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Six San Fransisco India Basin Initiative Focus Areas

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Introduction

Parks and recreational facilities are known to provide social and environmental benefits to local communities, and much more - increased health and wellness, community safety and connection, youth engagement, cultural and economic vitality, environmental conservation, and climate resilience. While essential for community wellbeing and inclusion, public funding and city initiatives have typically fallen short of inclusive and prosperous park development strategies and implementation. These issues are even more prevalent in areas in low-income neighborhoods and communities of color. The historic inequality that still affects most U.S. cities today has left many communities without the proper resources or access to quality parks or recreation opportunities. The urgency associated with creating an equitable park development plan is in response to the historical implications of previous projects across the country. So many significant development projects meant to serve such communities actually end up displacing them as the improvement increases the value of the community, driving up rent, housing prices, property taxes, etc. The feasibility and funding behind the implementation can be a hurdle for many agencies and city officials. Where one plan might have failed, another can learn from it. This is why it is important to review the current research as well as explore what other municipalities are doing regarding equitable development plan efforts as examples (see Case Study document), and learning opportunities for future plans.

A variety of cities have included equity as the center of their focus when planning and developing parks and/or renovating existing outdoor recreational sites. The San Francisco India Basin Initiative (IBI) and the Equity Development Plan (EDP) is one example of several across the country. With the intent to review examples of existing research, this document provides IBI leaders with a cursory literature review to consider using in the planning, development, and implementation stages. In some cases, only one report is cited because a particular agency, or group of scholars, have completed an extensive review to showcase any given topic. In those instances, readers are directed to their reference list for more information.

Each of the research reports reviewed in this document cover a range of topics including equitable measurements (e.g., amplifying the narratives and power of the disenfranchised). Central points that share a common goal with IBI's six topic areas have been extracted for review and summary. These six focus areas include:

1. Arts, Culture & Identity
2. Workforce & Business Development
3. Connectivity, Transit, Access & Safety
4. Healthy Communities & Ecology
5. Youth Opportunities
6. Housing Security

A key vision of the redevelopment for India Basin Shoreline Park is to create a thriving, accessible, park space while actively putting in place key interventions that will ideally ensure existing residents will not be displaced as a result of new the development. In a historic moment for environmental justice, the India Basin project will transform an impaired remnant of the industrial shipwrights' era into a superb model 21st-century park; emphases include public access, social equity, community building, resiliency, and restoration. The studies and projects reviewed for this report can provide more relevant ideas and recommendations for SF Recreation & Parks Department and project partners in support of the Bayview-Hunters Point community.

Arts, Culture & Identity

Creating Change through Arts, Culture, and Equitable Development [1] (2017) contains a variety of primary and secondary data to offer a framework for moving equitable development policy across multiple sectors—aided by and strengthening the use of arts and cultural practices. PolicyLink spent two years on this project including achieving the following: Completed inventory of sample arts and culture opportunities; explored what the area of equitable development encompasses; interviewed arts, culture, and municipal leaders; visited sample projects; and reviewed cultural plans and cultural economy studies. This was done in an effort to understand the impact of arts and culture on community development efforts across the country. This report emphasizes the types of policies that can expand arts, culture, and equitable development in a variety of places throughout the country.

While arts, culture, and equitable development initiatives are growing, their research (interviews with leaders in the field) suggest that the arts and culture sector continues to lag behind on equity. This document analyzes transportation, housing, infrastructure investment, economic development, health and food, youth and education, parks and recreation, and technology. All these variables correlate with the arts, culture, and equitable development. For example:

- Transportation, housing, and redevelopment agencies can commission design services and public art that enhance cultural identity in public infrastructure and spaces

- Investments in open space and recreation can support artists in collaborating with residents, planners, and environmental stewards to create cultural plazas, parks, historical trails, or memorials

- Investments in community health and food equity can incorporate culture bearers in the creation of farmers' markets, community farms, community clinics, and other programs that foster wellbeing, healing, and trauma recovery.

- Tourism and economic development resources can be targeted to create cultural districts and support robust arts and culture as hubs of local vitality and magnets for visitors.

Findings also show that federal, state, and local policymakers can support the interconnected growth of arts, culture, and equitable development with six principles:

1. Map the artistic and cultural assets

2. Evaluate economic conditions, including current investments in public works, arts, & culture

3. Identify barriers to resources for low-income and communities of color & restructure processes

4. Expand equity-focused arts and culture investments across public agencies

5. Ensure that governance and staffing are representative

These policy approaches aim to inspire further equity focused arts and culture policy action in partnership with community agencies and organizations that can lead to tangible positive results.

Workforce & Business Development

In December 2020, the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) research team surveyed park and recreation leaders to understand the current state of workforce development and career exploration programs at parks and recreation agencies. In their report, *Workforce development and career exploration in parks & recreation* [2] the team received 321 responses from a 13-question survey, inquiring about agency workforce development and career exploration programs, and the challenges of recruiting and cultivating a diverse workforce. The aim of this study was to connect youth and young adults to the possibilities of a parks and recreation (or related) career. These programs have the potential to expose young adults to a wide variety of occupations within the field, including recreation programming, natural resource management, planning, operations, construction, and public safety. Four key findings are highlighted below:

1. Nationwide, 1 in 3 park and recreation departments currently offer a workforce development or career exploration program targeted to teenagers, young adults, and other people entering the labor force for the first time

2. One in five park and recreation leaders looking to establish workforce development programs at their agencies within the next two years

3. 57% of survey respondents indicate that the key goal of their agencies' workforce development program is to develop future professionals and leaders

4. Nearly 90%of park and recreation agencies with workforce development or career exploration program collaborate with one or more partners

Workforce and business development programs play a significant role in connecting youth and young adults to the possibilities of a parks and recreation career. Subsequently, an indirect outcome would be understanding the value of business-related partnerships with, and getting to know, local establishments; prospective employment could also occur within any of those businesses as well. These programs have the potential to build self-confidence within young professionals and provide valuable work experience. Furthermore, individuals with more experience should also be engaged to reach additional potential new audiences.

The fact parks and recreation agencies need to build a diverse workforce that reflects the communities they serve has been discussed for decades. Some improvement has occurred over time; more work is needed to diversify the workforce. The India Basin initiative in San Francisco is well-positioned to ensure locals (with emphasis on the black community) are recruited, hired, trained, and retained. Research shows this process starts by exposing young people, and even more seasoned professionals seeking employment, to the many professional opportunities that a career in parks and recreation offers.

The Mass Inc. Gateway Cities Initiative Institute created a guide, *Calling all Gateway City Leaders* [3] and included three case studies each involving validated system changes, and how state and local leaders aligned resources, adopted new policies, and changed the system to get dramatically more output and better results. The goal of this guide is to inform Gateway City stakeholders around the priories needed to ensure best practices for equitable park development and planning.

In 2010, the City of Louisville, KY, launched a new public-private partnership called "55,000 Degrees" (55K), which was responsible for ensuring Greater Louisville had 40,000 more bachelor degree-holders and 15,000 more associate degree-holders by 2020. The 55K initiative tells the story of a meaningful public-private partnership around post-secondary education. What began as an aspiration to drive economic growth (via post-secondary degree attainment) evolved into a more comprehensive roadmap for prosperity and opportunity via equitable educational pathways and 21st century workforce preparation.

While 55,000 Degrees is no longer in operation, during these 10-years, its mission lives on through a culture of learning through data and of collaborating across sectors[4] (*Final Report, 2020*). Two of their objectives related to this

topic area of workforce development included: "Use the business community's unique points of leverage to accelerate attainment and prepare students for success in college, career, citizenship and life." In order to showcase goal attainment, the organization distributed an annual report (up until the final report, per above) and updated their leaders on how each partner was progressing on its commitments and overall accomplishments for the region.

To ensure the best practices for workforce development, The *Center for Law and Social Policy* (CLASP), a national, nonpartisan, anti-poverty organization sought to create more coherence among federal programs. Although established at the national level, these changes summarized below can be applied to the urban/municipal and state levels as well. The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) was established to help low-income and lower-skilled youth and adults achieve economic success. Hence, WIOA aims to:

1. Increase the focus on serving the most vulnerable workers

2. Expand education and training options to help participants' access good jobs and advance in their careers.

3. Help disadvantaged and unemployed adults and youth earn while they learn through support services and effective employment-based activities.

4. Align planning and accountability policies across core programs to support more unified approaches to serving low-income, low-skilled individuals.

Additionally, the 2017 CLASP report, *Integrated Education and Training Strengthens Career Pathways* [5]*,* their priority focus is engaging hard to reach communities in greatest need. This is summarized in their "*priority of service*" details and can have application to the IBI-EDP in San Francisco including the following: A substantive tracking/monitoring goal, specify a target for the percentage of high-need adults desired to serve, and include consequences for when the priority is not implemented as described in the EDP (e.g., job training, targeted outreach, communications strategy, ensure Bayview-Hunters Point residents receive equal opportunity in the application/hiring process for specified jobs).

Connectivity, Transit, Access & Safety

Measuring the accessibility and equity of public parks: A case study using a geographic information system (GIS)[6] showcases a 2001 study completed by Texas A&M based in Bryan TX to illustrate GIS technology and the link between accessibility and equity. GIS technology provides parks and recreation, and related service agencies with numerous opportunities to enhance the planning and management

of their facilities. This method was used to demonstrate an application to the measurement of levels of accessibility and distributional equity offered by a system of public parks. Results show that measuring distance and access to parks and recreational spaces as accurately as possible, is vital in creating a park plan (Note: "accessibility" refers to the ease with which a site or service may be reached or obtained; it can thus be said to measure the relative opportunity for interaction or contact with a given phenomenon such as a park).

As noted in the study, "The ability to combine the accessibility maps with a map of the population distribution using a simple function in a GIS is, therefore, an effective means of more meaningfully representing the level of accessibility in numeric as opposed to purely visual terms". When measuring the accessibility and equity of public parks, increased interaction and understanding between service providers' park visitors/activity participants "are likely to decrease the perceptual gaps between them, creating more satisfied users, and ensuring better use of park resources."

Because of recreational trends, aging recreational facilities, and a growing population, the City of Bryan adopted an updated *2016 Parks, Recreation, Open Space, and Trails Master Plan* [7] Within these topics, their goals include:

- Create a system of parks, open spaces, trails, and facilities that meet the needs of residents of all ages
- Pursue regional park and recreation opportunities
- Use the Master Plan as a guide for parkland acquisition, open space protection, and trail development
- Cooperate with the Bryan Independent School District to provide cost-effective services and optimize benefits to students and their families
- Build regional complexes for local recreational needs and for hosting regional, state, and national tournaments
- Plan for a comprehensive non-motorized trail system
- Use public input, senior citizen groups, and other stakeholders to identify the indoor recreation needs of the community
- Continue to evaluate, renovate and maintain an aging park system
- Provide a comprehensive offering of recreation programs for people of all ages, abilities, and interests
- Study the recreational value and opportunities of Lake Bryan for Bryan residents, as well as its ability to become a regional recreation destination

To achieve these goals, the City hired a consulting firm to work closely with both their Planning Department and Parks and Recreation Department staff to develop the Master Plan and analyze what their parks and recreation department need using three methods:

1. Public meetings
2. Parkland standard-based analysis (population)
3. Demand-based recreation analysis (based on users)

As stated in the Master Plan, *"Based on interviews with the sports associations and analysis of their participation numbers, and the Bryan Park and Recreation staff, the City of Bryan is not meeting the need for athletic complexes and sports fields."* The City has a plan by the year 2030 to acquire additional tracts of land to accommodate for the growing demand and changing population of Bryan.

The *Environmental Review Toolkit* [8] is an output of the Washington, DC Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration regarding the 11th Street Bridge project to improve the highway connection between the Southeast/Southwest Freeway (I-695) and the Anacostia Freeway (I-295 and DC-295) in southeast Washington DC. The project was established "to replace obsolete infrastructure, provide missing freeway connections to improve traffic flow to and from downtown Washington DC, discourage cut-through traffic on neighborhood streets, improve local access, and better link land uses across the Anacostia River."

The Toolkit, noted above, highlights the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOG) model that was used to generate traffic forecasts and simulate transportation and land use conditions. One need of this project that parallels this SF India Basin topic area is to enhance safety—to this end, their aim includes the following: "A safe pedestrian and bicycle access across the river and to the Anacostia waterfront. Correct roadway design elements that reduce safety and result in congestion. Reduce number of vehicular crashes in the project interchanges."

This study evaluated traffic conditions and recommended options to improve bridge and roadway connections. Additionally, this study also provides suggestions for other agencies to coordinate planning using common assumptions about future growth and development in their region. This study proposed several short and long-term improvements that, in addition to transit routes, include riverfront access improvements, signage improvements, and pedestrian improvements.

Safe Routes to Parks [9] ("Improving Access to Parks through Walkability") used a mixed-method strategy and concluded that safe park routes improve the well-being of all citizens and foster the creation of livable communities. This research report includes how to approach the process of building safe and accessible routes to parks. Using a two-part process, the agencies first reviewed previously conducted case studies and literature reviews on safe routes to parks. Findings showcased that research on safe routes to parks does indeed have limitations. A majority of research exhibits the benefits

of having a safe park route, rather than how to ensure a safe park route. The next process included a diverse selection of professionals who participated in focus groups. These participants ranged from park executive directors, research and evaluation managers, landscape architects, community relations and outreach professionals, physical activity coordinators, and strategic planning professionals. After reviewing both primary and secondary data, the agency found four common obstacles that limit walkability to parks:

- Proximity to parks
- Lack of infrastructure
- Crime and traffic safety concerns
- Partnership building

Subsequently, these indicators raised the next question: *how can cities overcome these obstacles and promote safe park routes?* Their recommendations include:

- **Comfort:** Examples include conditions of the sidewalks, creating a visually appealing and clean environment ensuring low traffic and developing off-road trail access
- **Convenience:** Routes should be in close proximity to where residents live, specifically routes that should be no longer than half of a mile, or within a 10-minute walk
- **Safety:** Physical separation boundaries, including road paths with physical barriers, well-maintained infrastructures, adequate lighting, and winter maintenance for northern tier states
- **Access and design:** Safe routes to a park must reflect various levels of mobility, including multiple access points to parks, effective wayfinding systems (e.g., use of landmarks, signage, distance to destination markers, and interest points to assist in navigating the routes easily). Additionally, all walkways at intersections must also be reviewed for ADA compliance.

While all the above factors are indeed crucial to building a safe route to a park, the park itself must offer the amenities that the surrounding population will use. At a large scale, the NRPA created three initial steps in which communities can begin assessing the barriers limiting walkability to parks include:

1. **Assess current park usage:** Prior to implementing improvements on safe routes to parks, it is useful to know if residents are using the park, and if not, what the reasons behind that may be.

2. **Walkability audits:** Walking audits are a simple and systematic way to assess a community's walkability to parks. They can assist if routes are functioning well, they allow managers to pinpoint the exact problem and allow tracking changes over time.

3. **Community focus groups and public participation:** Holding community focus groups to gather feedback from residents on what improvements are needed for them to feel safe walking to parks is an important determinant on whether residents will use routes to parks or not

This report assessed barriers to walkability, identified strategies for building awareness on the importance of walkability, and recognized a sample of current initiatives that have improved safe routes to parks. The purpose of this report is to understand the obstacles limiting walkability to parks and identify the essential elements of a safe route to a park. Lastly, this report serves as secondary research for other agencies or park organizations during their planning stage.

Healthy Communities & Ecology

Two studies worth noting include: *Parks Build Healthy Communities: Success Stories*[10] and the *Tulsa County Community Health Needs Assessment*[11]. Since 2009, the NRPA has worked with 44 communities across the U.S. to enact strategies focused on improving access to healthy food, increasing opportunities for physical activity and alternative transportation, and decreasing tobacco consumption. A study goal was to offer valuable insights for others seeking to take a stand and become leaders in their community for fighting the battle of obesity and other health issues that are challenging their city and our country. Focusing on the health of the community means focusing on every contributing point, which the NRPA outlines in six main categories:

1. Collaboration building
2. Increasing physical activity
3. Improving nutrition
4. Economic development
5. "Park Prescriptions"

Each category has several sub-themes. One example is their impressive report focuses on these five nationally recognized factors for increasing physical activity: a) Access to parks and park safety, b) Bikeability and walkability, c) Exercise and play, d) School programs, and e) Trails and signage. Within their "improving nutrition" category, programs consist of breastfeeding initiatives, farmer's markets, healthy vending, and various nutrition programs across generations. The tobacco reduction category includes creating "smoke-free zones for a healthier environment".

A Tulsa, OK, Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) was developed to create a data-driven approach to determine the health and needs of Tulsa County individuals and communities. Their report uses quantitative data derived from primary research (CHNA, 2015). The most current secondary data (other existing health-related data) was used for comparisons at the state and national levels. In general, state and national data were available for two different years (2013 or 2014). This study was completed through random digit dialing of both landlines and cell phones through available area codes. Totaling 2,428 surveys from Tulsa County residents, this study provided essential data to make decisions that can influence and improve community health and wellness.

A needs assessment was first conducted and employers/organizations were the target audience for desired environmental changes. Six objectives, all laudable and supported by research, are as follows:

1. Increasing opportunities to engage in physical activities
2. Providing subsidized memberships to gym facilities
3. Establishing a health and wellness committee
4. Implementing healthy vending
5. Providing healthy food at meetings
6. Creating designated breastfeeding places/locations

NRPA commissioned completion of *Relevant Research for Practice*[12] an annotated bibliography of recent research articles published from 2012-2015. Content, compiled by NC State University, is perceived to have direct application to every day work in parks, recreation, & conservation. This summary report is intended to help bridge the current research-practice gap by identifying key peer-reviewed published research articles that appear to provide a strong evidence base and/or have strong potential impact on the practice of P&R. The intended audience is both practitioners and their community decision-makers.

One such example relating to this IBI/EDP topic area is Hockings, et al. (2013), and their study on ecological research. They developed a code of practice suggested as a framework for "building improved cooperation between, on the one hand, protected area agencies and other key actors and rights-holders such as Indigenous peoples and local communities and, on the other hand, researchers." A dual data collection approach include review of existing literature and interviews based on experiences of professionals from a wide variety of backgrounds connected with protected areas.

While a crucial area of science, the authors note some of the findings are oftentimes of little value to management or studies are poorly planned, and can even damage protected sites. Hockings, and others, therefore compiled *A Draft Code of Practice for Research in Protected Areas*[13] containing

what is considered the proper method for those carrying out responsible environmental science research in parks and protected areas. Content can provide a basis for discussions on minimum standards for academic and other research institutions in the future. The data collected in this study to develop a "code of practice" was a multimethod approach and an overview of the draft is split into four sections:

• Responsible research and monitoring in the protected area
• Participation of relevant stakeholders
• Contribution to effective protected area management
• Intellectual property rights, access to information, and sharing of results

The importance of this research for the San Francisco IBI is to showcase the need for partnerships at both the individual manager-researcher level and between management and university or other research institutions. An increased understanding of how protected areas are designated and managed by research institutions, and how research is properly developed, carried out, reported, and used by protected area managers and management agencies is essential to a healthy community as well.

Investing in Equitable Urban Park Systems[14], is a compilation of case studies by the City Parks Alliance (CPA) that also includes recommendations for city park managers for the best investment strategies. Seven national case examples were completed: Detroit, Minneapolis, New York City, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, San Francisco, and LA County. Local residents were surveyed to examine conditions that spurred action on equitable funding strategies, leadership that drove an equity approach, equity criteria and data sources, policies enacted, tracking and evaluation, and replicability by other cities.

The purpose of this report is to be a resource for cities committed to ensuring equitable access to quality parks and recreational opportunities. The seven municipalities above have established equity criteria and are now using those criteria to prioritize their capital, operating, and programming investments. From the surveys, the City Parks Alliance identified five common elements among the areas studied that are critical for developing, implementing, and evaluating a data-driven equitable investment park strategy:

1. Leverage leadership from one or more sectors
2. Define equity goals, and collect data to support those goals
3. Educate and engage the community on equity data
4. Establish and sustain equitable funding practices
5. Institutionalize consistent tracking

By using the data-driven equitable investment strategy and leveraging partnerships, P&R facilities can ensure more equitable funding approaches. Subsequently, demonstrating the impact and broader benefits of parks, these strategies can inform policy and build more coalitions within communities of interest. This study led to a subsequent report relating to *emerging funding strategies and tools*[15] also useful for the San Francisco India Basin Shoreline Park redevelopment project. This 2019 City Parks Alliance report showcases economic development as a national research initiative for funding parks and green infrastructure in low-income communities.

Youth Opportunities

An integrative review of youth development research in selected United States recreation journals[16] was compiled to examine research conducted with youth as a focal point from 1985-2005. The main age demographic was between 10-18 years old and focused on the contributors to Positive Youth Development (PYD).

A variety of research methods were used including surveys, literature reviews, experimental designs, and qualitative approaches. Their systematic integrative literature review was used to identify trends, synthesize findings, and offer recommended directions for application in the field as well as for future research agendas. The study was conducted in two phases. First, previously conducted case studies were explored and reviewed in five-year increments. The team examined the literature, as a whole, to provide insight on the most frequently studied topics and search for thematic finding. Then, they compared themes within journals to assess whether these journals treated specific topics differently. The second procedure involved a content analysis of research methods (e.g., method of data collection, type of design, and analysis) used in the studies. This was followed by an examination of selected demographics of the populations and locations studied. Themes in the methods and content of the literature were used as a means for demonstrating how the youth mature through their varied recreation and leisure behavior.

This integrative review found that youth directly benefit from personal leisure, which has been challenged over the years to provide more meaningful community programs to help youth develop during out-of-school time and to be able to measure outcomes. Benefits also underlined the holistic nature of youth development, since articles in categories such as recreation settings and leisure spaces, leisure programming, and program evaluation were more likely to be classified under "benefits of leisure". The most frequently studied topics include youth culture and leisure; leisure programming, treatment, and intervention; research, measurement, and evaluation; demographic factors; management, administration, and policy of youth programs; benefits of leisure for youth; youth and family leisure; recreation settings and leisure spaces; risk behaviors and delinquency; human development and developmental issues; and social behavior.

Youth sports at park and recreation agencies1[7], is a research report published by the National Recreation and Park Association (n.d.). This report explores youth sports offerings, partnerships, fees and registration, and equitable access with content applicable to parks, including planning in progress for the IBI in San Francisco. The report also encompasses the impact of COVID-19 on youth sports during the summer and fall of 2020. Previous studies demonstrate that gender, household formation, and income correlate with children's engagement with organized sports, what sports they may play, and how long they engage in those activities. As noted, *"Unfortunately, there are significant disparities in who has access to youth sports opportunities, both in terms of proximity to sports fields and courts and the ability to afford registration fees."* This NRPA report is a guide for park and recreation professionals to promote access to sports through their agency and with their partners. Hence, target marketing and promotion has been deemed essential for increasing access to sports as well as outdoor opportunities for youth.

To better understand the current state of youth sports programs the NRPA research team developed a 22-question survey and obtained 254 responses in July 2020 (total sample unreported). The survey focused on youth sports programs, agency partners, fee structures, and activities that park and recreation agencies use to promote greater access. The survey content also inquired about the impact COVID-19 has had on their agencies' organized sports offerings in 2020. Key findings include:

- Five in six park and recreation agencies work with partners to deliver youth sports activities
- 86% of park and recreation professionals agree that they and their peers contribute to a fair and just future for youth sports by identifying inequities in access to organized sports offerings
- 92% of park and recreation agencies charge some type of registration fees for all their youth sports offerings
- Two in three agencies offer reduced or discounted fees for lower-income residents
- 90% of park and recreation professionals report the pandemic negatively impacts their agencies' youth sports programming during the summer and fall of 2020

Park and recreation professionals, and their agencies, play a critical role in providing and facilitating youth sports opportunities across the country. Despite their key role in youth sports delivery, agencies face many challenges in achieving this mission. Capacity and budget restraints

often result in insufficient youth programs. The COVID-19 pandemic made the issues worse, putting the future of youth sports in a tenuous position, as physical distancing requirements, budget shortfalls, need for masks, and from the change in demand. This report highlights the fact that park and recreation agencies are contributing to the development of youth into healthy, active adults. Through a mix of greater support, in the form of sustainable governmental tax support and the nurturing of partnerships, every member of local communities can have equal access to the many benefits of youth sports.

Youth visitation and participation in park programs and outdoor/nature-based activities in urban areas has seen an ebb and flow over the years. Given technological advances, and concerns about the lack of involvement that experienced a downward trend, parks and recreation agencies have needed to shift their goals and programs to include technology increasing youth comfort spending time in the outdoors. For example, *New Recreational facilities for the Young and the Old: Policy and Programming Implications*[18] reports the outcome of enhancing and augmenting park and recreational facilities to help boost community engagement. The objective of the study was to first measure changes in use over time, from before to after the renovation, especially changes in the level of physical activity. Then, they determined what particular factors might be most predictive of the changes found. Changes in the perceptions of safety, whether park proximity would be relevant to park use, and whether other changes in park management might be associated with changes in park use.

Comparing changes in the use of an expanded and renovated skate park and a modernized senior citizen's center to two similar facilities that were not refurbished, the study aimed to also assess the use of these facilities through direct observation and surveyed both facility users and residents living within two miles of each facility. In this study, it appears that the extensive expansion of the skate park and its dramatic bowls and ramps were sufficient to attract young people who could appreciate the physical challenges as well as participate in the classes and camps that were offered. The increase in use was immediate, but the update to the senior center declined significantly from pre-renovation times. The decline in the renovated facility use was mirrored by a decline in the use of the walking paths for seniors. The lack of consistent increases in facility use after improvements suggests that investment in "brick and mortar infrastructure" alone may not be sufficient to increase either facility use or physical activity levels. While the seniors did not adjust well to the new changes, the youth saw the physical improvements as a sufficient attraction.

This report shows success when directed at the youth, but not sufficient for older adults. This report can help future studies direct their attention to social issues as well as other factors including programming, marketing, outreach, and staffing, all of which are potential constraints on attracting people to park facilities.

Housing Security

An Empirical Analysis of the Causes of Neighborhood Racial Segregation[19] uses direct evidence on the cause of housing segregation based on data from the Multi-City Study of Urban Inequality (MCSUI). The MCSUI data were collected over a two-year period via face-to-face interviews with households across four metropolitan areas (not evenly distributed): Detroit (37 percent), Atlanta (34 percent), Los Angeles (16 percent), and Boston (14 percent). Totaling 3,621 interviews, 1,619 whites and 2,002 blacks addressed the following sample topics: Their work history/occupation, racial attitudes, preferences regarding their residence in racial/ethnic mix of neighborhoods, perceived (major) causes for housing segregation, and included several demographic characteristics for comparative purposes.

Results of the MCSUI show that black resident's preferences to neighborhood racial composition account for the largest amount of segregation. This desire may reflect a variety of factors, including the wish to share culture, prejudice against whites, and expectation of unfavorable treatment by whites against blacks in white communities. When looking at white neighborhood racial preferences, the contribution of housing segregation is smaller. Racial differences due to occupation and life-cycle stages do contribute to housing segregation, but only slightly. The individual results show that black and white references for neighborhood racial composition play an important role in explaining housing segregation. These findings suggest that more than one-half of the level of housing segregation can be attributed to black's preferences to live among blacks and white's preferences to live among whites. This demonstrates the amount of segregation unexplained after accounting for socioeconomic differences between the races, and should not be attributed solely to housing market discrimination.

Although completed more than over 20 years ago, findings from over 3,600 interviews at that time showed segregation may, apparently, be more of a voluntary phenomenon than is commonly believed. However, the desire for blacks to live in predominately black neighborhoods could be attributed to prejudice against whites, lower housing prices in black neighborhoods, or blacks' perceptions of white hostility and discrimination against blacks. There is also evidence to support that racial differences in permanent income explain housing segregation, but the contribution of this factor is relatively small. While the results imply that a significant portion of observed housing segregation may be voluntary, they should not be interpreted to imply that illegal constraints on blacks' residential choices play an unimportant role. Therefore, these results also demonstrate that eliminating discrimination may

not result in the elimination of racial segregation within urban housing markets. The central finding is that Blacks' preferences for Black neighborhoods and whites' preferences for white neighborhoods are major causes of housing segregation.

Racism and Discrimination Contribute to Housing Instability for Black Families during the Pandemic[20] is a 2021 report including a sample of national, state, and local data to examine housing access and other available support for black families, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. Finding housing that is affordable, high-quality, and stable is fundamental for our wellbeing, but is rarely "accessible", especially since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. Recent data on black families' access to stable housing in the United States, and at the local level since the COVID-19 pandemic shows a negative impact on the health and well-being of individuals like black Americans who have been historically disadvantaged in the U.S., broadly.

Findings are drawn from two data sources. First, national findings from the U.S. Census Bureau's Household Pulse Survey data were collected by *Child Trends* in February 2021. The analysis focused on adults with children who reported living in a renter or homeowner household (i.e., housing that is either rented or owned with a mortgage or loan, by the respondent or another person in the household):

- More than 1 in 6 (17%) adults in renter or homeowner households with children reported that they were not "caught up" on rent or mortgage. Black households, in particular, reported not being caught up on rent or mortgage (close to 1 in 3 households, or 30%).
- 1 in 4 U.S. adults (24%) in households with children reported limited confidence that their household would be able to make their next rent or mortgage payment on time. Among black households with children, 40 percent reported limited confidence in their ability to pay on time.

Of those not up to date on rent or mortgage, 36 percent of all households with children—and 50 percent of black households with children—said that eviction or foreclosure was somewhat or very likely in the next two months.

Second, the national data provide context for local data to demonstrate the role of housing discrimination using results from Newark, NJ, a predominantly black community. Their findings suggest discrimination based on race, ethnicity, family size, income, and criminal history limits access to stable, high-quality, affordable housing. Survey and interview data indicates:

- 21 percent of residents in the Newark South Ward, who self-identified as black, reported experiencing discrimination at some point when looking for affordable, high-quality, and stable housing
- Interview respondents also reported housing discrimination as a result of having a child, their income, or a criminal or bad credit history
- During interviews, many respondents provided unprompted examples of discriminatory practices when asked about other topics
- Discriminatory practices related to housing are often underreported and may not be labeled as such, often due to their subtle and changing nature

The pandemic has made it even harder for renters—the majority (65%) of renters and mortgage payers who responded to the survey were not able to pay their rent or mortgage in full and on time during the 2-month data collection period of the survey. In total, these local findings conducted indicate that families who are black and rent their housing face challenges in securing and remaining in their homes due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Data suggest that federal, state, and local policies and programs to support renters are not always sufficient, even in New Jersey, which has more generous policies than other states.

Additionally, discrimination based on race, ethnicity, family size, income, and criminal history further impacts families' ability to find stable, affordable living accommodations. To overcome these inequalities and to better assist black communities, local policymakers and community leaders interested in supporting equitable access to housing can follow these recommendations:

1. Assess community-specific needs
2. Work with local organizations to ensure that both residents and property owners are aware of tenant rights and anti-discrimination laws
3. Raise community awareness of housing support programs, particularly for black renters

Closing comments

Reviewing the literature (e.g., both research and gray literature) is a valuable way to assess equitable measures of park use, and related issues and concerns, in an efficient and successful manner; obtaining new ideas, understanding trends, and engendering applicable recommendations to local needs and challenges is anticipated. The SF Recreation and Parks Department via IBI, project partners, and agencies of similar nature can rely on the primary and secondary data extracted from sources with similar goals. Committing to achieving equity requires multidimensional engagement from stakeholders. An overview of the findings in this report, focusing on the IBI/EDP, can be summarized below:

1. **Arts, Culture & Identity:** Importance of making art, culture, and identity a multidimensional and intergenerational topic. All this can help connect the dots between improving transportation, housing, infrastructure investment, economic development,   contribute to healthy lifestyles, showcase local talent, provide food at events, activities for youth education and leadership experiences, and embrace new uses of technology.

2. **Workforce & Business Development**: Plays a significant role in connecting youth and young adults to the possibilities of a parks and recreation or related career, and has the potential to build self-confidence with young professionals and provide valuable work experience. Also provides improved relationships between local businesses and those agencies/partners involved with park management and potential for increasing trust and build new alliances (e.g., for collaboration prospects).

3. **Connectivity, Transit, Access & Safety:** A system of parks, open spaces, trails, and facilities that meet the needs of residents of all ages are essential to ensure equal access to every resident. Proximity to parks with questionable activities (e.g., drug dealing, gang use of parks), worn-out infrastructures, and crime and traffic safety concerns and are common obstacles that limit accessibility within neighborhoods.

4. **Healthy Communities & Ecology:** Can be attained in many ways including by improving access to healthy food, increasing opportunities for physical activity, providing reliable alternative transportation, and decreasing tobacco consumption.

5. **Youth Opportunities:** Importance of personal leisure (e.g., less formal at times and more unstructured play), benefits of youth sport and outdoor recreation programs, short and long-term impacts of leadership experiences, and the success of new and updated park facilities that youth want to use.

6. **Housing Security:** Blacks' preferences for black neighborhoods and whites' preferences for white neighborhoods are considered a major cause of housing segregation. Consistent need for housing that is affordable, high-quality, and stable is fundamental for community wellbeing. And, discrimination based on race/ethnicity, family size, income, and criminal/legal history limits access to this "stable, high-quality, affordable housing."

Additionally, of value to note is that partnerships between agency leaders and research institutions (e.g., university) to properly understand the research approach, results, and implementation suggestions are essential to the project's efforts. This ultimately impacts decision-making that benefits or harms the community and overall environment/ecology of the park and outdoor recreation settings.

Last, this basic review of literature also highlights the need for other types of research to be conducted in the future. Examples include:

- More evidence-based work that links the program or intervention directly to youth development outcomes
- Focus on emerging topics such as physical inactivity and obesity in children, the influence of television and technology in general, youth sport, and the relationships youth have with nature and the outdoors
- Update city population/demographics, review workforce data including unemployment ratios, and understand incarceration rates to cross reference park initiatives with data-driven results
- Monitor affordable housing options, rent control, and job opportunities within the parks and surrounding neighborhoods.

ENDNOTES

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