

JUSTIFICATION OF PROGRAM AND PERFORMANCE

Activity: Urban Park and Recreation Fund

Program Component	1999 Estimate	Uncontr/ Related Changes	Program Changes (+/-)	2000 Budget Request	Change From 1999 (+/-)
Urban Park and Recreation Grants	0	0	+4000	4,000	+4,000
Total Requirements \$(000)	0	0	+4,000	4,000	+4,000

AUTHORIZATION

16 U.S.C. 2501-2514 The Urban Park and Recreation Recovery Act (UPARR) of 1978
 Public Law 95-625 The National Parks and Recreation Act of 1978, Title X

OVERVIEW

The **Urban Park and Recreation Fund** activity provides grants to local governments to rehabilitate existing indoor and outdoor recreation facilities; contributes to an increase in investments by urban jurisdictions in planning, revitalization, operation and maintenance of existing recreation systems; and provides grants to communities to demonstrate innovative and cost-effective ways to enhance park and recreation opportunities at the neighborhood level.

APPLICABLE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE MISSION GOALS

- IIIb Through partnerships with State and local agencies and nonprofit organizations, a nationwide system of parks, open space, rivers, and trails provides educational, recreational, and conservation benefits for the American people.
- IIIc Assisted through Federal funds and programs, the protection of recreational opportunities is achieved through formal mechanisms to ensure continued access for public recreation use.

FY 1999 BUDGET REQUEST

	2000 Budget Request	Program Changes (+/-)
▪ Urban Park and Recreation Grants \$(000)	4,000	+4,000

▪ **Urban Park and Recreation Grants (+\$4,000,000):** The NPS is requesting \$4.0 million in FY 2000 for Urban Park and Recreation grants. Of the total, \$3,760,000 will be available for grant awards and \$240,000 will be used for program administration. Additional administrative funds would be needed to cover the costs associated with technical assistance to potential grantees in updating plans and developing grant applications, review and ranking of several hundred preapplications, and grant awards and obligations for successful applicants.

Grants funding will be applied to new grant requests. Based on prior UPARR competitions, the NPS anticipates applications from 100 to 150 urban localities requesting funds totaling up to approximately \$20 million. Probable awards would total 15 to 25 grants for the \$3.8 million available. The NPS has competitive criteria and procedures for awarding Rehabilitation and Innovation grants, and anticipates that it could be ready to consider applications for such grants by March 31, 2000, with all but a few projects completed by 2003.

Urban Park and Recreation Fund

The Urban Park and Recreation Recovery program, last funded in FY 1994, has extensive experience in targeting grants for recreation to low-income inner-city neighborhoods for the rehabilitation of existing critically needed recreation facilities and providing funds to support specific activities that increase recreation programs or services. Over the last nineteen years, the UPARR program has rehabilitated playgrounds, recreation centers, parks, ball fields, tennis and basketball courts, and swimming pools. Through innovation grants, this program has also helped turn an abandoned coal bunker into a recreation center, national guard armories into gymnasiums and community centers, and a shopping center and walkway into an exercise trail and senior citizen center; provided funds for recreation and education programs for teens; assisted communities in providing outdoor adventure and wilderness programs for inner-city youth that have limited mobility in seeking other recreation opportunities; developed swimming and water safety programs for minority children and disabled persons; and encouraged after-school programs for youth which are organized and run by public and private agencies working together to provide educational, cultural and environmental activities.

Many programs have been very successful in leveraging additional funding from public and private organizations. New Jersey's abandoned coal bunker recreation center is now a public/private partnership serving over 180 youths a day. Voluntary contributions are still its major source of income. Indianapolis, Indiana's Youth Conservation Corps, a program whereby inner-city youth renovated Washington Park and constructed an ecological pond, was supported in part by several area businesses which provided funds, transportation, and food for the youth while the park was being rehabilitated. Tucson, Arizona's KIDCO program (an after school and summer recreation program), is an effective and unique means of delivering after school and summer recreation programs for youth. The city developed a program using demonstration programs that offer a wide range of recreation activities which offer a positive outlet for the youth in the community. Recreation leader training manuals were developed as a result of this successful program, and have been distributed upon request to many cities across the Nation.

As in the examples above, additional funding would allow the Service, through rehabilitation projects, to renew its emphasis on improving recreation services to inner-city minority and low to moderate income populations and the rehabilitation of recreation improvements at specific sites resulting in the overall enhancement of a community's recreation system. Innovation projects, which are capped by law to ten percent of the amount available for funding, will focus on new, unique and more effective means for delivering recreation services which benefit disadvantaged community populations, programs which emphasize environmental education, family orientation and exposure to our natural resource base, and increased citizen involvement in project conception and implementation. Both rehabilitation and innovation grants will seek to leverage greater public or private investment in the form of services, materials and dollars.

Another good example of the benefits derived from the urban parks program is The Glenwood Community Recreation Center project. Located in Columbus, Ohio, in an older section of the city, the center is within a Community Development Block Grants service area, and serves a large population of low-income senior citizens and minorities. The center has a one-mile service area and most of the population served is within walking distance. The facility was built in 1915 and was in critical need of renovation. Major renovation of the center included replacing the roof, heating and air conditioning system, and barriers removed for improved handicap access inside and outside. A new chair lift was added for handicap access to all three levels of the center. Today, Glenwood Community Recreation Center is a focal point of the community. Improvements to the center have made it attractive and a more desirable place to participate in community recreation and social activities. New programs have been added to meet the community needs such as exercise and fitness classes for all age groups, tutoring and after-school programs for youth, and several neighborhood community groups rent space for meetings and social events.

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Funding provided in the past has also contributed to the development of programs and projects such as the innovation project established in Tacoma, Washington. The goals of this innovative project were to provide at-risk youth alternatives to gangs and drugs through participation in outdoor recreation activities, and to develop life skills such as self-esteem, leadership, decision-making, and cooperation. The program was designed to operate as an extensive partnership involving professionals from the disciplines of parks and recreation, education, city government, social services and criminal justice. It was designed to operate year-around with expanded activity during the summer months and over extended holiday periods. Youth participants were involved through various avenues such as schools, home school associations, youth service agencies and neighborhood community centers. The program has provided various activities such as backpacking in Olympic National Park; white water rafting on the Thompson River in British Columbia; cross-country skiing in Mount Rainier National Park; winter camping, inner-tubing and snow shoeing in various winter sports areas; water safety instruction; fishing, canoeing, boating and swimming, mountain biking on designated State and Federal lands; weekly environmental education and outdoor skills workshops; leadership training for advanced youth participants; and youth hosteling and meeting travelers from around the world.

The Tacoma program blossomed, leveraged other sources of funding and continues today as a model partnership program involving schools, government, criminal justice, social service and park and recreation agencies. It has since expanded to the adjacent community of Enumclaw, Washington. New partnerships have been formed with agencies such as Faith Group Homes and the Pierce County Juvenile Courts Probated Youth Program. This Tacoma program has received national recognition and was featured at a February 1995 invitational colloquium at Fort Worth, Texas, titled "Recreation for At-Risk Youth: Programs that Work," sponsored by the National Park and Recreation Association.