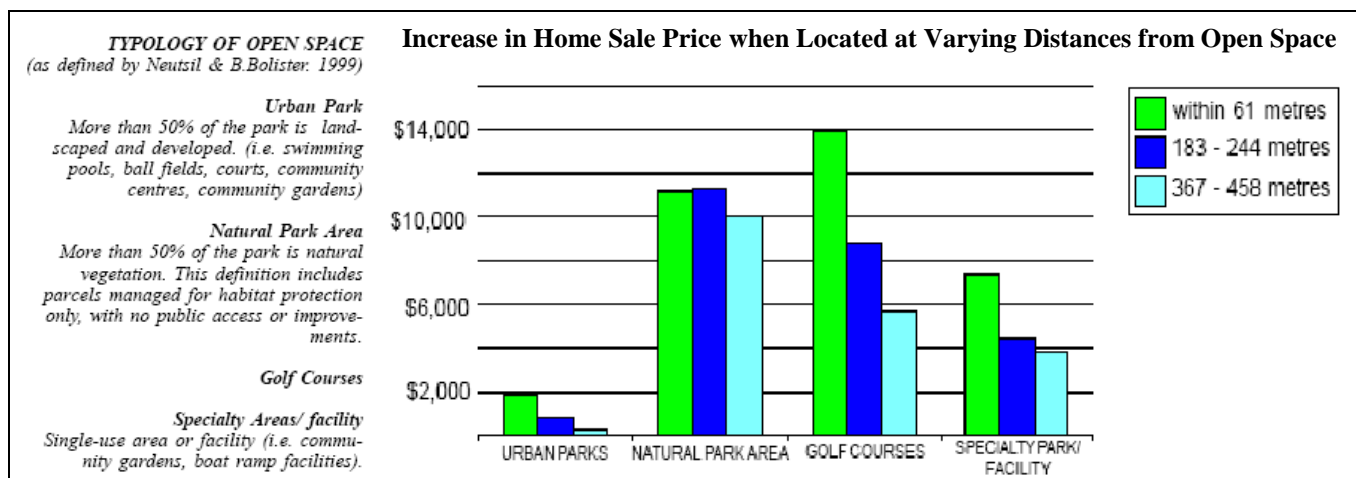


Municipal Benefits from Natural Areas, Parks and Rural Landscapes

ECONOMIC BENEFITS

- **Businesses gain directly from ecosystem services:** e.g., tourism and recreation, insurance, agriculture
- **Economic value of wetlands:** studies have shown economic values of up to \$689,000/acre/year
- **Parks are economic engines:** they contribute to an economy similar to roads, utilities and other infrastructure. Investment in open space and parks:
 - increases the value of nearby residential properties and commercial property values
 - increases property tax revenue
 - attracts businesses interested in high quality of life for employees
 - helps clean water and air, and prevent flooding – complementing more costly other approaches
 - attracts tourists and boosts recreational spending
 - requires space management, with associated jobs and local expenditures
- **Location benefits:** open spaces increase the value of adjacent property values. In fact, some companies in less desirable areas must pay ‘dis-amenity compensation’ (higher salaries). The chart shows how increases in property values ‘hold further’ with distance from a natural park area, vs other amenities

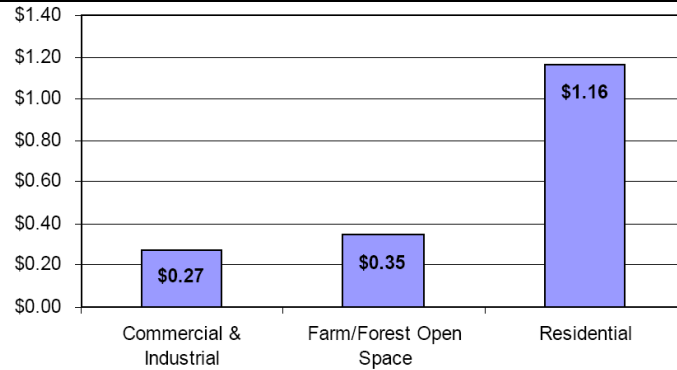
Effects of Community Green Space on Property Value and Community Completeness



James Taylor Chair in Landscape & Liveable Environments, 2001 "Effects of Community Green Space on Property Value and Community Completeness", University of BC, Technical Bulletin No. 9, March

- **Conservation communities cost less:** there are reduced infrastructural costs in developing new urbanism or conservation communities, since higher density housing reduces servicing costs
- **Reduced infrastructure costs:** watershed conservation has proved cost-effective in reducing water pollution which results in environmental and financial benefits for communities. Studies show every 10% increase in forest cover in a given area decreases treatment and chemical costs by roughly 20%, till 60% of the area is forested (US EPA)
- **Reduced municipal servicing costs:** studies show delivering services to residential development almost always costs more than the community can realise in taxes and other benefits, vs farm or forest.

Average Cost, per Dollar Revenue Raised, to Provide Municipal Services to Different Land Uses



J.L. Crompton 2004, "The Proximate Principle: The Impact of Parks, Open Space and Water Features on Residential Property Values and the Property Tax Base", Published by the National Recreation and Park Association.

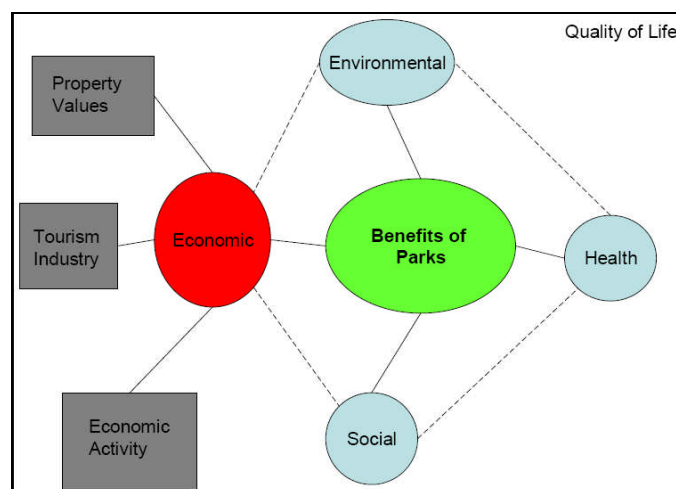
SOCIAL BENEFITS

- **Personal health:** when people have access to open spaces and parks, they exercise more, which reduces obesity and health care costs related to physical as well as mental and stress-related problems
- **Community health:** open space planning is correlated with an increase in "social capital". It can lead to more positive social interaction, a stronger sense of community, and reconnecting people and nature
- **Municipal profile:** integrating green spaces into landscape planning increases a municipality's appeal
- **Social equity:** community visionaries see parks as necessities for all, not amenities
- **Balance densification:** open space and environmentally sensitive area planning complements in-fill
- **Crime reduction:** juvenile delinquency and crime reductions are recorded benefits of parks

ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS

- **Air and water pollution mitigation:** a mature tree canopy reduces air temperatures significantly, lowering nearby building temperatures, and reducing smog levels up to 6%. Trees reduce water pollution, and the canopy absorbs rain, reducing pressure on the stormwater drainage system. Trees reduce air pollution – studies show a single rural tree can intercept up to 50lbs of particulates per year
- **Better overall resource conservation:** a sustainable planning approach encourages compact forms of urban development, which helps preserve parks, farmland and environmentally sensitive features. Compact developments require less energy to heat, and water consumption for lawns is reduced
- **Ecological support for protected areas:** parks alone are not sufficient to ensure key ecological functions are maintained. The surrounding lands are important to the park ecosystem's health, as the ecological systems don't necessarily function within the boundaries of the protected area. These "natural capital" services include: providing drinkable water, breathable air, a stable climate, recycling waste, pollinating food crops, and providing physical buffers against storms

Mapping the Benefits of Parks and Open Space



K. Edwards, 2007. "Do Parks make Cents? – An Economic Analysis of the Value of Parks in San Francisco", University of California Berkley, prepared for the San Francisco Neighbourhood Parks Council.