2024 ParkScore Index®

2024 Rank	Points
70	**45.1**

Memphis, TN

The ParkScore index is a national comparison of park systems across the 100 most populated cities in the United States. Published annually, the index measures park systems according to five categories reflective of an excellent city park system: access, investment, amenities, acreage, and equity. While the rankings provide fodder for friendly competition, the goal each year of publishing the index is to help leaders advocate for needed park resources and provide relevant data to inform local park improvement efforts. To facilitate a fair comparison across cities, the index aggregates across all public and private organizations supporting parks in each city.

This year, Memphis received a score of 45.1 points out of 100 based on an average of the five categories. There are 14 measures across these categories, with points awarded based on how Memphis compares to the other 99 cities for that particular measure.

58
out of 100 points

Acreage

The acreage score indicates the relative abundance of large 'destination' parks, which include large natural areas that provide critical mental health as well as climate and conservation benefits. There are two components to the acreage score. Of these, Memphis scores below average on the percentage of the city's overall area that is dedicated to parkland (24 out of 100 points), and among the highest on median park size (92 out of 100 points).

28
out of 100 points

Access

The access score indicates the percentage of a city's residents that live within a walkable half-mile of a park – the average distance that most people are willing to walk to reach a destination. With 46% of its population living this close to a park, Memphis scores below average in this category.

60
out of 100 points

Investment

The investment score indicates the relative financial health of a city's park system, which is essential to ensuring the park system is maintained at a high level. This value aggregates park and recreation spending across all agencies and organizations within the city, including monetized volunteer hours. In Memphis, a total of $163 per capita is spent each year on publicly accessible parks and recreation, about average for this category.

36
out of 100 points

Amenities

The amenities score indicates the relative abundance of six park activities popular among a diverse selection of user groups (kids, teenagers, adults, seniors). Overall for this category, Memphis scores below average, though it varies by amenity: basketball hoops (27 points out of 100), dog parks (28 points), playgrounds (18 points), senior and rec centers (69 points), permanent restrooms (24 points), and splashpads (51 points).

44
out of 100 points

Equity

The equity score indicates the fairness in the distribution of parks and park space between neighborhoods by race and income. This category is an average of two types of metrics. On the first set of measures, Memphis scores below average: 28 out of 100 points for people of color living within a 10-minute walk of a park and 31 points for low-income households. The second set of measures compare the distribution of park space. In Memphis, residents living in neighborhoods of color have access to 15% less nearby park space than those living in white neighborhoods (55 points out of 100). Residents living in lower-income neighborhoods have access to 14% less nearby park space than those in higher-income neighborhoods (60 points out of 100).

For additional information on the scoring methodology, please visit www.tpl.org/parkscore/about

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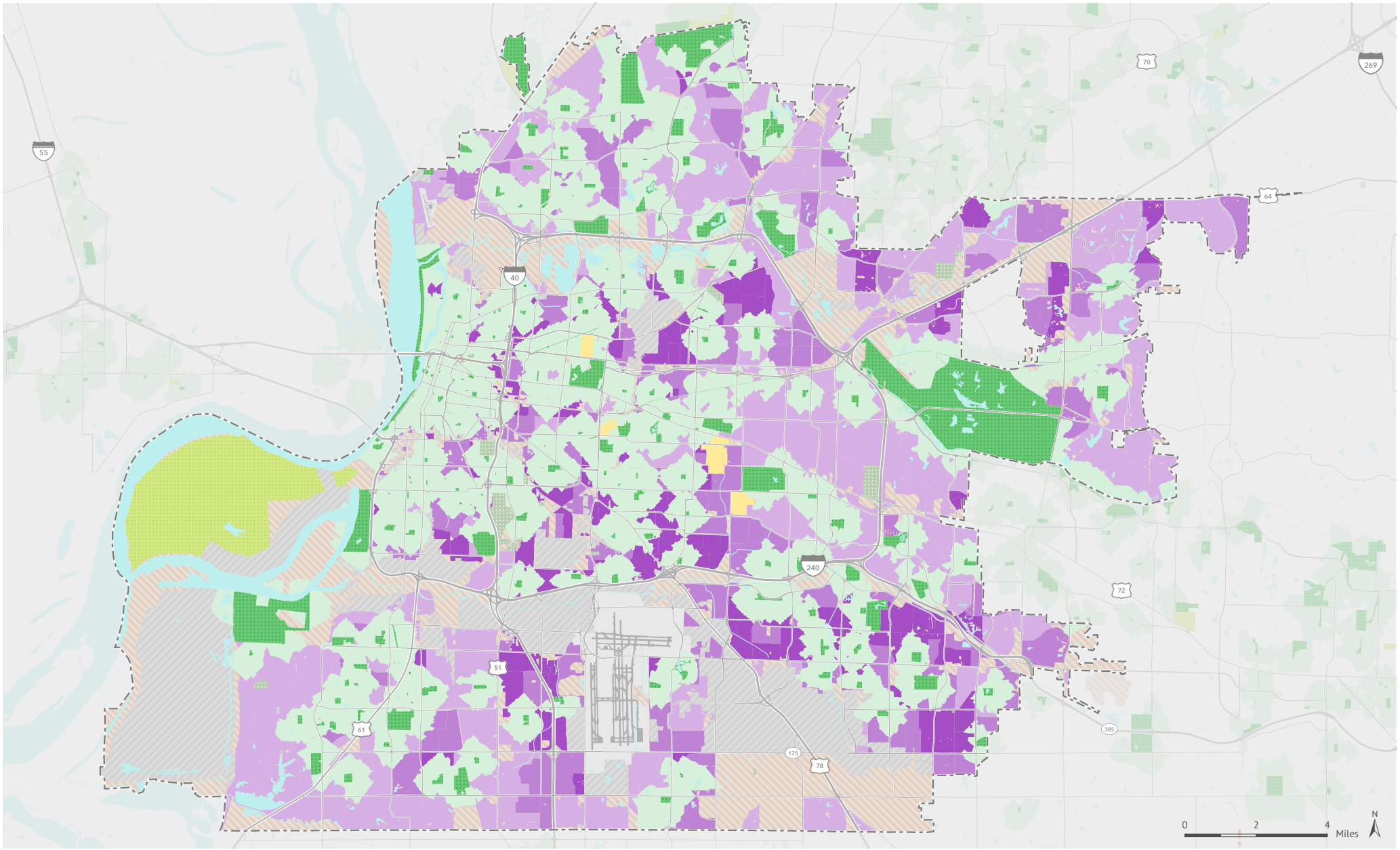
	Values for Memphis, TN: City-wide total	City-wide 'per capita'	City-wide score*	'Per capita' value needed to achieve*: 1 pt	100 pts
Acreage (58 Points)					
Parkland as a percentage of city area	11,645 *acres*	6.3% *of city area*	24 *points*	2.4%	19%
Median Park Size	10.0 *acres*	10.0 *acres*	92 *points*	.58	10.80
Access (28 Points)					
Percent of population within a 10-minute walk of a park with public access		46%	28 *points*	25%	100%
Equity (44 Points)					
Percent of people of color within a 10-minute walk of a park		46%	28 *points*	25%	100%
Percent of low-income households within a 10-minute walk of a park		49%	31 *points*	26%	100%
Residents in neighborhoods of color have _____ park space as those in white neighborhoods		15% less	55 *points*	92% less	47% more
Low-income neighborhoods have _____ park space as those in high-income neighborhoods		14% less	60 *points*	90% less	37% more
Investment (60 Points)					
Annual park investment (three-year average)	$103,070,405	$ 163 *per resident*	60 *points*	$35	$248
Amenities (36 Points)					
Basketball hoops	171 *hoops*	2.74 *per 10,000 residents*	27 *points*	.95	7.64
Dog parks	6 *dog parks*	0.96 *per 100,000 residents*	28 *points*	.32	2.63
Playgrounds	114 *playgrounds*	1.83 *per 10,000 residents*	18 *points*	.99	5.63
Senior/Rec centers	35 *centers*	1.12 *per 20,000 residents*	69 *points*	.18	1.55
Restrooms	56 *restrooms*	0.90 *per 10,000 residents*	24 *points*	.17	3.24
Splashpads	10 *splashpads*	1.60 *per 100,000 residents*	51 *points*	.10	3.03

**For each of the 14 measures, cities are scored on a 1-100 scale (100 is the highest) based on how they compare to the other 99 cities. To adjust for outliers, 100 points is awarded for any city that has more than double the national median for that measure.*



2024 ParkScore® index: Access

MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE

The Access category of the ParkScore® index awards points based on the percentage of the population within a 10-minute walk of a public park. This analysis is provided via the ParkServe® mapping application, which identifies the population living within a 10-minute walk of a park by creating dynamic 1/2-mile service areas (10-minute walking distance) for all public parks. In this analysis, service areas use the street network to determine walkable distance (streets such as highways, freeways, and interstates are considered barriers).

In Memphis, 46% of the population lives within a 10-minute walk of a park. Among the remaining 338,152 people without access to a nearby park, Trust for Public Land suggests **where to prioritize the development of new parks** to reduce this gap. This prioritization is based on a comprehensive index of six equally-weighted demographic and environmental metrics:

- Population density*
- Density of low income households (households with income less than 75% of the urban area median income; less than $39,000 in Memphis)*
- Density of people of color*
- Community health (a combined index based on the rate of poor mental health and low physical activity from the 2022 CDC PLACES census tract dataset)
- Urban heat islands (surface temperature at least 1.25 degrees greater than city mean surface temperature from Trust for Public Land, based on Landsat 8 satellite imagery)
- Pollution burden (air toxics respiratory hazard index from 2022 EPA EJScreen)

*Based on 2023 Forecast block groups provided by ESRI

Priority areas for new parks
(outside of 10-minute walk service areas of parks with public access)

- Very high priority
- High priority
- Moderate priority
- Park with public access
- Other park or open space
- 10-minute walk (half-mile) service area of park with public access
- Cemetery
- University
- Military
- Industrial
- Vacant zero population area
- City boundary
- County boundary

Special thanks to the following data providers: Memphis, Esri, OSM, CDC, EPA. **Information on this map is provided for purposes of discussion and visualization only.** Map created by Trust for Public Land on April 11, 2024. Trust for Public Land and Trust for Public Land logo are federally registered marks of Trust for Public Land. Copyright © 2024 Trust for Public Land.
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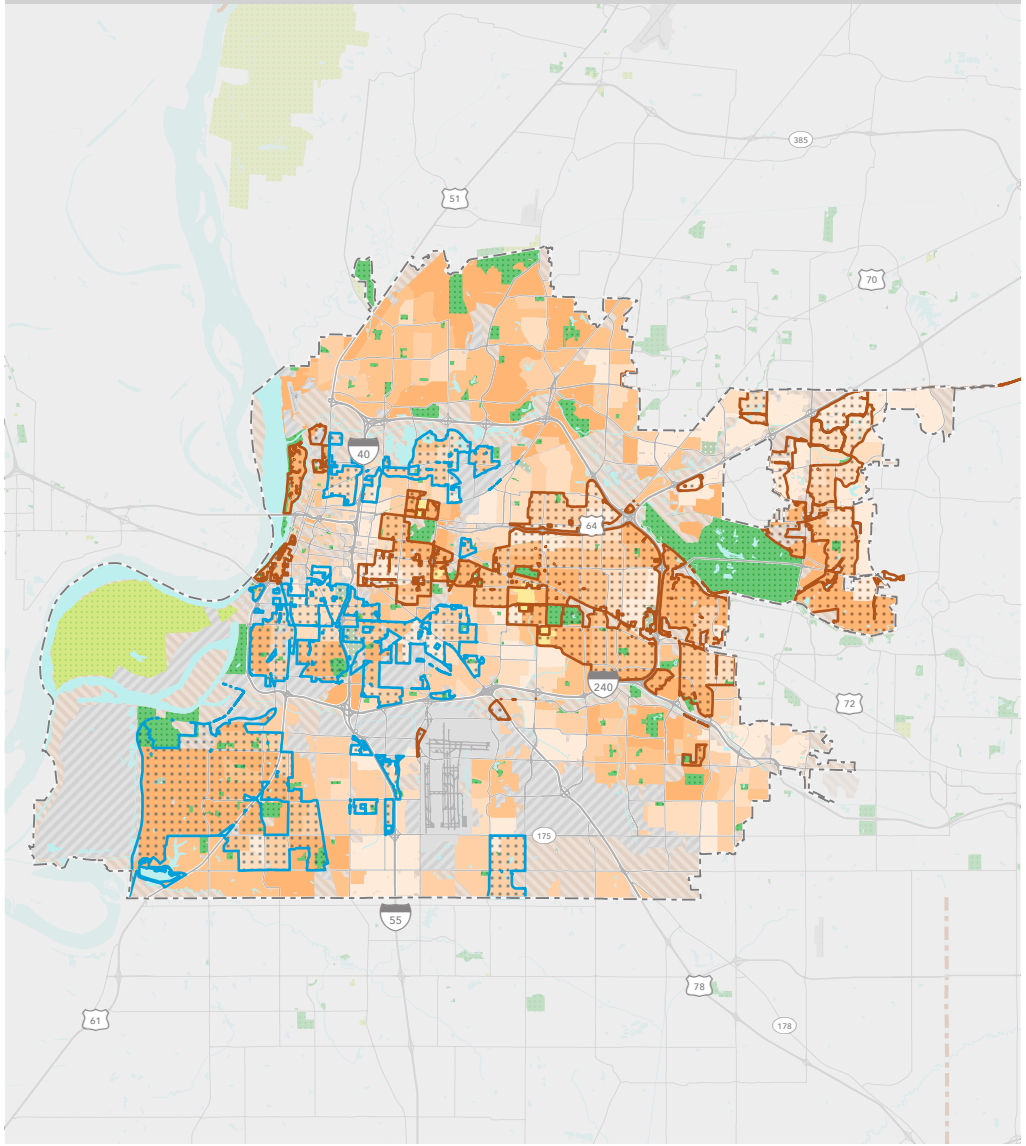
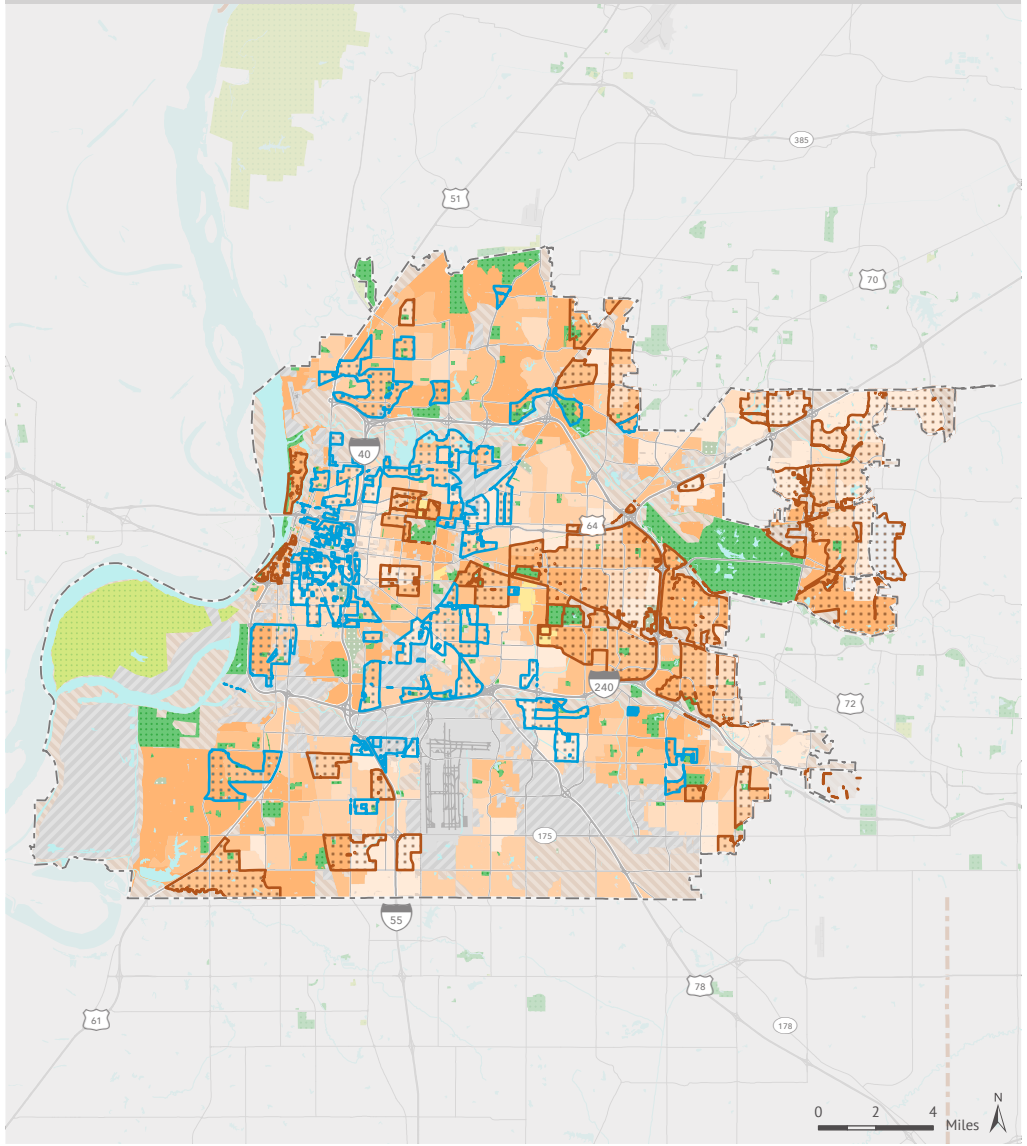
Race

Block Group with higher % of **people of color** | Block Group with higher % **white** population



Income

Block Group with higher % of **low-income** households | Block Group with higher % of **high-income** households



2024 ParkScore® index: **Equity**

MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE

The Equity category of the ParkScore® index awards points in part based on the difference in nearby park space between neighborhoods in a city:

- On a per person basis, ratio of nearby public park space between communities of color and white communities
- On a per person basis, ratio of nearby public park space between low-income communities and high-income communities

Nearby park space per person effectively measures the available park space within a 10-minute walk of a micro-neighborhood, identified as those with the highest concentrations (top 20% of all census block groups in a city) of people of color or white population and high-income or low-income households. Households with income less than 75% of city median income (less than $39,000 in Memphis) are considered low-income; households with income greater than 125% of city median income (greater than $65,000 in Memphis) are high-income.

In Memphis, neighborhoods of color have 15% less park space than white neighborhoods, and low-income neighborhoods have 14% less than high-income neighborhoods.

The metrics for people of color reflect each of the Census-designated race/ethnicity groups: Black, Hispanic, and Indigenous and Native American, Asian Americans, Pacific Islanders, multiple races, and other communities of color.

Demographic profiles are based on 2020 Forecast block groups provided by Esri.

- Park with public access
- Other park or open space
- Cemetery
- University
- Military
- Industrial
- Vacant zero population area
- City boundary
- County boundary

Park acres per person

- Very high
- High
- Moderate
- Low
- Very low

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