

The Park and Recreation System in San José, California Provides Millions in Economic Benefits



San José, California, the preeminent city of Silicon Valley, has a large natural and developed park system that provides beauty, recreational opportunities, access to nature, and positive environmental impacts to residents, workers, and tourists alike. In fact, parks are so important to the success of San José, that many people have asked how much economic value they bring. Thanks to a new study by The Trust for Public Land, the specifics of that value are now known.

Parks, trails, and community centers

San José contains almost 3,500 acres of city parkland and over 12,500 acres of county and federal preserves. This vast system provides unparalleled opportunities for walking, hiking, bicycling, swimming, playing sports, picnicking, and much more. It offers neighborhood and community parks, playfields, courts, golf courses, natural spaces, dog parks, skate parks, community centers, off-road trails, and the Happy Hollow Park and Zoo.

Enhancing property values

Parks and trails enhance the value of nearby residential properties because people enjoy living close to recreational amenities and are willing to pay for proximity. San José parks raise the value of nearby residential properties by \$1 billion and **increase property tax revenues by \$12.1 million a year.**

Providing essential natural goods and services

Parks reduce stormwater by capturing precipitation, slowing its runoff, and reducing the volume of water that enters the stormwater system. Parks in San José provide stormwater management valued at **\$6.43 million annually.**

Trees and shrubs in parks remove air pollutants that endanger human health and damage structures. Parks in San José provide health benefits and **reduce pollution control costs by \$1.18 million per year.**

Generating health care cost savings

Independent research shows that park use translates into increased physical activity, resulting in medical care costs savings. Approximately 24,000 adult residents use San José's parks, trails, and community centers to engage in physical activity at a level sufficient to generate measureable health benefits, yielding **annual medical cost savings of \$28.3 million.**

Offering recreational opportunities and attracting talented workers

Residents also enjoy San José parks, trails, and community centers. Each year residents of San José receive a **benefit of \$51.2 million for access to reduced or no cost recreational opportunities** at park facilities.

San José parks, trails, and community centers make the city an attractive place to live and work. Skilled workers are attracted to places like San José for its open space, clean air and water, and ample opportunities for outdoor recreation.

Boosting the local tourism economy

The Trust for Public Land estimates that approximately 7.7 percent of visitors to San José come to visit parks, trails, and community centers. These **visitors spend \$120 million annually in the local economy** and generate \$4.93 million in local tax revenues.

Source: The Trust for Public Land, *The Economic Benefits of the Park & Recreation System in San José, California* (2016). For the full report, visit WWW.TPL.ORG/ECONBENEFITS-SANJOSE

This Trust for Public Land report was completed in partnership with San José Department of Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services and with generous support from the S. D. Bechtel, Jr. Foundation.

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