

COVID Impacts and Parks and Recreation Agencies

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Parks and Recreation and COVID

- ▶ Parks are integral to the physical and mental wellness of communities, especially during the pandemic.
- ▶ Significant COVID impacts.
- ▶ Many parks, trails, natural areas and open spaces have welcomed record a number of visits during the pandemic.
- ▶ Need is great to continue provision of services and facilities.



Image Source: OPRD Twitter

Parks = Health and Wellness

▶ Reduced

- ▶ Symptoms of **ADHD** (eg. Kuo & Taylor, 2004)
- ▶ **Mortality** (eg. Villeneuve et al. 2013; Crouse et al. 2018)
- ▶ **Cardiovascular and Respiratory Illness** (eg. Tamoslunas et al. 2014)
- ▶ **Depression** (eg. McEachan et al. 2016; South et al. 2018)
- ▶ **Type 2 Diabetes** (eg. Astell-Burt et al. 2014)

▶ Improved

- ▶ **Wellbeing and Happiness** (eg. MacKerron & Mourato, 2013)
- ▶ **Cognitive Development and Brain Function** (eg. Dadvand et al. 2015; Dadvand et al. 2016)
- ▶ **Life Expectancy** (eg. Jonker et. al. 2014)

Impacts of COVID on P and R Agencies

- ▶ Impacts varied across the state and by agency type
 - ▶ Districts, small city, large city, county, rural/urban
- ▶ Common impacts across all types of agencies:
 - ▶ Closed facilities
 - ▶ Recreation centers
 - ▶ Senior centers
 - ▶ Playgrounds
 - ▶ Restrooms
 - ▶ Boat ramps
 - ▶ Trailheads and Natural Area access



Current Impacts

- ▶ 80% or more reduction in revenue
- ▶ Reduction in staffing levels
 - ▶ Maintenance of parks infrastructure
 - ▶ Processing and monitoring contracts and contract performance
 - ▶ Procurement supplies and equipment
 - ▶ Provision of vital cross-training of temp staffing
 - ▶ Enforcement rules and regulations in parks
 - ▶ Services for vulnerable populations including seniors, children, therapeutic
 - ▶ Reduced structure/supports in young peoples lives

Long-Term Impacts

- ▶ Deferred capital projects
- ▶ Loss of institutional knowledge
- ▶ Reduced capacity to reopen needed facilities
- ▶ Potential for reduction in regulatory compliance
- ▶ Decreased ability to meet service needs

Recovery from COVID Impacts

- ▶ Increase in demand and record park usage.
- ▶ Significant reductions to agency budgets and staffing levels.
- ▶ Need to continue access to Senior Centers, recreation facilities, natural areas and trailheads.
- ▶ Need for new and diversified funding mechanisms and sources to fulfill essential physical and mental health services, facilities and parks.



Thank You!