy.pdf>

[ 4 ] U.S. EPA. “Environmental Justice.” (2019). <https://www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice>

## Health Equity

*“Health equity means that everyone has a fair and just opportunity to be as healthy as possible. This requires removing obstacles to health such as poverty, discrimination, and their consequences, including powerlessness and lack of access to good jobs with fair pay, quality education and housing, safe environments, and health care.”*

- Robert Wood Johnson Foundation<sup>1</sup>

### Social Determinants of Health: Health Benefits of Equity

What do economic, environmental and social benefits have to do with human health? All of these are considered social determinants of health. “The social determinants of health are the conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work and age. These circumstances are shaped by the distribution of money, power and resources at global, national and local levels.”<sup>2</sup> Put simply, the social, economic and physical environment in which you live plays a large role in determining your health outcomes. If you face social discrimination because of your race, gender or sexuality, this negatively impacts your health. If you live next to a busy road where air pollutants are unavoidable, this negatively impacts your health. And if you don’t have access to a job that pays a fair and living wage in your community, this negatively impacts your health.

Health disparities, or differences in health outcomes rooted in health inequity, are caused by patterns of injustice. Racial injustice is a central cause of health inequity in the United States, with racial health disparities projected to have cost insurers more than \$330 billion from 2009 to 2018.<sup>3</sup> Other intersections of identity like class, gender, age, sexual orientation, ability level and rural residence also exacerbate health inequity around the country.

Fortunately, when we can address inequity, we can also see improvements in health outcomes. When people are able to earn a livable wage, live in a quality home and neighborhood and enjoy time with family and friends, they are healthier. Health equity begins by removing the systemic barriers to every person’s ability to realize their full potential.

**Did you know** that your zip code is a better predictor of your health and lifespan than your genetic code? In some cities, life expectancy can vary between zip codes by more than 25 years. “Where you live directly affects your health in a number of ways, from exposure to air pollution and toxins to accessibility of healthy food, green space and medical care.”<sup>4</sup> The more segregated a city is by race and ethnicity, the larger the gap in life expectancy and health outcomes.

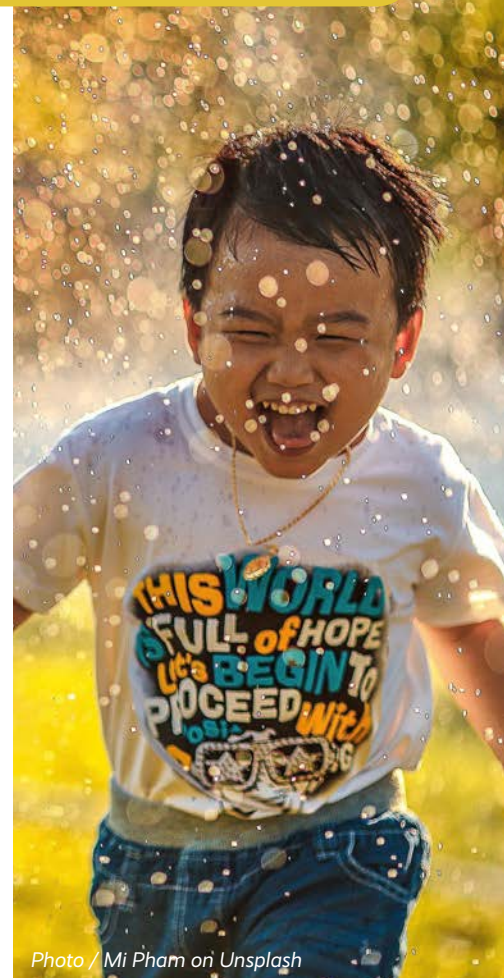


Photo / Mi Pham on Unsplash

[ 1 ] Braveman, P., Arkin E., Orleans, T., Proctor, D. and Plough, A. (2017). “What is Health Equity?” Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. Retrieved from <https://www.rwjf.org/en/library/research/2017/05/what-is-health-equity.html>

[ 2 ] WHO (n.d.). “Constitution.” Retrieved from <https://www.who.int/about/who-we-are/constitution>

[ 3 ] Ducharme, J., and Wolfson, E. (2019). “How Your Zip Code Could Affect Your Lifespan.” *Time*. Retrieved from <https://time.com/5608268/zip-code-health/>

[ 4 ] Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. (2017). *Communities in Action: Pathways to Health Equity*. Retrieved from <https://www.rwjf.org/en/library/research/2017/01/communities-in-action-pathways-to-health-equity.html>

# Equitable Park Access

## Why do some communities have greater access to quality parks than others?

Parks and green spaces are distributed neither equally nor equitably throughout most communities in the United States, which disproportionately benefit high-income, white and more educated communities. This isn't accidental — for years, government policies and racist legal contracts were used to discriminate against people of color and to keep these people in less desirable parts of communities that had less access to green space. Some of these include:

**Redlining:** A process in which the Home Owners' Loan Corporation (HOLC), a federal agency, gave neighborhoods ratings to guide investment. Because communities of color were considered more hazardous under this rating system, it made it more difficult for those communities to get loans for homeownership or maintenance and led to cycles of disinvestment during a time of significant investment in city infrastructure.<sup>1</sup>

**Racially Restrictive Covenants:** These contracts on private property prevented the purchase, lease or occupation of a piece of property by a particular group of people, and were used most often against African Americans and other racial and ethnic minorities. The practice was so widespread that by 1940, 80% of property in Chicago and Los Angeles carried restrictive covenants barring black families.<sup>2</sup>

**Eminent domain:** The power of a sovereign entity to take or appropriate any land within its borders for any purpose that it deems necessary or beneficial, enshrined in the Fifth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution with the protection that “nor shall private property be taken for public use, without just compensation.” These policies allow local, state and federal governments to seize private property and even today disproportionately affects low-income communities and communities of color.<sup>3</sup>



Photo / Dreamstime

[ 1 ] Jan, T. (2018). “Redlining was banned 50 years ago. It’s still hurting minorities today.” *Washington Post*. Retrieved from <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2018/03/28/redlining-was-banned-50-years-ago-its-still-hurting-minorities-today/>

[ 2 ] The Fair Housing Center of Greater Boston. (n.d.). “1920s–1948 Racially Restrictive Covenants.” Retrieved from <https://www.bostonfairhousing.org/timeline/1920s1948-Restrictive-Covenants.html>

[ 3 ] Somin, I. (2015). “How Eminent Domain Abuse Harms the Poor.” *Spotlight on Poverty and Opportunity*. <https://spotlightonpoverty.org/spotlight-exclusives/how-eminent-domain-abuse-harms-the-poor/>



## What effect do these policies have on park access today?

In some cities like Atlanta, Georgia and Tampa, Florida, homes in redlined neighborhoods are valued at less than half of homes in surrounding areas.<sup>1</sup> This means lower property taxes in these neighborhoods, which can continue cycles of underinvestment and inequity. Even in cities where redlined neighborhoods have property values equal to or higher than surrounding areas, gentrification means the benefits of higher property values typically go to newer residents instead of long-term residents of color.<sup>1</sup>

In the United States, people of color have also been historically excluded from parks and public places, which can lead to parks and forests “unintentionally [becoming] sites where African Americans experience insecurity, exclusion and fear born out of historical precedent, collective memory and contemporary concerns.”<sup>2</sup> Even though many of the exclusionary laws of the past are off the books today, cultural barriers still exist for communities of color in outdoor spaces where they were unwelcomed and unsafe for decades.<sup>3</sup>

## Unintended Consequences of Park Improvement Projects

**Gentrification:** is “the process of renovating and improving a house or district so that it conforms to middle class taste,” and is generally caused by higher-income residents moving into lower-income neighborhoods for economic opportunity.<sup>4</sup>

As renovated neighborhoods become more attractive to developers, rents and property taxes can increase, making the neighborhood too expensive for the original community and displacing original residents from their homes. Individuals contributing to gentrification usually do not intentionally displace the long-term residents who have lived in less-expensive neighborhoods. There are examples of how parks built in low-income neighborhoods, even with the best of intentions, have contributed to the displacement of the very communities the city was trying to serve.<sup>5</sup>

Park and recreation professionals need to think broadly about the historic and current roles these and other policies play to understand the impact of institutional racism and discrimination within their communities. It is important to acknowledge that trust with these communities who have faced unjust policies may be broken. Park and recreation professionals need to acknowledge these actions and work alongside their communities and community groups to rebuild that trust. This will encourage the voices that have been neglected to be lifted up in a meaningful way. Through all phases of the green infrastructure process (from planning and placement to development and implementation), community leaders and members should be supported and given the tools to make the best decisions for their community. Other government agencies (like housing and social services), should also be engaged to ensure green infrastructure isn't contributing to continued injustice. These and other policy actions can ensure parks are doing their part to promote equity.

For strategies on how to implement equitable and inclusive community engagement around the planning, design, construction, maintenance and activation of park projects and park plans, please visit NRPA's [Community Engagement Resource Guide](#).



[ 1 ] Passy, J. (2018, May). "How 'redlining' still hurts home values." *MarketWatch*. Retrieved from <https://www.marketwatch.com/story/how-redlining-still-hurts-home-values-2018-04-26>

[ 2 ] Finney, C. (2014). *Black faces, white spaces: reimagining the relationship of African Americans to the great outdoors*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press.

[ 3 ] Mock, B. (2016). "A Legacy of Racism in America's Parks." *CityLab*. <https://www.citylab.com/design/2016/06/for-african-americans-park-access-is-about-more-than-just-proximity/485321/>

[ 4 ] Nieves, A. (2019). "Americans see positive and negative effects of gentrification." *KSBY News*. <https://www.ksby.com/news/national/americans-see-positive-and-negative-effects-of-gentrification>

[ 5 ] Florida, R. (2019). "Why Greenway Parks Cause Greater Gentrification." *CityLab*. <https://www.citylab.com/life/2019/10/urban-parks-gentrification-city-green-space-displacement/599722/>

# How is Climate Change Affecting our Communities?

Climate change is inescapable and already affecting our communities throughout the United States. From destructive wildfire seasons in California and historic droughts in the Southwest to devastating flooding in the Midwest and sea level rise on the coasts, there's hardly a community that isn't already experiencing the effects of climate change. In fact, 8 of the 10 hottest years on record have been in the past 10 years.<sup>1</sup>

Green Infrastructure can have meaningful impacts on how communities deal with this new reality. Increased tree canopy can help reduce the effect of extreme heat at a neighborhood level. Rain gardens and bioswales can help direct stormwater away from community assets and prevent localized flooding events. And reintroducing native plants to create more biodiversity in our neighborhoods can provide valuable habitat to wildlife while also improving community mental health outcomes.

Adding green infrastructure in parks is one way we can take the lead in helping communities mitigate the harmful effects of climate change.

## Greener Parks as a Solution

Parks already provide invaluable benefits to their communities. They're places for neighbors to congregate and socialize, places for children to play and exercise. They make our neighborhoods greener, and they make our communities healthier.

Parks also provide distinct opportunities to amplify the benefits of green infrastructure. By adding green infrastructure to parks, we can help engage our communities and work together to build support for natural infrastructure, which can lead to increased social cohesion. Green infrastructure also improves air and water quality, making the environment safer for community members. And it can help save costs and protect park assets by keeping standing water off sports fields and treating water where it lands. Greener parks can be especially beneficial to low-income communities facing the greatest challenges related to climate change.

Not all communities have equal access to parks, which means not all communities have equal access to the benefits of green infrastructure. It's important to understand both the historical and current inequities these communities face to ensure greener parks help promote equity and discourage not further injustice.



Photo / Shutterstock

[1] Climate Central. (2019). "The 10 Hottest Global Years on Record." Retrieved from <https://www.climatecentral.org/gallery/graphics/the-10-hottest-global-years-on-record>



## Summary of Evidence One Pagers

Green infrastructure is not just good in theory. Hundreds of peer-reviewed academic journal articles and case studies explicitly link green infrastructure with a myriad of community benefits. Similarly, hundreds of articles point to the existence of health inequity and the benefits to a community's health, economy and environment that arise when inequities are addressed.

While parks and green space alone provide environmental, public health, economic and social benefits to surrounding communities, incorporating green infrastructure in parks that thoughtfully addresses community challenges can multiply these benefits to improve overall community well-being, especially when it means increasing tree canopy or biodiversity.

In pages 11 through 15 of the communications toolkit, we provide easy to use, one-pagers that pull together research on facts and statistics about each of the benefits that greener parks and green infrastructure provide to communities. We hope you use these tools to have meaningful conversations around green infrastructure in parks with your leadership, fellow colleagues, elected officials and community members.

### One pager topics:

- Health Benefits of Green Infrastructure in Parks
- Economic Benefits of Green Infrastructure in Parks
- Social Benefits of Green Infrastructure in Parks
- Environmental Benefits of Green Infrastructure in Parks

You can share the following one-pagers with your community to empower them to advocate for the many benefits green infrastructure brings. For example, you can:

- Hand them out at a community meeting
- Share them on social media
- Post in your office break room or kitchen
- Give them to your local city council or other elected representatives

# Health Benefits of Green Infrastructure in Parks

Parks provide opportunities for physical activity and connecting with the outdoors. By incorporating green infrastructure into the landscape, exercise becomes more enjoyable.

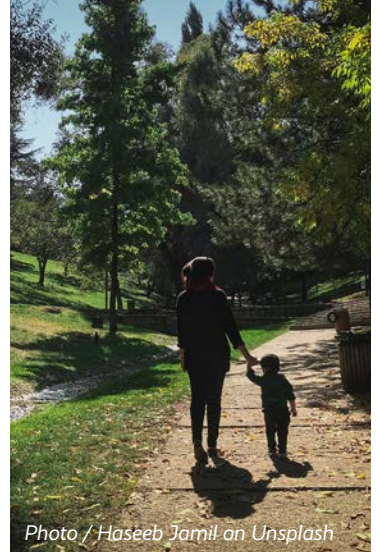


Photo / Haseeb Jamil on Unsplash

## More Trees Means Healthier People

Increased tree canopy is associated with all kinds of health benefits for communities, including decreased rates of obesity and obesity-related illnesses.<sup>1</sup> Trees also can help people feel less depressed and anxious,<sup>2</sup> and can help improve your memory.<sup>3</sup>

## Better Mental Health

Spending time in a place with green features helps people recover from mental fatigue more quickly.<sup>5</sup>

## Improved Physical Health

Green infrastructure features that increase biodiversity in an area can compound the positive health effects of time in nature, including better heart health.<sup>4</sup>

## Increased Physical Activity

Green infrastructure features like wetlands and man-made lakes can increase physical activity in an area.<sup>6</sup>

[ 1 ] Lovasi, G. S., Schwartz-Soicher, O., Quinn, J. W., Berger, D. K., Neckerman, K. M., Jaslow, R., Lee, K.K. and Rundle, A. (2013). "Neighborhood safety and green space as predictors of obesity among preschool children from low-income families in New York City." *Preventive Medicine*, 57(3), 189-193.  
[ 2 ] Watts, G. (2017). "The effects of 'greening' urban areas on the perceptions of tranquility." *Urban Forestry & Urban Greening*, 26, 11-17.  
[ 3 ] Bratman, G. N., Daily, G. C., Levy, B. J., and Gross, J. J. (2015). "The benefits of nature experience: Improved affect and cognition." *Landscape and Urban Planning*, 138, 41-50.  
[ 4 ] Chang, K. G., Sullivan, W. C., Lin, Y.-H., Su, W., and Chang, C.-Y. (2016). The Effect of Biodiversity on Green Space Users' Wellbeing—An Empirical Investigation Using Physiological Evidence. *Sustainability*, 8(10), 1049.  
[ 5 ] Li, D., and Sullivan, W. C. (2016). "Impact of views to school landscapes on recovery from stress and mental fatigue." *Landscape and Urban Planning*, 148, 149-158.  
[ 6 ] Vich, G., Marquet, O., and Miralles-Guasch, C. (2019). "Green streetscape and walking: Exploring active mobility patterns in dense and compact cities." *Journal of Transport & Health*, 12, 50-59.



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# Economic Benefits of Green Infrastructure in Parks

In addition to saving costs on gray infrastructure, green infrastructure has specific economic impacts through both workforce development and broader community economic development.

## Smarter Investments

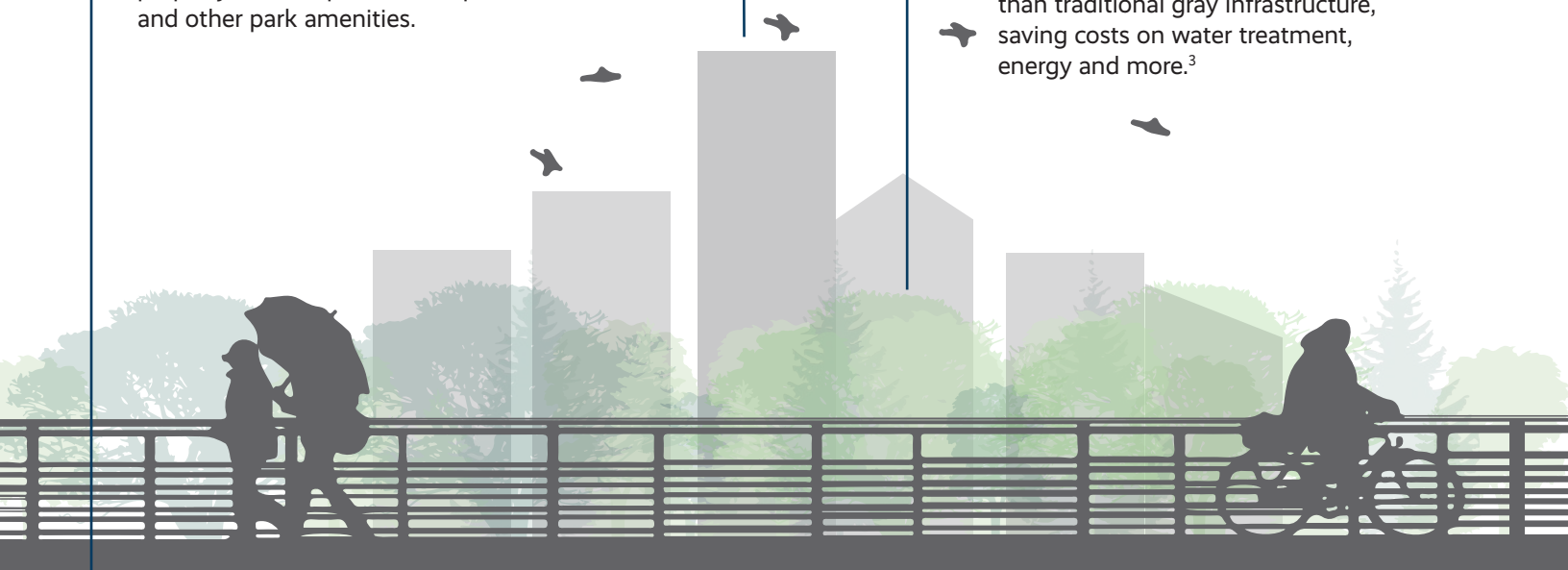
By reducing the intensity of localized flooding, green infrastructure can reduce costs associated with flood damage to property<sup>1</sup> and keep water off sports fields and other park amenities.

## More Local Jobs

Green infrastructure planning, development and maintenance helps create jobs for skilled workers.<sup>1</sup> One study showed that three quarters of green infrastructure jobs go to local residents, creating a direct economic investment in your community.<sup>2</sup>

## Cost Savings for Communities

Green infrastructure can be cheaper to build and maintain than traditional gray infrastructure, saving costs on water treatment, energy and more.<sup>3</sup>



**WILLAMETTE PARTNERSHIP**

[ 1 ] Morsy, M., Goodall, J., Shatnawi, F. and Meadows, M. (2016). "Distributed Stormwater Controls for Flood Mitigation in Urbanized Watersheds: Case Study of Rocky Branch Watershed in Columbia, South Carolina." *Journal of Hydrologic Engineering*, 21(11).

[ 2 ] Greene, M. (2014). "Green Infrastructure Projects Create Jobs for People Who Need Them." *Conservation Law Foundation*. Retrieved from <https://www.clf.org/blog/green-infrastructure-projects/>

[ 3 ] Hawkins, N. C. and Prickett, G. (2014). "The case for green infrastructure." In: R. Kupers (Ed.), *Turbulence* (pp.87-100).

# Social Benefits of Green Infrastructure in Parks

Green infrastructure can provide benefits to communities that help increase the bonds between community members, strengthen relationships and promote healthy lifestyles at a neighborhood-level. This happens primarily by providing communities more inviting green spaces to congregate, socialize and exercise together.

**Specific to parks:** A study from Chicago found that increasing the tree canopy in a park by just 10% decreased the assault and battery rate in the park by 10%, and decreased robbery, assault and narcotics usage by more than 11%.<sup>1</sup>

## Creating Safer Spaces

Green infrastructure in urban areas is correlated with decreased narcotics possession in surrounding areas.<sup>2</sup> And planting new trees in an area can help decrease crime levels in the area over time.<sup>3</sup>

## Closer Communities

Green infrastructure can offer a space for communities to come together and increases opportunities for socialization, which can lead to increased trust between neighbors.<sup>4</sup>

## Building Trust in Government

Well-managed green infrastructure in public places can increase trust and satisfaction with local government among community members, which increases over time as the assets stay well-managed.<sup>5</sup>

## Engaged Communities

Offering neighborhood education about green infrastructure leads to increased community cooperation,<sup>4</sup> making community members more likely to engage in social and volunteer opportunities around the neighborhood.<sup>6</sup>



[ 1 ] Schusler, T., Weiss, L., Treering, D., and Balderama, E. (2018). "Research Note: Examining the association between tree canopy, parks and crime in Chicago." *Landscape and Urban Planning*, 170, 309-313.

[ 2 ] Kondo, M. C., Low, S. C., Henning, J., and Branas, C. C. (2015). "The Impact of Green Stormwater Infrastructure Installation on Surrounding Health and Safety." *American Journal of Public Health*; Washington, 105(3), E114-E121.

[ 3 ] Burley, B. A. (2018). "Green infrastructure and violence: Do new street trees mitigate violent crime?" *Health & Place*, 54, 43-49.

[ 4 ] Green, O. O., Shuster, W. D., Rhea, L. K., Garmestani, A. S., and Thurston, H. W. (2012). "Identification and Induction of Human, Social, and Cultural Capitals through an Experimental Approach to Stormwater Management." *Sustainability*, 4(8), 1669-1682.

[ 5 ] Center for Active Design. (2018). "The Assembly Civic Engagement Survey." Retrieved from <https://centerforactivedesign.org/assembly-civic-engagement-survey>

[ 6 ] Sullivan, W. C., Kuo, F. E., and Depooter, S. F. (2004). "The Fruit of Urban Nature: Vital Neighborhood Spaces." *Environment and Behavior*, 36(5), 678-700.

# Environmental Benefits of Green Infrastructure in Parks

Human health is intricately linked to the health of the surrounding environment. Improvements to the natural world are one of the main ways that green infrastructure features benefit surrounding communities.

## What's the "urban heat island" effect?

Urban spaces that lack tree cover and greenery can create hot spots in cities up to ten degrees warmer than surrounding areas. The increased heat is dangerous for vulnerable populations such as children and the elderly. Most urban heat islands are concentrated in low-income neighborhoods.<sup>1</sup>

## Cooler Air

Trees help mitigate the urban heat island effect, lowering ground temperatures to make spaces more comfortable and safe for at-risk populations.<sup>2</sup>

## Cleaner Water

Almost all green infrastructure features can filter out harmful pollutants such as heavy metals and fertilizers, keeping these hazardous chemicals out of our waterways.<sup>4</sup>

**Green infrastructure is good for plants and animals, too!** Certain features, such as engineered wetlands, provide increased habitat space for wildlife in addition to recreational space for people.<sup>6</sup>

## Reduced Flooding

Green infrastructure features such as rain gardens can decrease the likelihood of localized flooding, protecting sports fields and other assets from water damage.<sup>3</sup>

## Healthier Air

Green infrastructure elements such as permeable pavement and trees help reduce pollutants in the air, making it safer to breathe and recreate.<sup>5</sup>

[ 1 ] Anderson, M. and McMinn, S. (2019). "As Rising Heat Bakes US Cities, the Poor Often Feel it Most." Retrieved from <https://www.npr.org/2019/09/03/754044732/as-rising-heat-bakes-u-s-cities-the-poor-often-feel-it-most>

[ 2 ] Young-Jae, K., Lee, C., and Jun-Hyun, K. (2018). "Sidewalk Landscape Structure and Thermal Conditions for Child and Adult Pedestrians." *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, Basel, 15(1), 148.

[ 3 ] Morsy, M., Goodall, J., Shatnawi, F. and Meadows, M. (2016). "Distributed Stormwater Controls for Flood Mitigation in Urbanized Watersheds: Case Study of Rocky Branch Watershed in Columbia, South Carolina." *Journal of Hydrologic Engineering*, 21(11).

[ 4 ] Pennino, M. J., McDonald, R. I., and Jaffe, P.R. (2016). "Watershed-scale impacts of stormwater green infrastructure on hydrology, nutrient fluxes, and combined sewer overflows in the mid-Atlantic region." *Science of the Total Environment*, 565, 1044-1053.

[ 5 ] Liu, C.-M., Chen, J.-W., Tsai, J.-H., Lin, W.-S., Yen, M.-T., and Chen, T.-H. (2012). "Experimental studies of the dilution of vehicle exhaust pollutants by environment-protecting pervious pavement." *Journal of the Air & Waste Management Association*, 62(1), 92-102.

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# HOW DO WE COMMUNICATE ABOUT HEALTH, EQUITY AND GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE IN PARKS?



Photo / The Greening of Detroit



# Communicating with Your Community

The following information, provided in parts two and three, lays out a range of communications tools for park and recreation professionals. Find tailored messaging to help you articulate why we need greener parks and how these projects can improve health, quality of life and equitable access to the outdoors.

You are encouraged to customize these materials based on your community's needs and local conditions. The messages in this document are not meant to be followed like a script. Instead, use these messages as guidelines for how to communicate these issues with your leadership, fellow colleagues, elected officials and community members.

## How do you Craft Successful Messaging?

Green infrastructure can be technical and tricky to talk about; so how can we bring our communities into the conversation without overwhelming them with jargon? You can use the tools in this section to create a range of communications for different audiences. You can refer to messages in this section when creating a presentation for a neighborhood group, adding copy to your website, creating posts for social media or putting together a fact sheet.

As you move forward with your communications, consider the following steps. Thinking about your intended audience and what matters to them — as opposed to just what matters to you or your department — will help ensure you're connecting with people and will boost the odds that you can change attitudes, behaviors or beliefs.

### → STEP 1

**Who is your audience?** Elected officials will talk about green infrastructure differently than a Parent Teacher Organization, so it's important to think about who you're trying to reach with each message.

### → STEP 2

**What does your audience care about?** Different groups of people have different priorities. Being able to tie your message to your audience's values will help you connect with them in a way they understand.

### → STEP 3

**Craft your message.** We have many sample messages collected here that you can tailor for your specific audiences.

# Message Platform

This message platform is a high-level outline for how to communicate with **all** audiences about how and why communities should increase investments for green infrastructure projects to create greener parks.

Consider **the following talking points as a menu** for you to pick from depending on what kind of communication you need and for whom you are creating it.

The platform is made up of key messages about the benefits of green infrastructure, along with supporting points to bolster our argument. All of these can be used in any order, and the language doesn't need to be exact or memorized. As you create presentations, talking points, or written materials you can supplement each of these messages with data points, evidence and stories for your own experience with greener parks.

When you see **[community]** in the message platform, replace this with the name of your city, town, county or department. We've made adapting each point as easy as possible, so you can tailor each message to the specific needs and values of your community.

## Vision

*We want to build communities where everyone can benefit from green parks that create healthier lives, stronger neighborhoods and places where everyone can thrive.*

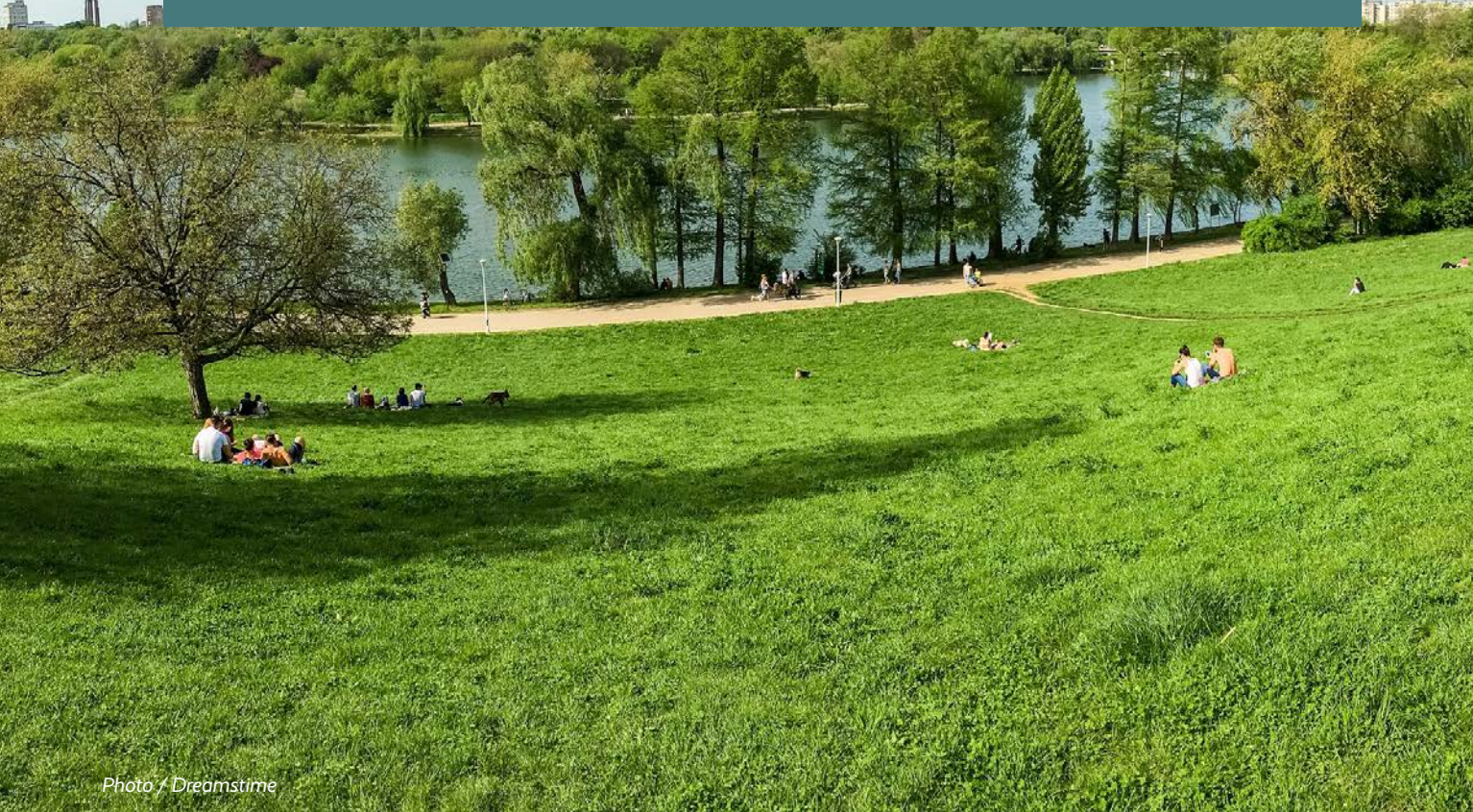


Photo / Dreamstime

# Making the Case for Greener Parks

## **How does climate change impact our communities?**

- Even if we don't experience big natural disasters like wildfires or drought, climate change can have smaller effects that add up to real consequences for our community. Hotter summers, severe weather and local flooding events are more than an inconvenience. They can destroy homes, worsen health conditions such as asthma and create dangerous conditions for seniors and children.
- Since we can't avoid climate change, our community is working to lessen its effects and to keep people safe. Green infrastructure is one of the strategies we can use to bring health, environmental, social and economic benefits to our community in the face of climate change.

## **What is green infrastructure?**

- Did you know that nature is a powerful tool that can address many of our community's greatest environmental and health challenges? Right now, **[department name]** is using natural and built green features to create a more livable community and protect people from life-threatening problems such as flooding, heat waves and air pollution. We call these improvements "green infrastructure," and they're important tools for our city to improve quality of life and keep people healthy and safe.
- Simple, yet powerful solutions like gardens and trees can help absorb excess rainfall when storms hit. Greener parks, open spaces and specialized pavement can help water flow safely into the ground. These kinds of green features help keep our drinking water clean and our sidewalks, ball fields, trails, homes and businesses open to all.

## **What do we mean by "greener parks"?**

- Parks serve important functions for recreation and green space in communities, but incorporating green infrastructure into parks can help boost their overall benefit to community through increased health, environmental, social and economic benefits. That's why we're referring to parks with green infrastructure features as "greener parks" in this messaging platform.

## **Places, People and Health Equity**

Ample research shows that people's health — and even how long they live — is closely linked to factors such as their race, income and ethnicity.

- In some communities, life expectancy can vary by as much as 20 years for people living just five miles apart.<sup>1</sup>
- Here in the United States, people with lower incomes have increased risk of heart disease.
- Families who earn less are also less likely to live near healthy, affordable food options, more likely to have high stress levels and less likely to have quality medical care.<sup>2</sup>
- Evidence shows people of color face these hurdles more than others — along with an increased risk for health challenges such as diabetes, heart disease and stroke.

[ 1 ] "Life Expectancy: Where You Live Affects How Long You Live." Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. Retrieved from <https://www.rwjf.org/en/library/interactives/whereliveaffectshowlongyoulive.html>  
[ 2 ] Kincaid, E. (2015). "How income affects health." *Business Insider*. Retrieved from <https://www.businessinsider.com/how-income-affects-health-2015-4>

# The Opportunity for Our Community

Why is it critical for us to support green infrastructure and greener parks? This section has points to help you convince groups in your community about the importance of greener parks.

- Evidence and common sense agree: parks improve people’s health, well-being and quality of life. That’s why every person deserves access to public green space and recreation activities in their community — so they have safe, welcoming places to connect with neighbors, to relax, to learn and to play.
- But as climate change brings hotter temperatures and more extreme weather, investments in greener parks offer even more powerful benefits for our community. Just consider: shade trees help cool neighborhoods and make our air cleaner, so kids can get outside and play safely. Greener parks can help prevent flood damage to homes and businesses. Rain gardens reduce the flooding that occurs on streets, sidewalks and even soccer fields and basketball courts, so people can enjoy the outdoors safely after a storm. They can even help keep our drinking water clean! With all the different ways we can use nature as a solution, it pays off to invest in these improvements.

## → Supporting points

### **Green infrastructure, parks and health benefits for low-income and communities of color**

- **All** people stand to gain from the proven health benefits of green infrastructure in parks. But not all people in our community have the same chance at living long, healthy lives. That’s why these solutions are especially critical in vulnerable communities where people struggle to make ends meet.
  - Just getting out into a park can lower stress and blood pressure, which is especially critical for low-income and communities of color who have higher rates of heart disease and stroke.
  - Increasing the number of trees in a neighborhood can increase clean air and shade. For families and seniors without air conditioning, or those living with conditions like asthma, these are big benefits contributing to health and quality of life.
  - Living near parks and greenspace can even change the odds for expectant families. Evidence shows pregnant mothers have lower blood pressure and babies are more likely to be born at a healthy weight when they have access to parks. For low-income and families of color — who have higher health risks during pregnancy — these benefits are especially important.
  - Kids who live near parks and spend time in nature have better attention, behavior and self-control — all of which can help lower the stress they face when growing up in a family that struggles to make ends meet.
  - Greener parks and features like rain gardens can help manage stormwater and flooding. This makes streets and sidewalks safer, and allows ball fields and playgrounds to stay open longer for the community to enjoy.
  - Well-managed parks and greenspace provide cost-free activities, give kids a place to play and offer neighbors a place to gather. Research shows this win-win improves physical and mental health, gives people a chance to stay active and boosts community safety.

### **Less Income Equals Fewer Playgrounds**

Children growing up in families who earn less are less likely to have playgrounds, sidewalks and recreation centers where they can stay safe and active in their neighborhoods.<sup>1</sup>



Example of Green Infrastructure / Willamette Partnership

[ 1 ] Finklestein, D., Petersen, D., and Schottenfeld, L. (2017). "Promoting Children's Physical Activity in Low-Income Communities in Colorado: What Are the Barriers and Opportunities?" Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

## Green infrastructure and economic benefits to the community

- Evidence shows green infrastructure in parks makes good financial sense for cities and taxpayers alike.
  - Greener parks can save cities money on managing stormwater.
  - Pavement that allows rainwater to soak in is cheaper to build and maintain than traditional cement or blacktop. And that can save tens of thousands of dollars over the lifetime of a parking lot.
  - Green infrastructure can mean long-term cost savings for taxpayers. By using nature to help manage stormwater, communities can save money that would otherwise go toward expensive water resource recovery facility construction and maintenance.
  - Green infrastructure is a growth industry — building and caring for it creates jobs and a lot of local economic activity.
  - Adding and maintaining green infrastructure in parks creates a range of new, well-paying jobs for people of all ages and levels of training: from youth workforce development opportunities to urban planners and designers to landscaping crews, these are jobs that offer exposure to new opportunities, career advancement and family-sustaining wages.
  - Green infrastructure in parks boosts opportunities for healthy, active living. And when community members are healthy, it creates a more robust workforce and stronger economy.
  - Cities that invest in parks and green space are more likely to attract and retain businesses and employees.
  - Greener parks, make neighborhoods that people are proud to call home.

### More Green Saves Green

According to one study, every \$1 spent on keeping pollution out of source water saved a city \$27 in treating polluted water further down the line.<sup>1</sup>

## Green Infrastructure Boosts Economy in Los Angeles

In Los Angeles, a \$166 million investment in green infrastructure created more than 2,000 new jobs; in Portland, Oregon, green infrastructure-related projects employed over 10,000 people in 2015.<sup>2</sup> And almost three quarters of these new jobs go to local residents, creating a direct economic investment back into the community, which is especially valuable in neighborhoods that have limited options for well-paying jobs.<sup>3</sup>

## Call to Action: Investing in Green Infrastructure and Advancing Equity

Right now, we have an opportunity to counter the effects of the unjust policies of the past, which deliberately made parks scarce, neglected or even non-existent in communities of color. By adding green infrastructure and park space, community leaders have a powerful tool to combat racial, ethnic and income inequities in their communities — and boost health, well-being and quality of life.

- For too long, communities like ours used official and unofficial policies — also known as “redlining” — to shut people of color out of certain neighborhoods and keep public amenities like parks from going in near their homes.
- To correct these wrongs, today’s park planning processes can — and must — give all people power to make decisions on what their neighborhood needs to be welcoming, enjoyable and safe. This is especially true for communities of color whose voices and viewpoints have been historically overlooked.
- Local elected officials should direct and guide agencies, such as park and recreation, housing and economic development, to work together to make sure neighborhood improvements benefit existing community members and keep communities stable and thriving. No one deserves to be priced out of the community they call home.
- When local governments, community leaders and community members work together, we can spread the benefits of parks and green infrastructure equitably, so everyone has access to green spaces and the benefits they provide.

[ 1 ] Chesapeake Bay Foundation. (2014). “The economic benefits of implementing the blueprint in Delaware.” Retrieved from <https://www.cbfg.org/document-library/cbf-reports/0929-Final-DE-fact-sheet9b9e.pdf>

[ 2 ] Jobs for the Future. (2017). “Exploring the Green Infrastructure Workforce.” Retrieved from [https://fforg-prod-prime.s3.amazonaws.com/media/documents/NatureWORKS-Issue-Brief-032317\\_v3.pdf](https://fforg-prod-prime.s3.amazonaws.com/media/documents/NatureWORKS-Issue-Brief-032317_v3.pdf)

[ 3 ] Conservation Law Foundation. (2014). “Green Infrastructure Projects Create Jobs.” Retrieved from <https://www.clf.org/blog/green-infrastructure-projects/>

# Building Public Support for Greener Parks

Once you've convinced people that greener parks are important, you can use the following messages to help build public support around your vision.

## Community-Focused Messaging

- **[Community name]**'s knows a great parks system can do even more than connect people to the outdoors, recreation and each other. We can be a leader in improving our community's health and well-being in the face of a changing climate and changing world. And we can do our part to undo unfair policies and practices of the past to make sure no neighborhood is shut out of places that should belong to us all.

That's why we're inviting local leaders and neighbors alike to join us in boosting investments and making smart plans that transform our community and parks into even healthier and greener places: from creating new pocket parks and planting more trees to: **[managing our local lakes and streams/expanding native plantings/etc.]**

- With all the benefits to people's health and well-being, everyone in our community deserves access to a great park. That's why equity is **[community name]**'s guiding principle as we manage existing green infrastructure projects and plan for new ones.
- As **[a government agency/civil servants]**, we know it's critical to establish trust and dialogue with every community. But it's especially important for low-income and communities of color to have a voice in what their neighborhood needs — because unjust policies in the past deliberately kept them from having a fair say.

### For communities with limited experience in green infrastructure

- We're just getting started with this important new mission. That's why we're eager to brainstorm with local community members, businesses and community leaders to understand how we can make green infrastructure work in **[community]**.

### For communities with moderate track record

- Here in **[community]**, we're lucky to have made a solid start on these critical green improvements. But we know we have more work to do to learn about how we can best meet the community's interests and needs. That's why we're planning to **[fill in activity: host listening sessions, meet with local leaders, etc.]**.

### For communities with established success

- Our **[community]** is a national leader in using green improvements to boost **[city/town/county]** citizens' well-being and quality of life--and other communities are learning from our example. But the challenges of a fast-changing climate means we must keep innovating, because there's no time to waste.





## Common Questions and Answers

People may have negative opinions about green infrastructure or think that investments in greener parks won't have significant impacts on the community's well-being. Use the following list of questions with answers that address common misunderstandings about green infrastructure and/or greener parks. It is important to remember that each community will have different opinions and reasons for those opinions, so use the information below as a guide, not a script. Rather than giving equal real estate to the information you want the audience to know and the misconception they may have, always focus on positive messaging.

### Q: Green infrastructure sounds great, but won't it be expensive?

Greener parks can go a long way in saving taxpayer dollars, and not just because climate change is making weather extremes more frequent and more damaging for our city and its people. Green infrastructure in parks and public places has proven to benefit people's physical and mental health, which can translate into a more productive workforce and lower healthcare costs. It can help prevent costs from flooding damage after storms. These projects also are known to create jobs that result in employment opportunities for people from a variety of backgrounds and levels of education. And the evidence shows that a majority of these jobs are held by people in the communities they serve, which means lower unemployment and more people with incomes they can support a family on.

What's more, maintaining and replacing "gray infrastructure" in cities is costly, and supplementing or replacing it with green infrastructure can be less expensive and more efficient. No matter what, all communities need a smart, efficient way to manage stormwater, and cities across the United States — and around the world — are quickly recognizing green infrastructure is a win-win.

With green infrastructure, we can use a single investment to create a lot of benefits for the community.

### Q: What's the evidence that something like green parks can actually improve people's health?

The research is clear: people's health is profoundly affected by their environment — whether the issue is access to clean air, healthy food, transportation or affordable housing. People who live near parks see a range of benefits to their health and quality of life from lower rates of heart disease and stress, to higher rates of physical activity and better connections to their neighbors. They provide places for people of all ages to get moving and stay active. Parks with green infrastructure, such as plenty of trees and good drainage when storms hit, can help keep our water supply and air clean and safe.

Whether you measure the benefits in lower blood pressure, reduced asthma, healthier weight or lower anxiety, every community stands to gain from green improvements. But in neighborhoods where health risks are highest including communities of color and places where people struggle to make ends meet, the advantages are even greater.

### Q: What about neighborhoods without big parks or lots of greenspace? What impact does green infrastructure have there?

Every neighborhood can grow greener; it doesn't take a lot of open space! Park and recreation agencies in dense, urban communities can plant green roofs to manage stormwater and convert unused lots into rain gardens. Even a "pocket park" can give community members access to the same range of health benefits a bigger space can. Research shows just getting outside into a green space can lower blood pressure and reduce stress. These are the places where it can be most important to increase green infrastructure, because places with few trees or plants are hotter and more likely to flood, which makes it harder on the people and the places they gather — from playgrounds to ball fields.



## Q: Why should we focus on adding green infrastructure in historically disinvested communities?

All community members can benefit from greener parks, but these solutions are especially critical in low-income neighborhoods and places people of color reside. Historically, these communities have faced decades of public disinvestment. Policies of the past continue to diminish access to safe, well-maintained park and recreation facilities and programs today. With all the proven benefits to health and well-being people get from a greener park, no community member should be left out.

Families with young children and older adults are especially vulnerable to poor air quality and weather extremes, which can worsen conditions such as asthma or keep kids from playing outside. And people who struggle to make ends meet are more likely to rely on walking or public transportation to get to school or work. That's why it's critical our community's park and recreation facilities use green infrastructure to help manage stormwater, keep our neighborhoods cool and ensure everyone can benefit from a great park.

### What about green infrastructure in rural community parks?

Rural communities face their own set of health equity challenges:

- Lack of access to local medical care and services<sup>1</sup>
- Water pollution from agricultural runoff<sup>2</sup>
- Air pollution from agriculture and industrial plants located away from major urban areas.<sup>3</sup>

Ensuring that rural communities have greener parks can provide places for dispersed communities to come together to recreate while having positive effects on air and water quality.

## Q: Won't green infrastructure lead to gentrification and hurt the people who need help the most?

Every neighborhood deserves the chance to benefit from green infrastructure, which improves people's health and well-being and makes communities safer, more attractive places to live. But it's especially important for our city to make careful plans that distribute these solutions where they can do the greatest good, which is often where people's needs are the highest and private resources are scarce.

Our city is committed to making sure we combine nature-based solutions, at the right time, with the right policies and practices to keep communities vibrant and diverse. We're eager to partner with and learn from neighbors, local leaders and government agencies, so neighborhoods reflect the community's culture, values and needs while remaining affordable.

[ 1 ] Warshaw, R. (2017). "Health Disparities Affect Millions in US Rural Communities." Association of American Medical Colleges.

[ 2 ] U.S. EPA. (2005). "Protecting Water Quality from Agricultural Runoff." Retrieved from [https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2015-09/documents/ag\\_runoff\\_fact\\_sheet.pdf](https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2015-09/documents/ag_runoff_fact_sheet.pdf)

[ 3 ] U.S. EPA. (2017). "Agriculture and Air Quality." Retrieved from <https://www.epa.gov/agriculture/agriculture-and-air-quality#main-content>

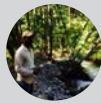
# 3

## **SAMPLE SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS FOR PARK AND RECREATION PROFESSIONALS**



Let's create a campaign to make greener parks a reality for every community! Tailor, add to and share the posts below, and link them back to your agency's webpage and other resources you've created. Invite your friends, family, leadership, elected officials and community members to do the same. Be sure to use [#greenerparks!](#)

## Facebook



### Greener City Parks and Recreation

7 hours ago



As [#climatechange](#) brings hotter temperatures and more extreme weather, public green space offers powerful benefits for our community. Just consider: [#greenerparks](#) help manage stormwater to keep our sidewalks safe, our streets clear and our playgrounds open for kids. Find out how we're putting nature to work for all of us at [\[insert link\]](#).

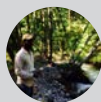


### Greener City Parks and Recreation

7 hours ago



Heat waves get us all down, but some older adults and families in [\[city name\]](#) without air conditioning are especially vulnerable when the temperature rises. Learn how your parks department is using nature-based solutions to keep neighborhoods cool and the air safe to breathe — especially for those who need it most. [#greenerparks](#) [\[insert link\]](#)

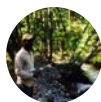


### Greener City Parks and Recreation

7 hours ago



Did you know that the outdoors can be some of the best medicine? Research shows that spending time outside cuts anxiety and stress, and having places to get active can help people stay healthy. Learn how we're using [#greenerparks](#) to make our community a place where everyone can thrive. [\[insert link\]](#)



### Greener City Parks and Recreation

7 hours ago



[\[Park and recreation agency name\]](#) is taking the lead on improving people's health and well-being in the face of a changing climate and a changing world. That's why we're using [#greenerparks](#) nature-based solutions — from planting trees to adding rain gardens — to keep neighborhoods cool and make our air safer to breathe. Find out what we're planning for your community! [\[insert link\]](#)

*\*Please note that these example posts are from a fictional account and in no way reflect a real account or existing account's opinions.*

# Twitter



**Greener City Parks and Recreation**

@greeninfraexample

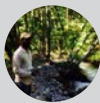
The outdoors can be our community's best ally when it comes to improving peoples' health, well-being and quality of life. Find out how at [insert link]! [#greenerparks](#)



**Greener City Parks and Recreation**

@greeninfraexample

Ever wonder where all this rain goes after it falls? We've got you covered. See how our parks are using nature to keep homes safe, sidewalks open and streets clear at [insert link]. [#greenerparks](#) [#stormwater](#)



**Greener City Parks and Recreation**

@greeninfraexample

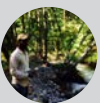
Heat wave got you in a sweat? Find out how [community] parks department is using nature to keep our neighborhoods cool. [insert link] [#greenerparks](#)



**Greener City Parks and Recreation**

@greeninfraexample

Parents love parks — and they should! Did you know living near a [#greenerpark](#) can improve health for expectant moms and babies? Find out how by visiting [insert link]. [#parenting](#)



**Greener City Parks and Recreation**

@greeninfraexample

Our community's parks are more than just a place to play! Check out the cool new ways our city is using green space to make people healthier. [insert link] [#health](#) [#greenerparks](#)

*\*Please note that these example posts are from a fictional account and in no way reflect a real account or existing account's opinions.*



**Greener City Parks and Recreation**

@greeninfraexample

Pollution stinks! But [community] parks department has a plan. Learn how we're using trees, gardens and green space to keep our air and water clean. [#greenerparks](#) [insert link]



**Greener City Parks and Recreation**

@greeninfraexample

A dose of nature can be great medicine! Learn how parks and green space improve [#mentalhealth](#) and [#wellbeing](#). [insert link]



**Greener City Parks and Recreation**

@greeninfraexample

What's cheap and smart and green all over? [#Greenerparks](#)! Find out how we're using smart park design to create jobs, save money and make communities better places to live. [insert link]



Photo / Bewakoof.com Official on Unsplash



Photo / Chuttersnap on Unsplash

## ABOUT NRPA



The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) is a national nonprofit organization dedicated to advancing parks, recreation and conservation efforts that enhance quality of life for all people. Through its network of 60,000 recreation and park professionals and advocates, NRPA supports 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, nonprofit organizations and commercial enterprises. Funded through dues, grants, registration fees and charitable contributions, NRPA produces research, education and policy initiatives that ultimately enrich the communities that our members serve. For more information, visit [www.nrpa.org](http://www.nrpa.org).

## ABOUT WILLAMETTE PARTNERSHIP



Willamette Partnership is a conservation nonprofit dedicated to solving complex environmental problems in ways that work for people. We are known for helping state and federal natural resource agencies, businesses, and conservation interests take advantage of opportunities to achieve conservation and economic outcomes. We work throughout the western U.S. with a focus on the Pacific Northwest. For more information visit, [www.willamettepartnership.org](http://www.willamettepartnership.org).

# Greener Parks for Health

Green Infrastructure as a Strategy for  
Improving Equity and Community Well-Being

Communications Toolkit

