Cully Park Community
Health Indicators Project
2013
Acknowledgements

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Introduction

Background
The Let Us Build Cully Park! coalition of 17 community organizations along with hundreds of local residents are designing, planning and constructing a park atop a former landfill site in the Cully Neighborhood of NE Portland. Previous reports describe the community-based participatory approaches and collaborations with state and local agencies to conduct the environmental site assessment for the property, transportation and safety analysis, and describe anti-displacement strategies. Information on how to access these reports is found at the end of this document.

The Cully Park Community Health Indicators Project is a community led effort supported by numerous organizations and agencies to improve health and quality of life in a predominantly low-income and one of the most racially and ethnically diverse neighborhoods in Portland.

This project engaged a Technical Advisory Panel (TAP) comprised of leaders in public health, healthcare, mental health, community health, and parks and recreation. The project also engaged a Community Advisory Panel (CAP) comprised of local community health leaders, parents, and neighbors of the former landfill. The TAP functioned as a think tank providing resources in response to data, technical and strategic needs identified by the CAP. The CAP served as the innovator, connecting neighborhood health interests to plans for monitoring health-related changes. Together the work of the TAP and CAP resulted in a list of neighborhood level, community-identified health indicators. These indicators describe the community’s identified health interests as they pertain to the park. The indicators provide a snapshot of data available to establish a baseline of health-related conditions, and are intended for use in monitoring the progress toward the health interest of the community.

Social Determinants of Health
Health is shaped by our homes, schools, workplaces, neighborhoods, and communities. These “places” include physical buildings, the natural environment, and patterns of social engagement, sense of safety and security, and overall well-being. Places that enhance quality of life significantly influence population health outcomes. Examples of resources in places that enhance quality of life include access to safe and affordable housing, nutritious food, education, public safety, healthcare services, and environments free from contamination.

The term ‘brownfield’ is used to describe properties with contamination concerns that are idled, underused, or abandoned. Common examples in Oregon include former gas stations, auto repair shops, dry cleaners, landfills, and former industrial sites. Brownfield properties are located throughout Oregon. OHA’s Brownfield and Land Reuse Initiative builds capacity at the local level to integrate health considerations into brownfield planning. This project was funded by a community health projects related to brownfields and land reuse grant from the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) to foster collaborations among multiple agencies and sectors to assist with maximizing the community health benefits of redevelopment.

Public health involvement in brownfield redevelopment seeks to prevent harmful exposures to contamination that may be present through the redevelopment process, while at the same time promoting and monitoring the health benefits that can occur through
strategies that involve and address community health needs.

**Strategy**
The approach for the Cully Park Community Health Indicators Project is based on two worldview models, the Relational Worldview Model (RWVM), a Native American holistic thought process with the concept of balance as the basis for health, and the Social Change Worldview model, whereby health is intimately tied to social and environmental conditions and communities use their voice to define and make their health concerns known to improve their health status.

These worldviews guided the process of engaging local residents and leaders, as well as the process by which technical assistance was provided to build local capacity in connecting community identified health interests to redevelopment outcomes for Cully Park.

Project participants acknowledge that health is deeply grounded in a broader social and environmental context that includes multiple dimensions of health and wellness – mind, body, and spirit. The value of inclusion rather than exclusion and the embrace of diversity as a means of enriching the social fabric of the community are central to the worldviews guiding this work. **Figure 1. Relational Worldview Model Source: Native American Youth and Family Association**

**Process**
This project took place from Jul-Dec 2013 and focused on engaging local community health leaders on the topic of maximizing and keeping track of intentional strategies to improve the local community’s health provided by the redevelopment of a former landfill into Cully Park.

The World Health Organization states that, “Monitoring is a process of repeatedly observing a situation to watch for changes over time. Monitoring health at the population level helps to show if the health situation is improving, worsening or staying the same. The results of monitoring indicate whether policies, programs and practices are accomplishing what they are designed to achieve.”

Community health leaders convened Sept-Oct 2013 for three workshops at the local elementary school to create a monitoring plan.

Workshops were co-facilitated by staff from the local community organization, Verde, and the OHA-Brownfields Initiative. Workshops provided a space for respectful and meaningful intergenerational and multicultural community engagement, including: meals, childcare, and language services. Many Spanish and Somali residents live nearby the former landfill. The Native American Youth and Family Association (NAYA) is located within a mile of Cully Park.

The workshops included reflective discussion based opportunities for co-learning. Local leaders spoke about the meaning of health and the health-related interest of their families and communities. Their voices provide first-hand knowledge of the needs, struggles and visions for their communities. As health interests were identified participants worked together to identify themes and prioritize the interests. The TAP assisted linking community-identified health interests to indicators and measures with existing data to capture baseline conditions. Many of the interests...
With the worldview models as a framework for the discussion, the CAP discussed opportunities to improve health through the redevelopment of the former landfill into Cully Park. Through this discussion a health definition was derived for the park,

“A place to celebrate life, a safe, outdoor space to connect with nature and community through cross cultural and intergenerational learning, sharing, exercise, play, activities, wellbeing, and balance.”

Cully Park Community Health Indicators

identified by the community are difficult to measure based on the hyper local nature of this project, and data sources often covering geographies that are too large to be meaningful at a community within a neighborhood level. [TAP, help with describing limitations to data collection, also insert different pictures below, Tony?]
Community Identified Health interests

- Opportunities for outdoor community gathering, getting to know neighbors (at parks or spaces intended for social events). Including a kiosk for sharing information about events at the park.
- Outdoor places for children to play.
- Feeling safe using the park (safe from crime, gangs) and in the neighborhood as a community in general.
- Getting to the park safely (sidewalks, bike lanes, traffic, lighting), from the schools and homes, and within the neighborhood.
- Safe bathrooms to use while at the park (and potentially along the way getting to the park) especially for small children and the elderly.
- Programming for children and the community at the park, including summer box lunch program for low-income youth.
- Opportunities for arts and crafts activities at the park.
- Opportunities for intergenerational interactions at the park.
- Opportunities for connecting to nature, spirituality, and celebrations.
From Health Interests To Health Indicators

In small groups, community members sorted and organized the full group’s health interests into the following themes:

- Getting to Cully Park safely,
- feeling safe while at Cully Park,
- Ensuring that programming and activities at Cully Park are culturally relevant and allow for multicultural and intergenerational opportunities.

The remainder of this report compiles existing data that pertain to the health interests identified. The health indicators included are not representative of all of the health interests voiced. Some of the interests, like tracking changes in feelings of wellbeing as the land transitions from a former landfill into restored habitat and park space, would require dedicated initiatives at the neighborhood level to collect baseline and future data.

Local Wisdom

“The opposite of depression is expression — play, exercise, people.”

“We need a kiosk to post local activities and events planned for community at the park.”

“It is important for parents to know that children can get to the park safely and play at the park safely.”

“I live right next to the park and I’m outside walking my dogs every night keeping an eye on what’s going on in the neighborhood.”

“I want our community to feel connected to our cultural roots.”
What this means
This indicator measures progress toward the goal of universal park access. The CLF Regional Equity Atlas 2.0 scores all neighborhoods in the region based on their proximity to parks. A score of 5 indicates a neighborhood where nearly everyone has access to a park within 1/4 mile. [This indicator includes Cully Park, Scotty/CLF, what would it be without Cully Park?]

Why it’s important for health
Access to parks provides opportunities for improving physical, mental and social aspects of health. The more physically active communities are, the less likely they are to develop obesity, diabetes, heart disease and other chronic health conditions. Parks provide spaces to cope with mental stress, to encourage brain development and to foster community connectedness. Ensuring a basic level of access to parks is one way to reduce the differences in health observed from neighborhood to neighborhood.

Parks Access Score
3.8 out of 5

What this means
This indicator measures how access to parks in Cully compares to other neighborhoods in the region. The CLF Regional Equity Atlas 2.0 ranks all neighborhoods in the region based on a combination of proximity to parks and proximity to natural areas. Like grading on a curve, neighborhoods with the best access rank 100, and neighborhoods with the worst rank 0.

[This indicator includes Cully Park, Scotty/CLF, what would it be without Cully Park?]

Pedro Moreno, Verde Outreach Worker, marks the beginning of the construction of the Cully Community Garden.
Percent visiting a park near home at least monthly in the past 12 months

55%

What this means
This indicator measures how access to parks in Cully compares to other neighborhoods in the city. The City of Portland Office of the Auditor conducts an annual (English-only) mail survey to learn about how residents use services. In 2013, 55% of respondents from central northeast neighborhoods reported that they had visited a park near their homes at least monthly within the past 12 months. The definition of “near” was left to the respondent to define. This is slightly lower than the city-wide rate of 59%, and substantially lower than the rate for Northwest Portland, 72%.

Why it’s important for health
Our choices are shaped by our environment. If parks are too far away, difficult to get to, or not safe, residents are less likely to visit them. This limits their ability to engage in healthy activities like exercising, feeling connected to nature, and recreating outside with family and friends. From one year to the next this indicator will show trends that will help to inform efforts to promote park use and the health benefits that result.

Number of publically accessible outdoor community spaces

7

What this means
This indicator measures the absolute number of spaces that are used like parks. It highlights the assets that already exist in Cully. If it increases, we would expect that access to parks would also increase. This count of publicly accessible park or play areas includes 1 public school playground, 1 natural area, 1 park, and 4 community gardens. This does not include parks that will soon be developed, like Cully Park, the Werbin Property, and Colwood Golf Course.

Why it’s important for health
The number and variety of outdoor recreational spaces available to neighborhood residents influences their ability to be physically active, and to connect socially outside of their homes. In addition, opportunities to grow nutritious food and have contact with nature offer a variety of mental and physical health benefits.
Percent who feel safe walking alone in parks during the day

81%

What this means
The annual City of Portland Auditor annual survey asks respondents about their perception of safety. In 2013, 81% of respondents from central northeast neighborhoods reported that they felt safe or very safe walking alone in the park closest to their home during the day. This is similar to the city-wide response of 82%, and somewhat lower than the neighborhood with the highest perceived safety (Southwest, 88%).

Why it’s important for health
Injury from violent crime is relatively rare, but it is a health concern. The perception of safety affects whether people take advantage of the health-supportive resources in their community. If parks feel unsafe, residents can’t benefit from them.

Percent who feel safe walking alone in parks at night

30%

What this means
Like the indicator above, this measures perceived safety among central northeast neighbors walking in the nearest park, but this indicator focuses on nighttime. Among respondents in 2013, 30% said they felt safe or very safe walking alone in the nearest park at night. This is similar to the city-wide response of 33%. The neighborhood with the highest perceived safety at night had a substantially higher percentage, 45%, reporting that they felt safe or very safe.

Expresiones students on a field trip to a nature play area at Metro’s Blue Lake Park.
Sidewalk density score

1.8 out of 5

What this means
This indicator measures progress towards a goal. The CLF Regional Equity Atlas 2.0 scores neighborhoods based on sidewalk coverage. A score of 1.8 ranks “medium-low” according to their classification, with 5 representing full sidewalk coverage.

Why it’s important for health
Sidewalks promote neighborhood mobility through dedicated space for pedestrian and transit use. Sidewalk connectivity encourages navigation by wheelchairs, strollers, and makes mobility safer for individuals who walk with assistive devices. Sidewalks protect people from traffic. In sum, sidewalks in neighborhoods promote physical activity, decrease the risk of chronic disease, and reduce injuries from traffic crashes.

Percent of streets with sidewalks

24%

What this means
This indicator measures progress towards the goal of 100% sidewalk coverage. According to estimates from the Oregon Health Authority Brownfields program, 24% of Cully sidewalks are complete. Thanks to community advocacy, and collaborative efforts to address safe access to the park, sidewalks are being built.

Why it’s important for health
Monitoring changes in sidewalk infrastructure can assist in health promoting actions by decision makers and overall park use. Overtime we would expect this map to improve. However, the Cully neighborhood still has significant unmet needs for sidewalks.
Community members identified the following needs for additional health-related resources for the park:

1. Safe restrooms
2. Culturally relevant programming for arts and crafts
3. Intergenerational activities and events
4. Free lunch program for kids
5. Spaces for community celebrations and social gatherings

Why it’s important for health
Amenities like safe restrooms encourage the use of parks for the many healthy activities that take place there. This is especially important for families with young children and older adults. Opportunities for gathering and developing community can increase social cohesion, which is important for overall health.

These facilities or opportunities may be present in Cully already in important but informal ways. Securing permanent and long-term access to these facilities is a goal voiced by the community in the process of envisioning a healthy Cully Neighborhood Park.
How to update indicators

Park access score
The Coalition for a Livable (CLF) Regional Equity Atlas 2.0 provides a score for each neighborhood in the region. Visit https://gis.oregonmetro.gov/equityAtlas/ to view the map and indicators. From scenario maps, select “Proximity to Publicly Accessible Parks and Natural Areas.” Use the indicators tab to set the analysis units to neighborhoods. Right-click on “Neighborhoods” in the table of contents to access the attribute table and scroll to Cully. The column named “Proximity to Publicly Accessible Parks” displays the score.

Park access rank
The CLF Regional Equity Atlas 2.0 ranks each neighborhood in the region. Visit https://gis.oregonmetro.gov/equityAtlas/ to view the map and indicators. From scenario maps, select “Proximity to Publicly Accessible Parks and Natural Areas.” Use the indicators tab to set the analysis units to neighborhoods. Right-click on “Neighborhoods” in the table of contents to access the attribute table and scroll to Cully. The column named “Composite” displays the rank.

Percent visiting a park near home at least monthly in the last 12 months
The City of Portland Auditor’s Office conducts an annual survey that includes this indicator. Visit the Audit Services Division web page at http://www.portlandonline.com/auditor/index.cfm?c=26649 to find the most recent report. In the Community Survey Data section, under the heading “Parks & Recreation”, find the question: “In the past 12 months, how many times did you visit a City park near your home?” In the Central NE column, add up the percentages answering daily, weekly, and monthly.

Number of park spaces
The CLF regional equity atlas 2.0 shows publicly accessible schools, parks, natural areas, and community gardens. Visit https://gis.oregonmetro.gov/equityAtlas/ to view the atlas. Use the indicators tab to set the analysis units to neighborhoods. From the indicators tab, use the add/remove data dialogue box to find the reference layers tab. Make sure “Oregon Metro Regional Basemap,” and “RLIS Thematic Map Data,” and “Schools” layers are turned on. Zoom to the Cully neighborhood and count the park spaces within neighborhood boundaries. For the baseline measure in this report, we included the following park spaces: Ringler Elementary Playground, Whitaker Ponds, Sacajawea Park, Cully Community Garden, Sumner Street Community Garden, Rigler Community Garden, and Cully Park Community Garden.

Percent who feel safe walking in the nearest park alone during the day
The City of Portland Auditor’s Office conducts an annual survey that includes this indicator. Visit the Audit Services Division web page at http://www.portlandonline.com/auditor/index.cfm?c=26649 to find the most recent report. In the Community Survey Data section, under the heading “Public Safety”, find the question: “How safe would you feel walking alone during the day in the park closest to you?” In the Central NE column, add up the percentages answering safe or very safe. Do the same for the question, “How safe would you feel walking alone at night in the park closest to you?”

Percent who feel safe walking in the nearest park alone at night
The City of Portland Auditor’s Office conducts an annual survey that includes this indicator. Visit the Audit Services Division web page at http://www.portlandonline.com/auditor/index.cfm?c=26649 to find the most recent report. In the Community Survey Data section, under the heading “Public Safety”, find the question: “How safe would you feel walking alone at night in the park closest to you?” In the Central NE column, add up the percentages answering safe or very safe.

Sidewalk density score
The CLF Regional Equity Atlas 2.0 provides a score for each neighborhood in the region. Visit https://gis.oregonmetro.gov/equityAtlas/ to view the map and indicators. From scenario maps, select “Walkability.” Use the indicators tab to set the analysis units to neighborhoods. Right-click on “Neighborhoods” in the table of contents to access the attribute table and scroll to Cully. The column named “Walkability—Sidewalk Density” displays the score.

Percent of streets with sidewalks
Unlike other indicators, sidewalk mapping is not readily available online. It can be requested from the Portland Bureau of Transportation. Contact WHO? What about Coalition for a Livable Future to make a request.

Additional community identified priorities
Neighbors, community organizations, and the Parks and Recreation Department can act on and track of these priorities as Cully Park proceeds through planning and construction.
How to update indicators

Other ways to keep track
Community organizations and residents can help describe access to parks by sharing their experiences in accessing them, observing how their neighbors use informal outdoor gathering spaces, and by requesting updates from city bureaus. TODD, could you add something here describing PP&R processes for public involvement in advocating for programming, influencing parks decisions, etc.

Who to call for help
The following organization have committed to providing guidance or technical assistance in future monitoring efforts to update the data in this report and track progress toward health promoting actions over time:

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Statement from funding agency ATSDR
OHA alternative format statement
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[Other credits]
Additional Resources


