

Valuing Our Green Places

A Social Return on Investment (SROI) evaluation of parks and sportsgrounds in City of Parramatta.

City of Parramatta provides around 350 beautiful and diverse parks and sportsgrounds for residents, visitors and workers to enjoy. With the population expected to reach nearly 400,000 people by 2036, there will be increased pressure on existing parks, sportsgrounds and other open spaces in our Local Government Area.

Our Aim

To understand & quantify the social & economic value created by the parks & sportsgrounds provided & maintained by Council

What is an SROI evaluation?

A Social Return on Investment (SROI) evaluation identifies the investment that is required to deliver a service, asset or activity and compares it with the value of the outcomes experienced by stakeholders.

The seven core principles of SROI are:

- Understand what changes
- Involve stakeholders
- Value things that matter
- Only include what is material
- Do not over-claim
- Be transparent
- Verify results

What did we do?

City of Parramatta Council (Council) and Western Sydney Local Health District (WSLHD) commissioned this SROI evaluation to assess the social and economic value created by Council's parks and sportsgrounds.

The value created for the community was determined based on site evaluations of two sportsgrounds (Max Ruddock Reserve and Robin Thomas Reserve) and three parks (Jubilee Park, West Epping Park and Ray Park).

The findings of these site-based SROI evaluations were then used to scale the results across all 33 sportsgrounds 124 local and district parks in City of Parramatta.

Why is Green Space valuable?

- Access to quality green open space is beneficial for health and physical and mental health and wellbeing
- Green open space improves social connections and supports the development of vibrant communities by providing a place for activity and opportunities to interact
- Accessible and safe green open spaces foster active play, which is associated with physical, cognitive and social benefits for children
- Residents in high rise dwellings benefit from the provision of accessible green space

What did we find?

For every dollar invested in Council parks and sportsgrounds, **\$10 of social and economic value** is created for and experienced by a range of stakeholders per year.

Input costs (Total Council costs on parks and sportsgrounds for 2018) = **\$36,715,326** Outcomes valuation = **\$366,827,093**

For the full report by Council's Social Outcomes Team and Western Sydney Local Health District, contact the Customer Contact Centre on 9806 5050.
For translation, please contact Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) National on 131 450.

To our knowledge, this SROI evaluation was the **first undertaken in Australia** to measure the value of the social change created by public green space.



CITY OF PARRAMATTA



Health
Western Sydney
Local Health District