

Iowa Foundation for Parks & Recreation: 101



Parks and Recreation is Essential

- All statistics are from a national level with U.S. adults from the **National Parks and Recreation Association**
- 90% of US adults say that parks and recreation is an **important local government service**
- 3 in 4 adults say that access to a nearby park, playground, open space or recreation center is an **important factor in deciding where they want to live**



Parks and Recreation Use and Reach

- Residents visit local park/recreation facilities on **average 22 times each year**
- 74% of residents live within a **walkable (10 minutes) distance** from a local park or recreation opportunity
 - Playgrounds, open space, trail, recreation center



Accessibility and Inclusion

- Demand for park and recreation services **often outweighs community resources**
- 81% want parks and recreation to **ensure inclusivity** through policies and practices that take into account mental and physical abilities, as well as ethnic, religious, racial, orientation, cultural or socio-economic backgrounds
- 86% believe it is **important for local governments to make investments** that ensure children have access to safe and inclusive playgrounds



Public Support for Parks and Recreation

- 88% of adults agree that parks and recreation provide good opportunities to **interact with nature and outdoors**
- 91% of adults seek out **park-centered entertainment/social events** that allow them to mingle with others
- 9 in 10 people agree that it is important for all levels of **government to sufficiently fund parks and recreation**
- 66% of adults **support their local government in dedicating revenue and taxes** that are specific for park and recreation operations or expansion projects



Physical Health Impacts

- Provides opportunities for physical activity and **connecting with the outdoors**
- Access to indoor/outdoor facilities and frequency of park visitation correlates with **greater physical activity**
- Children lacking access to parks and facilities have shown to be more likely **physically inactive**, excessive screen time (4+ hours daily), obtain inadequate sleep, overweight or obese, or diagnosed with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)
- Green space exposure corresponds with **improved health**
 - Decrease in stress, blood pressure, heart rate, and risk of chronic disease (cancer, diabetes, cardiovascular heart disease)



Mental Health Impacts

- Counters social isolation by **connecting people with nature and each other**
- Time spent in nature **positively impacts mental health** by increasing cognitive performance and well-being and alleviating illnesses such as depression, attention deficit disorders and Alzheimer's
- People living more than 1 kilometer (.6 miles) away from a green space have **nearly 50% high odds of experiencing stress** than those living fewer than 300 meters from a green space
- Physician-diagnosed **depression was 33% higher in residential areas with the fewest green spaces** compared to neighborhoods with the most



Community Impact

- **Forefront of their communities'** emergency response
- **A leading provider of healthy meals, nutrition services and education**
- **A leader in offering access to active recreation** such as playgrounds, hiking and biking trails, senior centers, sports fields, and swimming pools



Environmental Impact

- Parks lower ground temperatures with tree canopy, clean water, reduce flooding and contribute to healthier air
- Urban parks can improve the environment, enhance storm water management, reduce traffic noise and increase biodiversity
- 93% agree that **it is critical to develop local parks, trails and green spaces near bodies of water for the purpose of protecting natural resources** in the community
- 89% want their local agencies to **reduce the impact of extreme temperatures through the planting of trees** and other vegetation



Child Development Impact

- **A leading provider of childcare** and out-of-school time programming (4 in 5 agencies offer it)
- 82% of park and recreation agencies offer **summer camp programs** for their communities' children
- A leader in youth sports, providing opportunities for all skill levels and abilities to play and **introduced to a wide variety**
- Self-reported time in **nature correlates with overall positive youth development**, resilience to external stressors and improves overall mental health



Economic Impact

- Local agencies in the U.S. generated **\$201 billion in economic activity** and supported more than 1.1 million jobs in 2021
- 87% of **corporate executives agree that quality of life is an important factor** when considering making new facilities, expansion or relocation plans
- 96% of adults agree there are **important benefits that teenagers and young adults gain from their first jobs and volunteer opportunities**



Iowa Foundation for Parks & Recreation



Who We Are

- Founded in 1987
- Evolved out of a need to financially support the growth of the Iowa Parks and Recreation Association (IPRA)
- 15 Board Members
 - Field Professionals
 - Commercial Professionals



Our Mission

To provide resources to deliver the benefits of park
and recreation to all Iowa communities.

Our Vision

To build a better Iowa through parks and recreation.



Our Purpose

Iowa Foundation for Parks and Recreation is organized and operated exclusively for the benefit of and to carry out the purposes of the leisure movement in Iowa by:

- Working closely with local governments, recreation and parks departments, and private organization to identify and prioritize park and leisure opportunities and amenities
- Furthering the course of research and development in all areas of leisure in Iowa
- Providing scholarships on a nondiscriminatory basis regardless of race, color, creed, religion, sex or national origin to unrelated worthy students enrolled in professional development programs in parks and recreation or related fields of study at post-secondary institutions of higher learning in Iowa;



Currently Funded Projects



- Sponsor of the IPRA's Women In Leadership
- Sponsor the IPRA Leadership Institute
- Sponsor fellowships to attend IPRA Spring Conference
- Sponsor fellowships to attend the National Park and Recreation Annual Conference



Mini Grant Program

Created in 2019 to support communities with a population of 10,000 people or less.

Application available annually:
October 1 – January 31

Receive around 30 applications each year.

2024 Recipients of \$1,000:

- Story City: Rec Center Batting Cages
- Colfax: Disc Golf Course Updates
- Oakland Acres: Adjustable Multi-Sport Net System
- Laurens: Park Fun Upgrade
- Walcott: Swing Set Replacement



Friends of the Foundation

Make An Impact by joining the Friends

- *Educate*
 - 1-2 emails every month detailing what the Foundation is currently working on and what is coming up
- *Support*
 - Help support the Foundation by being on a committee (*it is not required*)
- *Connect*
 - Opportunities to connect with other Friends, Board Members and our Commercial Sponsors

FRIENDS APPLICATION

one time fee



\$25 -



How can **YOU** support our efforts?



- Support and recommend Commercial Sponsors
- Match Campaign
- Annual Golf outing
- Live & Silent Auctions
- Friends of the Foundation



What We Provide

- Education experiences locally and nationally
- Community development including:
 - New and enhanced recreational facilities
 - Community involvement
 - Youth programs
 - Health and wellness
 - Quality of life
- Mentorship
- Development of tomorrow's leaders
- Connection to colleges and Universities to talk with students about the profession



A Day in the Life...

Parks & Recreation



What is one
thing you
enjoy about
your job?

Different most days

Not stuck behind a
computer

See my work play out

Engaging with people

Working with teens

Creative/innovative

Being used a reference
from employees

People appreciating &
using facilities

Free programming



What do you do in the
winter?

Is it like the show?

Can we still sign up?

How is it working with
Seniors?

Do you still like the
public?

What are the
schools doing?

Other city department questions

What is one
question the
public always
asks you
about your
job?



What is one
thing you would
like City
Administration/
Mayor/Council
to know about
this field?

We can't be black &
white in most things

Many layers to what we offer
and why we offer them

We are more than just
sports

Work when others play

Attend the events/programs
& give us feedback

The impact we provide
to participants and the
community

We can help provide solutions

We ARE essential - so fund us like we are



Positivity

Learning and networking

Using facilities

Asking questions - and to
the right person

Limit silos between
departments

Showing up to events

Look at more than
just the budget

Talk to us

How can you
be more
supported you
more in your
job?



Why do you
show up for
your job
everyday?

Bringing people into
our community

Seeing memories/experience
unfold

Gap filler in communities

Laying the foundation
for the future

The job is (mostly) fun

Seeing the enjoyment

Ability to be creative

Serving our community



Current Corporate Sponsors:



- **Exempt Status** - The Foundation for Parks and Recreation is a 501(c)(3) organization and is exempt from federal income tax. All contributions are deductible under Section 170(c)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.



Get involved!

In-person: Connect with a Board Member

Join: Become a Friend

Email: info@iowaparksfoundation.org

Facebook: *Iowa Foundation for Parks and Recreation*

Visit: iapra.org/foundation

