

Open spaces, forests, nature, and farmland are proven to drastically improve our quality of life in many ways and provide economic benefits to the community.

Economic Impacts:



- **Stimulate the Local Economy**

Preserved open space and farmland generate jobs, create revenue, and attract people to spend money in the region through leisure tourism, agritourism, and ecotourism.

- **Curb Property Taxes**

Investment in open space is less costly to taxpayers due to the low maintenance needed for open space versus the high costs for infrastructure such as utilities, schools, and public services required for new development.

- **Increase Property Values**

Homes near open space, public parks, and farmland are consistently more desirable, resulting in higher property values and resale interest.

Environmental Impacts:



- **Safeguard Water Supply**

Preserved lands like wetlands (compared to paved and other impermeable surfaces) provide a natural system to continuously recharge groundwater, streams, reservoirs, and aquifers, filtering, maintaining, and protecting our water supply in a cost-effective manner. Without them, taxpayers would be forced to pay for engineered water filtration and treatment and face water conservation mandates during periods of drought.

- **Provide Stormwater Mitigation Services**

Protected lands serve as a buffer against destructive natural events like storms, erosion, and flooding, thereby safeguarding people and property and reducing the burden placed on local man-made stormwater infrastructure to absorb and filter stormwater, runoff, waste, and pollutants.

- **Conserve Wildlife Habitat**

Protected lands promote biodiversity and provide a haven for a diverse array of plants and animals, including threatened and endangered species.

- **Reduce Air Pollution**

Poor air quality and air pollution lead to a variety of health problems, damage buildings and plants, create smog, and contribute to climate change. The retention and creation of forests naturally remove significant amounts of air pollution, thereby contributing to environmental quality and health.

Societal Impacts:



- **Provide Health and Well Being**
Exposure to the outdoors has been shown to combat stress, boost health, improve immune system functionality, recharge vitamin D levels, and reduce the development of allergies in children.
- **Promote Recreational Opportunities**
Parks provide free and low-cost recreational opportunities for people of all ages. Physically active people exhibit a lower incidence of cardiovascular disease, diabetes, depression, certain cancers, and obesity, with better overall health, and therefore, reduced healthcare costs.
- **Foster Social Interaction**
Parks support social activities that promote relationships with friends and family and encourage cohesive communities.
- **Secure Sustainable Food Sources**
Ensuring the permanent availability of land for farming secures sustainable, nutritious food options for all. Eating locally sourced food means fresher, healthier, and tastier food at home and in schools.
- **Improve Productivity**
Individuals working near open space can take breaks in nature, returning to work with a clear mind and a keener ability to focus. Employers with healthy employees have lower healthcare costs, fewer workers' compensation claims, and lower rates of absenteeism and burnout.
- **Nourish the Mind**
Time spent in nature improves the psyche by replenishing overstimulated and exhausted mental energy and sharpening our cognition.
- **Encourage Smart Planning**
Preserving open space reduces urban sprawl and encourages strategic, sustainable development, achieving goals such as access to parks or open space within a 10-minute walk or bike ride for all residents, and decreasing vehicular travel time and accidents.
- **Empower the Next Generation**
Time in nature is proven to reduce childhood behavioral problems and increase self-esteem. Planting the seeds of curiosity, appreciation for nature, and a sense of wonder at a young age immersion in the natural world fosters the future stewards of our land.