



THE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF PARKS AND RECREATION.

Just as public safety and water utilities are considered essential public services, parks and recreation facilities and offerings are equally important to establishing and maintaining the quality of life in Arlington, and ensuring the health and well-being of our residents and visitors.

While the societal benefits are clear, some don't recognize the impact of parks and recreation on the economic and environmental growth and stewardship of

this great city. The following content will provide a clearer glimpse of the importance of parks and recreation services across the country and outline the initiatives that the Arlington Parks and Recreation Department has developed to boost the City Council's priorities.

"Many cities feel they must choose between economic growth and open space protection. In most cases, however, no such choice is necessary. A city's parks system

not only provides health and environmental benefits, a sense of community, and a higher quality of life, it is also good for the bottom line. Parks can significantly increase property values, attract and retain businesses, attract and retain a talented workforce, revitalize cities and communities, boost the tourism industry, create jobs, and increase tax revenues. Parks also play a major role in economic development and economic growth."¹

BUILD A THRIVING COMMUNITY

The Arlington City Council has determined that "Building a Thriving Community" is a priority for the work of our city. Every part of our organization contributes to our overall success and vitality as we make Arlington a better place to live, work, learn and play.

APRD INITIATIVES:

- Playground Improvements
- Park Enhancements, including projects at the SW Nature Preserve, Burl Wilkes, Rush Creek and Richard Simpson.
- New and Expanded Special Events
- Master Planning, including update to 10-yr Park, Recreation and Open Space Plan
- Hugh Smith Recreation Center and East Library Assessment

DEFINE AN IDENTIFIABLE BRAND

Arlington is achieving a higher profile on a regional, national and international basis with world-class events taking place in the Entertainment District and as a home to an emerging Tier I research university. As our visibility increases, we want to be known for our authentic hometown charm and big city amenities. We strive to be genuine, the community of choice for our own residents and businesses and for those seeking a place to call home.

APRD INITIATIVES:

- New Parks and Gateway Signage
- Entertainment District Sculpture Trail
- Website Development of NaturallyFun.org
- Increase Social Media Presence
- Re-Design of Naturally Fun magazine

SUPPORT QUALITY EDUCATION

A successful community requires a variety of support systems and an environment that enables educational opportunities to flourish. Residents, students and families seeking a community to invest in desired choices and a culture of achievement. Arlington strives for quality public, private and higher education for our community. This focus will attract new residents and businesses, and prepare a foundation for our future. The synergy between educational institutions, the municipal corporation, the private sector and the community can help ensure success and achievement for all students.

APRD INITIATIVES:

- Internship Programs
- Lunch & Learn Career Development Seminars
- Brand+Aid Marketing & Social Media Conference
- Mayor's Youth Commission
- After-School and Day Camp Programs

ENHANCE REGIONAL MOBILITY

Improving the efficiency and effectiveness of Arlington's transportation connections within and beyond our borders is critical because of our central location within the region. Our community is at the crossroads. As the regional and statewide conversation to increase mobility continues, Arlington faces an important decision to determine its place in the future of this system.

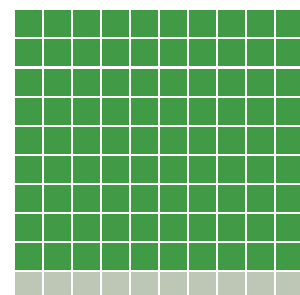
APRD INITIATIVES:

- Beautification of City Entry Points
- Improved Trail Connections Between Parks, Schools and Neighborhoods
- Bowman Branch Linear Park Trail Development
- Rush Creek Linear Park Trail Extension

SOMETHING FOR ALL

90%

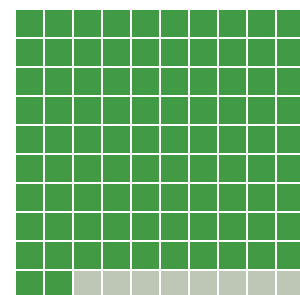
Ninety percent of residents surveyed in our most recent poll have visited an Arlington park and/or one of our recreation facilities in the last 12 months.



BETTER THAN THE REST

92%

When asked to rate their overall satisfaction of Arlington athletics programs, 92% said it was as good or better than they would expect from another public program.



REVENUE GENERATOR

A greenbelt in Boulder, Colo., that helped to increase the value of surrounding homes by approximately \$5.4 million was shown to potentially generate \$500,000 annually in property tax revenue for the neighborhood.³



VALUE OF TREES

Arlington's urban forest is estimated to have a structural value of \$2.75 Billion (e.g., the cost of having to replace a tree with a similar tree). Trees in Arlington are estimated to reduce energy-related costs from residential buildings by \$2.80 Million annually.⁵



WELCOME HOME

The National Association of Home Builders found that 65 percent of home shoppers surveyed felt that parks would seriously influence them to move to a community.²



POSITIVE PROPERTY

Value increase to homes located within 1,500 feet of the following types of parks according to the American Planning Association:²

- Natural Areas: \$10,648
- Golf Courses: \$8,849
- Specialty Parks: \$5,657
- Urban Parks: \$1,214



COMING FOR THE PARKS

In a study by Miller et al., a retiree sample was asked to review 14 features and indicate their importance in the decision to move. The first two in rank order were scenic beauty and recreational opportunities.²



WANTING TO SEE GREEN

A study in Active Living Research estimated that the average household living half a mile from open space would be willing to pay \$4,104 more for a home to live a quarter mile closer to the open space.³



HEALTH BENEFITS

Active Living Research highlighted a Nebraska study which found that for every \$1 spent on trails, there was almost \$3 in savings in direct medical costs.³



A PREMIUM ON PARKS

A survey by the National Association of Realtors (NAR) revealed that 50 percent of voters would be willing to pay 10 percent more for a house located near a park or protected open space.²

“Parks provide intrinsic environmental, aesthetic and recreation benefits to our cities. They are also a source of positive economic benefits. They enhance property values, increase municipal revenue, bring in homebuyers and workers, and attract retirees.” — AMERICAN PLANNING ASSOCIATION - CITY PARKS FORUM

¹Open Space San Francisco. "The Economic Value of Parks." 2009. ²American Planning Association "How Cities Use Parks for Economic Development." 2002. ³Active Living Research. "Economic Benefits of Communities that Support Physical Activity." May 2010. ⁴Active Living Research. "The Economic Benefits of Open Space, Recreation Facilities and Walkable Community Design." May 2010. ⁵City of Arlington. "Urban Forest Resource Analysis." 2009.