

# What can your park be?

**Everyone deserves to live close to a great park – do you have one?** When you go to your neighborhood park, does it feel safe, clean, and vibrant? For many Americans, there is an inequitable need, not just for more park space, but for a park that benefits their neighborhood’s health, resilience, and identity. Parks departments and other local organizations across the country can help you get the park your community deserves. Below are some parks features you may not know you can ask for.

## Climate solutions

Parks can be part of the climate solution. They can protect people from climate hazards such as extreme heat and flooding, and they can even absorb carbon from the atmosphere. [Learn more.](#)

**Park story:** [Paul Habans Charter Green Schoolyard](#)

### ASK FOR:

**Green infrastructure:** Water-smart landscaping features and permeable surfaces can capture stormwater, improving water quality and minimizing flooding risk.

**Tree canopy:** Trees clean the air, absorb carbon from the atmosphere, and reduce urban heat islands by acting as a cooling oasis.

**Trails:** Connecting neighborhoods through trails and greenways provides alternative transportation uses, such as running and biking, which reduce greenhouse gas emissions.



TIM GENDRON

## Health and wellness

Neighborhoods play a key role in our health status. Access to high-quality parks provides the opportunity for healthier, safer, happier neighborhoods. [Learn more.](#)

**Park story:** [Boeddeker Park](#)

### ASK FOR:

**Walking path with trees:** More than any other natural feature, access to trees has a remarkable impact on reduced stress levels.

**Active recreation zones:** Include designs that encourage people to explore active living at all ages, such as fitness equipment, walking paths, or even a rock wall!

**Community garden:** Increase access to healthy produce, agricultural awareness, and economic resilience with a community garden.

**Programming and events:** Parks departments can be wonderful partners for hosting programs and events that will get neighbors out and active in parks.



MICHAEL MILLMAN

## Equitable development

Well-resourced neighborhoods tend to have more parks and green space, and it takes intentionality to meet park needs equitably. [Learn more.](#)

**Park story:** [Kiwanis Methow Park](#)

### ASK FOR:

**Community engagement:** Who knows what the community needs better than the community. Build a coalition of neighbors for meaningful involvement in the park system.

**Local arts and culture:** Park features such as murals, pavilions, and sculptures that celebrate local identity and neighborhood history can foster a sense of ownership and belonging.

**Park needs assessment:** Identifying where parks are most needed can help you advocate for additional park investment.



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