



SUPPORT FEDERAL INVESTMENT IN URBAN & COMMUNITY PARKS

WHY INVEST IN URBAN AND COMMUNITY PARKS?

Parks support planning efforts in urban areas to build strong, vibrant communities in four primary ways:

- They promote **public health and wellbeing**, providing space to exercise, socialize, and relax.
- They support a **healthy environment**. Green infrastructure conserves open space in highly developed areas, protects ecosystems, and contributes to healthier air and water in urban communities.
- They contribute to a **prosperous economy**, attracting a competitive workforce seeking an excellent quality of life.
- They **build community** by providing a common space for all to gather and feel safe.

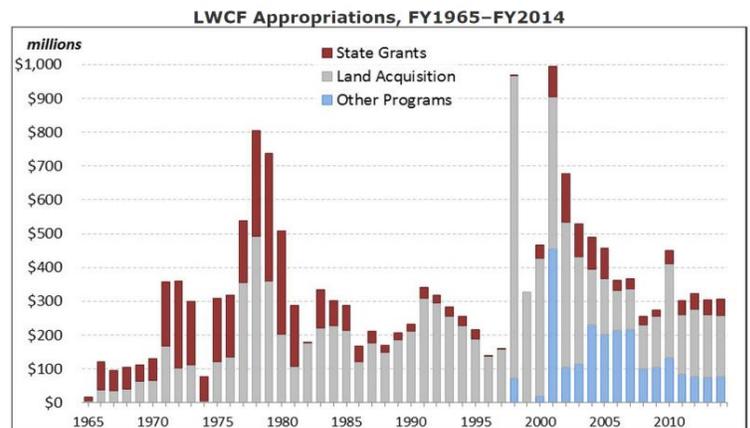


Buffalo Bayou in Houston, Texas. Designated a Great Place in America in 2012.

STATUS OF CURRENT FEDERAL INVESTMENT IN URBAN AND COMMUNITY PARKS

Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF):

- LWCF provides the primary source of federal investment in urban and community parks around the country.
- LWCF awards matching grants to states for local recreational planning and development projects. Unfortunately, LWCF state assistance has been woefully underfunded in recent decades.



LWCF Appropriations, FY1965-FY2014. Chart reproduced from Congressional Research Service report Land and Water Conservation Fund: Overview, Funding History, and Issues.

Why LWCF State and Local Assistance Grants

Matter to Planners: Planners across the country rely on LWCF state assistance matching grants to protect outdoor space and develop recreational facilities locally. Specifically, within LWCF state assistance, the **Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership (ORLP) program** has been created to provide matching grants to urban and economically disadvantaged communities for park and recreational planning and development.



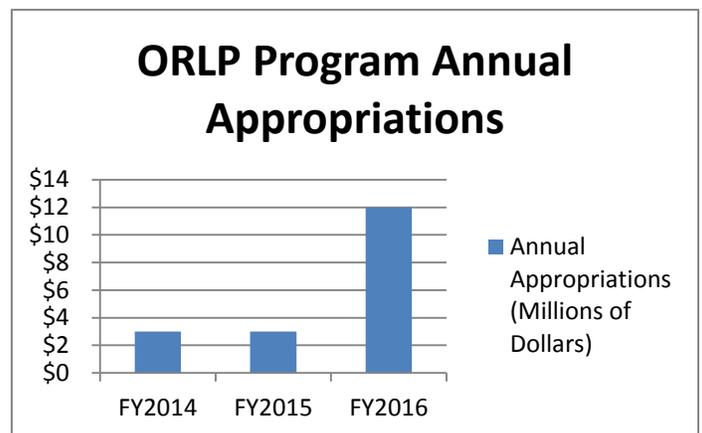
➤ **REAUTHORIZE AND FULLY FUND LWCF**

The American Planning Association supports a long-term reauthorization of LWCF and the inclusion of dedicated funding at \$900 million annually. Revenue for the fund comes from leasing fees paid by offshore oil and gas companies rather than from taxpayers. However, this revenue is not made available without an appropriation from Congress. Over the years, Congress has appropriated less than half of all funds available for LWCF. Long-term reauthorization and full, dedicated funding for LWCF will ensure planners can continue to provide parks and recreational facilities in local communities around the country.

➤ **PROVIDE NO LESS THAN LEVEL FUNDING FOR THE ORLP PROGRAM IN FY2017**

The American Planning Association supports no less than level funding for the ORLP program in FY2017.

This program received a significant increase in FY2016, which will help cities around the country plan and develop parks. Yet even this generous increase will not fulfill the unmet need when it comes to providing parks and recreational facilities for urban and economically disadvantaged communities.



➤ **FORMALLY AUTHORIZE THE ORLP PROGRAM**

The American Planning Association supports legislation to formally authorize the ORLP Program.

Appropriators created this program during the FY2014 appropriations process and have funded it for the last three years, but without a formal authorization, the program’s future remains uncertain.

➤ **SUPPORT INNOVATIVE FEDERAL PROGRAMS FOR URBAN PARK PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT**

Innovative new initiatives that support urban conservation, foster park planning, and promote recreation in cities are critical to keeping Americans healthy and happy. The American Planning Association supports future legislation that directly invests in communities that have shown a dedicated commitment to developing a strong network of urban parks.



Grand Park in Los Angeles, California. Designated a Great Place in America in 2013.