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%.[1]

Creating Safer Spaces

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

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.[4]

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.[5]

Engaged Communities

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

[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.

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