Creating Healthier Communities:
Evaluating Park Environments for Physical Activity

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Making it Better Conference
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Agenda for today...

- Parks and physical activity background
- Development of the Community Park Audit Tool (CPAT)
- Details of the CPAT
- Next steps
- Discussion
Some Broad-based Benefits of Parks

- Enhancing quality of life
- Attracting and retaining businesses
- Enhancing real estate values
- Protecting the environment
- Preventing youth crime/promoting youth development
- Facilitating community pride, connectedness, social capital
- Individual and community health – stress relief, spiritual restoration, reduced pollution, flood control, community connectedness, physical activity

• **32%** youth (2-19) in US overweight or obese

• **63%** adults in US overweight or obese

- Health-related issues (mental & physical)
- Staggering costs of medical care
- Overweight children are more likely to be overweight or obese as adults

(Ferraro et al., 2003; Freedman et al., 2001)
Parks as Important Community Physical Activity Resources

- Most local and provincial governments have some form of agency that oversees public open space.

- Increasing interest among researchers and practitioners in the field(s) of leisure studies and recreation management in how parks contribute to community health.

- Some have argued that much of the gains in physical activity are likely to occur in people’s leisure time.

- Parks provide important “behavior settings” in communities for both physical and social activity among residents of all ages.
Background: Parks and Physical Activity Research

- **Living closer to park space** is associated with increased physical activity among adults & youth (e.g., Giles-Corti et al., 2005; Kaczynski & Henderson, 2007; Roemmich et al., 2006)

- Systematic observation protocols and user surveys have been used to document that **approximately 40-90% of park users are active during their visits** (e.g., Cohen et al., 2007; Floyd et al., 2008; Wilhelm Stanis et al., 2009)

- **Park features & other characteristics** may be just as important as proximity in encouraging neighborhood & park-based physical activity (e.g., Cohen et al., 2006; Kaczynski et al., 2008; Timperio et al., 2008; Colabianchi et al., 2008)
  - Number & types of features
  - Quality of park and features (e.g., renovations)
  - Ease of accessing the park from surrounding neighborhood

- Park availability & park features and quality are generally **worse in low income and/or high-minority areas** (e.g., Crawford et al., 2008; Estabrooks et al., 2003; Moore et al., 2008)
The primary methods used to measure characteristics of the built environment that may be related to physical activity include:

- Perceptions of residents
- Geographic databases
- Direct observation (audits)
  - Best for capturing micro-scale features not included in geographic databases (e.g., specific features, quality ratings, etc.)
  - More time-intensive
  - Useful for engaging residents in the research process
  - Can be tested for reliability
Audit Tools – Reliability and Validity

• In understanding environmental influences on physical activity, accurate measurement of physical activity environments is critical

• When attempting to measure something, two characteristics of your tool are key:
  • Reliability – Does a measurement technique yield consistent results each time?
    • Inter-rater reliability – Do two different evaluators get the same findings?
  • Validity – Does the measurement technique accurately capture the concept you’re trying to study?
    • Content validity – Does the measure cover all of the important aspects of the concept?
Audit Tools – Diversity of Applications and Settings

- Neighborhood Environment
- Nutritional Environment
- Parks, Trails, Playgrounds
Audit Tools – Diversity of Applications and Settings

- **Neighborhood Environment**
  - Measure environmental features related to walking and active transportation
    - Pedestrian Environment Data Scan (PEDS) Tool
    - Active Neighborhood Checklist
    - Systematic Pedestrian and Cycling Environmental Scan (SPACES)

- **Nutritional Environment**

- **Parks, Trails, Playgrounds**
Audit Tools – Diversity of Applications and Settings

- Neighborhood Environment

- Nutritional Environment
  - Assess food environments in schools, neighborhoods, restaurants, grocery stores, etc.
    - Nutrition Environment Measures Survey (NEMS)
    - Nutrition Environment Assessment Tool (NEAT)

- Parks, Trails, Playgrounds
Audit Tools – Diversity of Applications and Settings

- Neighborhood Environment
- Nutritional Environment
- Parks, Trails, Playgrounds
  - Rate the physical & environmental characteristics of outdoor areas (facilities, amenities, quality, etc)
    - BRAT-Direct Observation (BRAT-DO)
    - Environmental Assessment of Public Recreation Spaces (EAPRS)
    - Path Environment Assessment Tool (PEAT)
Park Audit Tools

To date, at least five park audit tools have been developed by various groups:

- **Bedimo-Rung Assessment Tool – Direct Observation (BRAT-DO)**
- **Environmental Assessment of Public Recreation Spaces (EAPRS)**
- **Physical Activity Resource Assessment (PARA)**
- **Public Open Space Audit Tool (POST)**
- **Safe, Healthy, and Attractive Public Environments (SHAPE)**
Summary of Existing Park Audit Tools

- Several park audit tools previously developed – each has its own strengths and weaknesses
- Varying lengths and coverage of important dimensions
- Most glaring limitation is the lack of development and testing of existing tools with diverse community stakeholders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Audit Tool</th>
<th>Use Setting</th>
<th>Length</th>
<th>Park Quality</th>
<th>Youth-Oriented</th>
<th>Developed with stakeholders</th>
<th>Tested with stakeholders</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BRAT-DO</td>
<td>Parks</td>
<td>16 pages, 181 items</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Some</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>EAPRS</td>
<td>Parks</td>
<td>47 pages, 646 items</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Somewhat</td>
<td>Some</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PARA</td>
<td>Varied resources</td>
<td>1 page, 49 items</td>
<td>Limited</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POST</td>
<td>Parks, ovals</td>
<td>2.5 pages, 88 items</td>
<td>Limited</td>
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<td>Some</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SHAPE</td>
<td>Parks</td>
<td>1 page, 20 items</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Some</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Need for a Community Stakeholder Park Audit Tool

• Developing activity-friendly neighborhoods, including better parks, requires:
  • an accurate understanding of the current state of resources, and
  • the involvement and support of multiple constituencies

• “Simplified observational measures of parks... can be created from existing measures”
• “Creating practical measures for community groups should be a goal for researchers”
• “The incorporation of reliable observational measures into health advocacy efforts should be encouraged to provide an evidence base for advocacy” (Brownson et al., 2009, p. 120)

• Environmental justice: *fair treatment* and *meaningful involvement* of all people in decisions and actions about their health (Taylor et al., 2006)
Agenda for today...

- Parks and physical activity background

- Development of the Community Park Audit Tool (CPAT)
  - Details of the CPAT
  - Next steps
  - Discussion
Study Purpose & Aims

**Purpose**: To develop a tool that will enable diverse stakeholders to quickly and reliably audit community parks for their potential to promote youth physical activity.

**Specific aims:**

1. To review and evaluate existing park audit tools for their suitability for i) use by diverse community stakeholders, and ii) understanding park characteristics that may encourage youth physical activity.

2. To develop a revised, user-friendly tool with lay terminology that can facilitate involvement in research by community stakeholders and that captures park characteristics that are likely associated with youth physical activity.

3. To test the reliability of the new tool when used by diverse community stakeholders to audit parks.

4. To engage stakeholders in a process of thinking about the role of parks in community-level physical activity participation and how parks may be better designed to enhance youth physical activity in particular.

5. To document the process of tool development and engagement by community stakeholders around parks, the results of this process, and to disseminate lessons learned to facilitate better process in the future and in other communities.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stage 1</td>
<td>April-May 2010: Review of existing instruments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage 2</td>
<td>June 2010: Planning workshop with community stakeholders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage 3</td>
<td>July-August 2010: Development of park audit tool</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage 4</td>
<td>September 2010: Training workshop with community stakeholders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage 5</td>
<td>September-October 2010: Testing of park audit tool</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage 6</td>
<td>January 2011: Evaluation workshop with community stakeholders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage 7</td>
<td>February-October 2011: Dissemination of park audit tool</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Study Setting

- Kansas City, Missouri
- 66 parks that represent a mix of quality and size and that emphasize features oriented towards youth physical activity
Project Participants

- In total, 34 unique community stakeholders participated in the three workshops representing diverse organizations from around the KC metro area:

  - Academia
  - Community Park Users and Non-Users
  - Municipal Legislators
  - Parks and Recreation Department
  - Parks and Recreation Board
  - Public Health
  - Other City Departments
  - Other Government Agencies
  - Private Sector Organizations
  - Youth Agencies
  - High School Students

- Stakeholders received a $20 gift card at the conclusion of each workshop
Workshop 1 – Developing a Revised Park Audit Tool

• Pre-Workshop:
  • Review of domains/items within existing park and neighborhood audit tools

• Workshop 1 – Roundtable discussions with stakeholders
  • What is important to consider regarding an audit tool focusing on park-based physical activity?
  • What is important to consider regarding an audit tool focusing on youth activities in parks?
  • What is important to consider regarding a user-friendly audit tool?
  • Evaluation of strengths and weaknesses of existing park tools

• Post-Workshop:
  • Three key informant interviews with researchers familiar with parks and physical activity and/or the use of audit tools with community members

Data from all steps transcribed and analyzed by multiple coders
Workshop #1 Findings ...

What is important to consider regarding an audit tool focusing on park-based physical activity?

- **Presence and condition of facilities and amenities**
  - Condition: equipment there, surface, maintenance, cleanliness

- **Considerations of surrounding neighborhood**

- **Comfort & support facilities**
  - Restrooms, water fountain, benches, picnic shelter, parking, trash cans, recycling, food
  - Shade

- **Appearance/aesthetics**
  - Maintenance of the grounds, trash not overflowing, lakes/ponds, appealing

- **Signage**
  - Rental equipment, activities, etc.

- **Access**
  - Walking, public transportation, parking, connectivity to neighborhood, ADA/curb cuts, bike racks, sidewalks to the park

- **Safety considerations**
  - Lighting, proximity to other areas, traffic concerns, emergency considerations

- **Dog issues**
  - Animal friendly, but provide dog bags and place to throw bags

- **Fitness information**
  - Signs, equipment, education
Workshop #1 Findings ...

What is important to consider regarding an audit tool focusing on youth activities in parks?

- **Amenities** – facilities to keep people in the park
  - Restrooms
  - Changing tables
  - Trash receptacles
  - Vending machines
  - Picnic shelters

- **Condition of grounds**
  - Cleanliness, vandalism, graffiti
  - Aesthetics
    - Fountains, ponds, lakes
    - Attractive/colorful equipment

- **Access**
  - Walking, public transportation, biking, sidewalks/trails to the park
  - Concerns about busy streets

- **Equipment rental**
- **Benches for adults to watch kids**

- **Safety**
  - Emergency phones
  - Broken equipment
  - Lighting
  - Distance between facilities and street
  - Fencing around playground
  - Playground surface
  - Shade for equipment & benches

- **Areas for different ages**
  - Some open/free space
  - Multipurpose areas
  - Some spaces that can accommodate families/groups
  - Interpretive signs
Workshop #1 Findings ...

What is important to consider regarding a user-friendly audit tool?

- **Should not take long**
  - 15 minutes – 1 hr?
  - 2 pages – no more than 8?
  - 30-100 questions?
- **Short but useful**
- **Simple checklist**
  - Check if it is there and check what the condition is
  - Not a lot of writing
  - Small scales (yes/no or 1-3; check box if present)
- **Place for comments**
- **Easy to follow**: provide directions, consistent formatting
- **Objective**: checklist, counting; no misleading wording
- **Include date, time of day, weather and temperature**
- **Need map** of the area prior to arrival

- **Short training/guide, but not needing to refer to guide**
  - Clear and simple instructions and directions – easy to understand
  - Needs to be clear without a separate manual
  - Everything needed on the tool
  - Provide necessary definitions – no jargon
  - Visuals in tool and/or training
- **Website** to access training/guide, find and print tool, FAQ section
- **Should work anywhere**
- **Differences across parks**
  - Standard form or different form?
  - Different versions, different sheets, skip sections?
- **Offer in different languages**
Community Park Audit Tool (CPAT)

• Based on findings from workshop 1 & our review of previous tools, we developed a new park audit tool
• 6 pages with 4 sections:
  • Park Information
  • Access and Surrounding Neighborhood
  • Park Activity Areas
  • Park Quality and Safety
• Comprehensive (key areas covered) yet user-friendly (length, format, etc.)
  • Mostly yes/no responses, but also some items with three options, as well as checklists and spaces for comments
  • Concerned with presence/absence and ‘useability’ & ‘condition’ of most park elements
• Average completion time = 15-30 min
• Instructions contained within tool or items themselves
• Guidebook available with additional details and definitions.
COMMUNITY PARK AUDIT TOOL

Instructions:
Before you begin, review the brief training guide and audit tool and try to locate a map of the park. Then, go to the park and proceed with filling out this audit tool. The tool (6 pages) is divided into four sections that focus on different aspects of the park environment. Additional instructions are provided within each section.

Tips for Using the Community Park Audit Tool (CPAT):
- Drive, bike, or walk around the park to get a feel for the contents and characteristics of the park and surrounding neighborhood.
- The CPAT is organized such that questions on similar topics are grouped into logical sections and the four sections are arranged in the order that you might encounter them during your audit. However, you may need to switch between sections or pages as you complete the park audit. Therefore, it is important to review and be familiar with all of the tool sections and questions before you begin your audit.
- It is also important that you check back through the full document (6 pages) when you are finished to ensure you have completed all the sections and questions.
- Space is provided at the end of each section (and some individual questions) where you can take notes or record comments as you complete your audit. The margins or back of each page (if copied single-sided) can also be used to take notes, but please be sure that all relevant information is transferred to appropriate places on the tool and that all questions are fully answered using the format provided.
- If you see anything during your audit that requires immediate attention, contact the local parks department.

Section 1: Park Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Address/Location</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Were you able to locate a map?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Was the park easy to find?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date (mm/dd/yy)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temperature</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Start Time</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>End Time</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length of visit</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Section 2: Access and Surrounding Neighborhood

This section asks about factors related to accessing the park and about features of the neighborhood surrounding the park. Several questions include follow-up responses if you answered yes. After completing all questions, provide any additional comments in the space at the end of the section. When thinking about the surrounding neighborhood, consider all areas that are visible from all sides of the park.

When rating the access and surrounding neighborhood, please use the following definitions:
- Useable: everything necessary for use is present and nothing prevents use (e.g., sidewalks are passable)
- Not usable: everything necessary for use is not present and prevents use (e.g., sidewalks are passable)
- Partially usable: everything necessary for use is not present and prevents use (e.g., sidewalks are passable)
- Not usable: everything necessary for use is not present and prevents use (e.g., sidewalks are passable)

1. Can the park be accessed for use? (e.g., not locked/fenced, available for activity, etc.)
   - Yes
   - No

2. Are there signs that state the following (could be same sign)?
   - Park name
   - Park hours
   - Park contact information
   - Park rules
   - Park map
   - Rental equipment information
   - Event/program information
   - Yes
   - No

3. How many points of entry does the park have?
   - Yes
   - No

4. Is there a public transit stop within sight of the park?
   - Yes
   - No

5. What types of parking are available for the park? (check all that are present)
   - None
   - Parking Lot
   - On street parking
   - Bike racks
   - Yes
   - No

6. Are there sidewalks on any roads adjacent to the park? (could be on opposite side of road)
   - Yes
   - No

7. Is there an external trail or path connected to the park?
   - Yes
   - No

8. Are there marked bike lanes on any roads adjacent to the park?
   - Yes
   - No

9. Are there nearby traffic signals on any roads adjacent to the park? (e.g., crosswalk, stop light/sign)
   - Yes
   - No

10. What are the main land use(s) around the park? (check all that apply)
    - Residential
    - Commercial
    - Institutional (e.g., school)
    - Industrial (e.g., warehouse)
    - Natural

11. Which of the following safety or appearance concerns are present in the neighborhood surrounding the park?
    (check all that are present in the surrounding neighborhood with sight on any side of the park)
    - Inadequate lighting (e.g., absent or poor lighting on surrounding neighborhood streets)
    - Graffiti (e.g., markings or paintings that reduce the visual quality of the area)
    - Vandalism (e.g., damaged signs, vehicles, etc.)
    - Excessive litter (e.g., noticeable amounts of trash, broken glass, etc.)
    - Excessive noise (e.g., noticeable sounds that are unpleasant or annoying)
    - Vacant or unfavorable buildings (e.g., abandoned houses, liquor store)
    - Poorly maintained properties (e.g., overgrown grass, broken windows)
    - Evidence of threatening persons or behaviors (e.g., gangs, alcohol/drug use)
    - Other

Comments on Access or Surrounding Neighborhood Issues:

Community Park Audit Tool
## Community Park Audit Tool (CPAT) – pages 3 and 4

### Section 3: Park Activity Areas

This section asks about the activity areas in the park. For each activity area type:
1. First, indicate the number (i) that are present in the park (if none, write “0”).
2. Then, respond to several subsequent questions about up to three of those particular areas. If there are more than three areas for a specific activity area type, rate the first three you encounter during the audit. If there were no activity areas of that type present in the park, move on to the next type.
3. Finally, use the space provided to note any additional comments about each type of activity area.

When rating the activity areas, please use the following definitions:
- **Useable**: everything necessary for use is present (excluding portable equipment - rackets, balls, etc.) and nothing prevents use (e.g., there are nets up for tennis courts, goals for sport fields, are trails passable, etc.)
- **Good condition**: looks clean and maintained (e.g., minimal rust, graffiti, broken parts; even surface; etc.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity Areas</th>
<th># of Areas</th>
<th>Area 1</th>
<th>Area 2</th>
<th>Area 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Playground</td>
<td>(i)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Useable</td>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good condition</td>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distinct areas for different age groups</td>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colorful equipment (i.e., 3+ colors)</td>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shade cover for some (25%+) of the area</td>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benches in/surrounding area</td>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fence around area (i.e., 2+ sides)</td>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Separation or distance from road</td>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comments:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Sport Field (football/soccer)</td>
<td>(i)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Useable</td>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good condition</td>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comments:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Baseball Field</td>
<td>(i)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Useable</td>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good condition</td>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comments:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Swimming Pool</td>
<td>(i)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Useable</td>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good condition</td>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comments:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Splash Pad</td>
<td>(i)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Useable</td>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good condition</td>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comments:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. Basketball Court</td>
<td>(i)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Useable</td>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good condition</td>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comments:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. Tennis Court</td>
<td>(i)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Useable</td>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good condition</td>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>Comments:</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th># of Areas</th>
<th>Area 1</th>
<th>Area 2</th>
<th>Area 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>h. Volleyball Court</td>
<td>(i)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Useable</td>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good condition</td>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comments:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i. Trail</td>
<td>(i)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Useable</td>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good condition</td>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>Connected to activity areas</td>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distance markers/sign</td>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benches along trail</td>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is the trail surface? (check one)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Paved</td>
<td>Paved</td>
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<tr>
<td>Comments:</td>
<td></td>
<td>Crushed stone</td>
<td>Crushed stone</td>
<td>Crushed stone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j. Fitness Equipment/Station</td>
<td>(i)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Useable</td>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Good condition</td>
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<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>Comments:</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>k. Skate Park</td>
<td>(i)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Useable</td>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
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<td>l. Off-Leash Dog Park</td>
<td>(i)</td>
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<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>m. Open/Green Space</td>
<td>(i)</td>
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<td>No</td>
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<td>Comments:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>n. Lake</td>
<td>(i)</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Useable</td>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>Good condition</td>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is there a designated swimming area?</td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comments:</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>o. Other (Fill in a type description for each)</td>
<td>(i)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Useable</td>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>Good condition</td>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comments:</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Comments on Park Activity Areas:
Section 4: Park Quality and Safety

This section asks about factors related to comfort and safety when using the park. Several questions include follow-up responses if you answered yes. After completing all questions, provide any additional comments in the space at the end.

When rating the quality and safety features of the park, please use the following definitions:

- Useful: everything necessary for use is present and nothing prevents use (e.g., can get into restrooms, drinking fountains, etc.)
- Good condition: looks clean and maintained (e.g., minimal rust, graffiti, broken parts, etc.)
- Usable: everything necessary for use is present and nothing prevents use (e.g., can get into restrooms, drinking fountains, etc.)
- All or most are useable
- About half
- None or few are useable
- Are they in good condition? All or most in good condition
- About half
- None or few in good condition
- Is there a family restroom? Yes
- None
- Is there a baby change station in any restroom? Yes
- No
- Are there drinking fountains at the park? Yes
- No
- All or most are useable
- About half
- None or few are useable
- Are they in good condition? About half
- None or few in good condition
- Is there an activity area? About half
- None or few are near
- Are there benches to sit on in the park? Yes
- No
- About half
- None or few are near
- Are they in good condition? About half
- None or few in good condition
- Are there picnic tables in the park? Yes
- No
- About half
- None or few in good condition
- Is there a picnic shelter in the park? Yes
- No
- Are there trash cans in the park? Yes
- No
- About half
- None or few are near
- Are they near activity areas? Yes
- No
- Are there food/vending machines available in the park? Yes
- No
- Are there rules posted about animals in the park? Yes
- No
- Are there rules posted about animals in the park? Yes
- No
- Is there a place to get dog waste pick up bags in the park? Yes
- No
- Are there lights in the park? Yes
- No
- About half
- None or few are lit
- Are the activity areas lit? About half
- None or few are lit
- Comments on Park Quality and Safety Issues:

Before finishing, please ensure you have answered all questions in the tool.
Workshop 2 – Audit Tool Training

• Reviewed the CPAT elements in detail at a second workshop
• Practiced in a local park
• Discussed confusion/ideas for revisions
• Tool modified and sent out again for final feedback before testing stage
Audit Tool Field Testing

- 66 parks audited independently by 2 stakeholders each September-October 2010
- Parks audited represented a diverse mix of size, geography, neighborhood characteristics, and features and amenities
- Examined the inter-rater reliability of all of the questions within the CPAT
- For all variables except three, percent agreement was greater than 70% (considered good if 70% or better: Boarnet et al., 2006)
- Based on feedback from stakeholders, modifications are being made to clarify questions within the tool and instructions within the guidebook
Workshop #3 – Debriefing and Dissemination

Stakeholders provided feedback and input on:

1) Their experience using the CPAT to audit parks around Kansas City

2) How best to disseminate the CPAT for future use

3) How to improve the process of developing and using the CPAT in other communities

Suggestions are being incorporated into modifications to the CPAT and guidebook, as well as future dissemination and training activities.
Lessons Learned from Working with Diverse Community Stakeholders

• People bring a wide range of knowledge and attitudes about the built environment to the process

• Considerable time investment necessary to organize 30+ busy individuals
  • ensure you have excellent staff, frequent communication, strong partners

• Impact of the tool development process on the community extends well beyond the development of a tool (for both stakeholders and you!)
  • valuable connections with other key individuals/organizations
  • interest in and momentum for advocacy
  • increased awareness of how the built environment influences health

• 86% of stakeholders reported their perceptions of the importance of both the built environment and parks for promoting PA had improved ‘moderately’ or ‘a lot’ over the course of the project
Process-Related Outcomes Among Stakeholders

• Networking and community building
  • “The process encourages and fosters a sense of togetherness, team building and community”
  • “[The CPAT] provides a nice vehicle for engaging grassroots citizens and constituents in a reasonably manageable process by which to assess parks and what they offer”

• Awareness and knowledge
  • “I personally have gained greater awareness of and appreciation for the range and types of variation in parks available”

• Planning and advocacy support
  • “The CPAT can be a valuable resource for many organizations, specifically for me – a community collaborative working to prevent childhood obesity. This tool can help us inform families of places to be active, could help us identify areas of need related to physical activity, help guide our planning process, and help provide information to support advocacy efforts”
Agenda for today...

- Parks and physical activity background

- Development of the Community Park Audit Tool (CPAT)

- Details of the CPAT

- Next steps

- Discussion
Community Park Audit Tool

Instructions
Before you begin, review the brief training guide and audit tool and try to locate a map of the park. This is important to ensure each question and response option is clear when you are making your ratings. Then, go to the park and proceed with filling out this audit tool. The tool (6 pages) is divided into four sections that focus on different aspects of the park environment. Additional instructions are provided within each section.
Community Park Audit Tool

Tips for Using the Community Park Audit Tool (CPAT)

• Drive, bike, or walk around the park to get a feel for the contents and characteristics of the park and surrounding neighborhood.

• The CPAT is organized such that questions on similar topics are grouped into logical sections and the four sections are arranged in the order that you might encounter them during your audit. However, you may need to switch between sections or pages as you complete the park audit. Therefore, it is important to review and be familiar with all of the tool sections and questions before you begin your audit.

• It is also important that you check back through the full document (6 pages) when you are finished to ensure you have completed all the sections and questions.

• Space is provided at the end of each section (and some individual questions) where you can take notes or record comments as you complete your audit. The margins or back of each page (if copied single-sided) can also be used to take notes, but please be sure that all relevant information is transferred to appropriate places on the tool and that all questions are fully answered using the format provided.

• If you see anything during your audit that requires immediate attention, contact the local parks department.
Section 1: Park Information

Park Name: ___________________________  Observer Name or ID: ______________

Park Address/Location: ____________________________________________________________

Were you able to locate a map?  □ No  □ Yes

Was the park easy to find?  □ No  □ Somewhat  □ Yes

Date (m/d/yr): ___ /___ /_______

Approximate Temperature: ___ °F  Weather: □ Clear  □ Partly Cloudy  □ Rain/Snow

Start Time: ______ am or pm (circle)  End Time: _____ am or pm (circle)  Length of visit: ____ min

Comments on Park Information:
Section 2: Access and Surrounding Neighborhood

This section asks about factors related to accessing the park and about features of the neighborhood surrounding the park. Several questions include follow-up responses if you answered yes. After completing all questions, provide any additional comments in the space at the end of the section. When thinking about the surrounding neighborhood, consider all areas that are visible from all sides of the park.

When rating the access and surrounding neighborhood, please use the following definition:

- **Useable**: everything necessary for use is present and nothing prevents use (e.g., sidewalks are passable)

1. Can the park be **accessed for use**? (e.g., not locked/fenced, available for activity, etc.)
   - No
   - Yes

2. Are there **signs** that state the following (could be same sign)? *(check all that are present)*
   - Park name
   - Park hours
   - Park contact information
   - Park/facility rental information
   - Park rules
   - Park map
   - Rental equipment information
   - Event/program information

3. How many **points of entry** does the park have?
   - More than 5 (or park boundary is open)
   - 2-5
   - Only 1

4. Is there a **public transit stop** within sight of the park?
   - No
   - Yes
Section 2: Access and Surrounding Neighborhood (continued)

5. What types of **parking** are available for the park? *(check all that are present)*
   - □ None
   - □ Parking Lot
   - □ On street parking
   - □ Bike rack(s)

6. Are there **sidewalks** on any roads adjacent to the park? □ No □ Yes
   If yes ... Are they useable? □ All or most are useable □ About half □ None or few useable
   Are there **curb cuts and/or ramps** on any sidewalks bordering or entering the park?
   - □ No
   - □ Yes

7. Is there an external **trail or path** connected to the park? □ No □ Yes
   If yes ... Is it useable? □ No □ Yes

8. Are there **bike routes** on any roads adjacent to the park? *(check all present)*
   - □ None
   - □ Marked lane
   - □ Designated route sign
   - □ Share the road signs/markers

9. Are there nearby **traffic signals** on any roads adjacent to the park? *(e.g., crosswalk, stop light/sign)* □ No □ Yes

10. What are the main **land use(s)** around the park? *(check all that apply)*
    - □ Residential
    - □ Commercial
    - □ Institutional *(e.g., school)*
    - □ Industrial *(e.g., warehouse)*
    - □ Natural
11. Which of the following safety or appearance concerns are present in the neighborhood surrounding the park? (check all that are present in the surrounding neighborhood within sight on any side of the park)

- Inadequate lighting (e.g., absent or limited lighting on surrounding neighborhood streets)
- Graffiti (e.g., markings or paintings that reduce the visual quality of the area)
- Vandalism (e.g., damaged signs, vehicles, etc.)
- Excessive litter (e.g., noticeable amounts of trash, broken glass, etc.)
- Heavy traffic (e.g., steady flow of vehicles)
- Excessive noise (e.g., noticeable sounds that are unpleasant or annoying)
- Vacant or unfavorable buildings (e.g., abandoned houses, liquor store)
- Poorly maintained properties (e.g., overgrown grass, broken windows)
- Lack of eyes on the street (e.g., absence of people, no houses or store fronts)
- Evidence of threatening persons or behaviors (e.g., gangs, alcohol/drug use)
- Other ___________________________________________________________________

Comments on Access or Surrounding Neighborhood Issues:
Section 3: Park Activity Areas

This section asks about the activity areas in the park. For each activity area type:

1. **First**, indicate the number (#) that are present in the park (if none, write “0”).
2. Then, respond to several subsequent questions about **up to three** of those particular areas. If there are more than three areas for a specific activity area type, **rate the first three you encounter during the audit**. If there were no activity areas of that type present in the park, move on to the next type.
3. Finally, use the space provided to note any additional comments about each type of activity area.

When rating the activity areas, please use the following definitions:

- **Useable**: everything necessary for use is present (excluding portable equipment - rackets, balls, etc.) and nothing prevents use (e.g., are there nets up for tennis courts, goals for sport fields, are trails passable, etc.)

- **Good condition**: looks clean and maintained (e.g., minimal rust, graffiti, broken parts; even surface; etc.)
### Section 3: Park Activity Areas (continued)

#### 12. Activity Areas # of Areas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Area 1</th>
<th>Area 2</th>
<th>Area 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Playground</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Useable</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good condition</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distinct areas for different age groups</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colorful equipment (i.e., 3+ colors)</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shade cover for some (25%+) of the area</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benches in/surrounding area</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fence around area (i.e., half or more)</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Separation or distance from road</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comments:</td>
<td></td>
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</table>
### Section 3: Park Activity Areas (continued)

12. **Activity Areas # of Areas**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Area 1</th>
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<th>Area 3</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>b. Sport Field</strong> (# : _____) (football/soccer)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Useable</td>
<td>☐ No  ☐ Yes</td>
<td>☐ No  ☐ Yes</td>
<td>☐ No  ☐ Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good condition</td>
<td>☐ No  ☐ Yes</td>
<td>☐ No  ☐ Yes</td>
<td>☐ No  ☐ Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Comments:</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>c. Baseball Field</strong> (# : _____)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Useable</td>
<td>☐ No  ☐ Yes</td>
<td>☐ No  ☐ Yes</td>
<td>☐ No  ☐ Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good condition</td>
<td>☐ No  ☐ Yes</td>
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<td>☐ No  ☐ Yes</td>
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</table>
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<th></th>
<th>Area 1</th>
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<th>Area 3</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>d. Swimming Pool (# :______)</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Useable</td>
<td>□ No</td>
<td>□ Yes</td>
<td>□ No</td>
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<tr>
<td>Good condition</td>
<td>□ No</td>
<td>□ Yes</td>
<td>□ No</td>
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<tr>
<td>Comments:</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>e. Splash Pad (# :______)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Useable</td>
<td>□ No</td>
<td>□ Yes</td>
<td>□ No</td>
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<tr>
<td>Good condition</td>
<td>□ No</td>
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### Section 3: Park Activity Areas (continued)

12. **Activity Areas # of Areas**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area 1</th>
<th>Area 2</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basket Court (# :______)</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Useable</td>
<td>□ No □ Yes</td>
<td>□ No □ Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good condition</td>
<td>□ No □ Yes</td>
<td>□ No □ Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comments:</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

| Tennis Court (# :______) | | |
| Useable | □ No □ Yes | □ No □ Yes | □ No □ Yes |
| Good condition | □ No □ Yes | □ No □ Yes | □ No □ Yes |
| Comments: | | | |
### Section 3: Park Activity Areas (continued)

12. **Activity Areas # of Areas**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Area 1</th>
<th>Area 2</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>h. <strong>Volleyball Court (# :______)</strong></td>
<td>![Yes/No]</td>
<td>![Yes/No]</td>
<td>![Yes/No]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Useable</td>
<td>![No]</td>
<td>![No]</td>
<td>![No]</td>
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<tr>
<td>Good condition</td>
<td>![No]</td>
<td>![No]</td>
<td>![No]</td>
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<tr>
<td>Comments:</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

i. **Trail (# :______)**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Area</th>
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<th>Area 2</th>
<th>Area 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Useable</td>
<td>![No]</td>
<td>![No]</td>
<td>![No]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good condition</td>
<td>![No]</td>
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<td>![No]</td>
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<tr>
<td>Benches along trail</td>
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<tr>
<td>What is the trail surface? <em>(check one)</em></td>
<td>Paved</td>
<td>Paved</td>
<td>Paved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crushed stone</td>
<td>Crushed stone</td>
<td>Crushed stone</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dirt/mulch</td>
<td>Dirt/mulch</td>
<td>Dirt/mulch</td>
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<tr>
<td>Comments:</td>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>j. Fitness</strong> (&lt;# :_____&gt;)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equipment/Stations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Useable</td>
<td>☐ No</td>
<td>☐ Yes</td>
<td>☐ No</td>
</tr>
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<td>☐ No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comments:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>l. Off-Leash Dog</strong> (&lt;# :_____&gt;)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Park</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Useable</td>
<td>☐ No</td>
<td>☐ Yes</td>
<td>☐ No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good condition</td>
<td>☐ No</td>
<td>☐ Yes</td>
<td>☐ No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comments:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Section 3: Park Activity Areas (continued)

12. **Activity Areas**  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th># of Areas</th>
<th>Area 1</th>
<th>Area 2</th>
<th>Area 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>m. Open/Green Space (# :_____)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Useable</td>
<td>❑ No ❑ Yes</td>
<td>❑ No ❑ Yes</td>
<td>❑ No ❑ Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good condition</td>
<td>❑ No ❑ Yes</td>
<td>❑ No ❑ Yes</td>
<td>❑ No ❑ Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comments :</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n. Lake (# :_____ )</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Useable</td>
<td>❑ No ❑ Yes</td>
<td>❑ No ❑ Yes</td>
<td>❑ No ❑ Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good condition</td>
<td>❑ No ❑ Yes</td>
<td>❑ No ❑ Yes</td>
<td>❑ No ❑ Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is there a designated swimming area? ❑ No ❑ Yes</td>
<td>❑ No ❑ Yes</td>
<td>❑ No ❑ Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comments:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o. Other (fill in a type description for each)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Useable</td>
<td>❑ No ❑ Yes</td>
<td>❑ No ❑ Yes</td>
<td>❑ No ❑ Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good condition</td>
<td>❑ No ❑ Yes</td>
<td>❑ No ❑ Yes</td>
<td>❑ No ❑ Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comments:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comments on Park Activity Areas:
Section 4: Park Quality and Safety

This section asks about factors related to comfort and safety when using the park. Several questions include follow-up responses if you answered yes. After completing all questions, provide any additional comments in the space at the end.

When rating the quality and safety features of the park, please use the following definitions:

- **Useable**: everything necessary for use is present and nothing prevents use (e.g., can get into restrooms, drinking fountains work, etc.)
- **Good condition**: looks clean and maintained (e.g., minimal rust, graffiti, broken parts; etc.)

13. Are there public restroom(s) or portable toilet(s) at the park?  [ ] No  [ ] Yes

If yes … Are the restrooms useable?
  [ ] All or most are useable  [ ] About half  [ ] None or few are useable

Are they in good condition?
  [ ] All or most in good condition  [ ] About half  [ ] None or few in good condition

Is there a family restroom?  [ ] No  [ ] Yes

Is there a baby change station in any restroom?  [ ] No  [ ] Yes
Section 4: Park Quality and Safety (continued)

14. Are there **drinking fountain(s)** at the park?  □ No  □ Yes
   If yes ... How many different fountains are there? (i.e., units, not spouts) _____
   Are the fountains useable?
      □ All or most are useable  □ About half  □ None or few are useable
   Are they in good condition?
      □ All or most in good condition  □ About half  □ None or few in good condition
   Are they near activity areas?
      □ All or most are near  □ About half  □ None or few are near

15. Are there **bench(es)** to sit on in the park?  □ No  □ Yes
   If yes ... Are the benches useable?
      □ All or most are useable  □ About half  □ None or few are useable
   Are they in good condition?
      □ All or most in good condition  □ About half  □ None or few in good condition

16. Are there **picnic table(s)** in the park?  □ No  □ Yes
   If yes ... Are the tables useable?
      □ All or most are useable  □ About half  □ None or few are useable
   Are they in good condition?
      □ All or most in good condition  □ About half  □ None or few in good condition
   Is there a picnic shelter in the park?  □ No  □ Yes
   Is there a grill or fire pit in the park?  □ No  □ Yes
Section 4: Park Quality and Safety (continued)

17. Are there **trash cans** in the park?  
   - No  
   - Yes  
   If yes ... Are they overflowing with trash?  
     - All or most overflowing  
     - About half  
     - None or few overflowing  
   Are they near activity areas?  
     - All or most are near  
     - About half  
     - None or few are near  
   Are recycling containers provided?  
     - No  
     - Yes

18. Is there **food/vending machines** available in the park?  
   - No  
   - Yes

19. If the sun was directly overhead, how much of the park would be **shaded**?  
   - <25%  
   - 25-75%  
   - >75%

20. Are there **rules posted about animals** in the park? (e.g., dogs must be leashed)?  
   - No  
   - Yes

21. Is there a place to get **dog waste pick up bags** in the park?  
   - No  
   - Yes  
   If yes ... Are bags available at any of the locations?  
     - No  
     - Yes
Section 4: Park Quality and Safety (continued)

22. Are there lights in the park? (not including neighborhood street lights)  □ No  □ Yes
   If yes ... How much of the park could be lit?  □ <25%  □ 25-75%  □ >75%
   Are the activity areas lit?
   □ All or most are lit  □ About half  □ None or few are lit

23. Is the park monitored? (e.g., volunteer or paid staff, patrolled by police, cameras, etc.)  □ Unsure  □ Yes

24. Are there any emergency devices in the park? (e.g., phone, button, emergency directions)  □ No  □ Yes

25. Is there evidence of threatening behavior or persons in the park? (e.g., gangs, alcohol/drug use)  □ No  □ Yes

26. From the center of the park, how visible is the surrounding neighborhood?
   □ Fully  □ Partially  □ Not at all
Section 4: Park Quality and Safety (continued)

27. Are there road(s) through the park?  No  Yes
   If yes ... Are there traffic control mechanisms on the roads within the park? (e.g.,
crosswalk, stop light or sign, brick road, speed bumps, roundabouts)  No  Yes

28. Which of the following park quality concerns are present in the park?  (check all that
are present)
   - Graffiti (e.g., markings or paintings that reduce the visual quality of the area)
   - Vandalism (e.g., damaged signs, buildings, equipment, etc.)
   - Excessive litter (e.g., noticeable amounts of trash, broken glass, etc.)
   - Excessive animal waste (e.g., noticeable amounts of dog waste)
   - Excessive noise (e.g., noticeable sounds that are unpleasant or annoying)
   - Poor maintenance (e.g., overgrown grass/weeds/bushes or lack of grass in green areas)
   - Other ______________________________________________________________
29. What **aesthetic features** are present **in the park**? *(check all that are present)*

- [ ] Evidence of landscaping (e.g., flower beds, pruned bushes)
- [ ] Artistic feature (e.g., statue, sculpture, gazebo, fountain)
- [ ] Historical or educational feature (e.g., monument, nature display, educational signs, etc.)
- [ ] Wooded area
- [ ] Trees throughout the park
- [ ] Water feature (e.g., lake, stream, pond)
- [ ] Meadow (e.g., natural, tall grassy area)
- [ ] Other ______________________________________________________________

30. Are there any **dangerous spots** in the park? *(e.g., abandoned building, pit/hole)*

- [ ] No
- [ ] Yes

**Comments on Comfort and Safety Issues:**

Before finishing, please ensure you have answered all questions in the tool.
Agenda for today...

- Parks and physical activity background
- Development of the Community Park Audit Tool (CPAT)
- Details of the CPAT
- Next steps
- Discussion
Next Steps in the KC Parks and Physical Activity Project

- **Dissemination of audit tool**
  - Use by researchers
  - Use by parks and recreation, planning, public health professionals, etc.
  - Use by citizens (education, participatory action research, advocacy, etc.)

- **Additional Research:**
  - Short and long-term impacts of using such a tool and engaging in such a process on citizens’ knowledge, attitudes, and advocacy
  - Examining the role of park environments in facilitating neighborhood and park-based physical activity: **Kansas City Neighborhood and Park Study**
PAR & Advocacy

- **Participatory Action Research (PAR)** - is “a methodology for an alternate system of knowledge production based on the people’s role in setting the agendas, participating in the data gathering and analysis, and controlling the use of the outcomes” (Reason 1994: 329).

- The accountability of participatory research is based on three components:
  1. Open participation in identification of issues, problems, and concerns by those involved or who would be affected by decisions
  2. Understandable knowledge to be used and developed through the interaction of researchers and the local group
  3. Stakeholders are *active researchers* rather than people made into passive objects of study.

Participatory Action Research Model

- Identify Issue
- Collect Data
- Analyze Interpret
- Develop Plan
- Take Action
- Ongoing Evaluation
Arnstein’s Ladder of Citizen Participation

1. Being placed on advisory committee by powerholder.
2. Fake form of group participation where focus is on curing their “pathology”.
3. Typically a one-way flow of information (lack of participatory options).
4. Inviting citizen opinions (survey) for appearance of participation.
5. Few “hand-picked” worthy citizens on boards (easily out-voted if necessary).
6. Negotiation between citizens and powerholders for planning and decision-making responsibilities.
7. Dominant citizen authority over certain plans/programs.
8. Full community participation in governing.

PAR & Advocacy

- **Advocacy** - is a political process by an individual or a group which normally aims to influence public-policy and resource allocation decisions within political, economic, and social systems and institutions.

Lobbying Versus Advocacy: Legal Definitions. NP Action retrieved 09-19-11
PAR & Advocacy

Steps to Using the CPAT to Increase Advocacy in your Community

1. Create Awareness: Identify the issue(s) important to your community (e.g. # parks, park quality, facilities/amenities available, park accessibility, safety)

2. Partnership: Organize a team of stakeholders and resource providers (e.g. parents, businesses, residents, local coalitions, non-for profits, schools, parks and recreation council, city/county officials, etc)

3. Assessment: Have a variety of stakeholders audit parks and recreation area(s) using CPAT

4. Empowerment: Develop a plan to address your issue

5. Advocacy: Engagement of citizens to in goal attainment
Kansas City Neighborhood and Park Study

- Detailed audits of 120+ parks across Kansas City, Missouri (diverse mix of size, features, quality, geography, etc.)

- Assessment of neighborhood characteristics around parks (e.g., crime and traffic, density, connectivity, land use patterns, etc.) via surveys and GIS

- Mail survey with a random sample of nearly 4000 residents living within a half-mile of the parks to assess physical activity, park use, and other health behaviors and outcomes for one adult and one child in the household

- Numerous multi-level analyses related to associations between park **proximity**, **features**, **quality characteristics**, and **neighborhood context** and physical activity of children and adults
Kansas City Neighborhood and Park Study

- Youth with a playground within ½ mile from home 2.5x more likely to meet PA recommendations

- Certain proximal park amenities also related to greater physical activity (e.g., shade, transit stop nearby, traffic signal on adjacent street, etc.)
Evaluating Park Environments for Physical Activity

Kansas City Neighborhood and Park Study

Park Facilities
• High income tracts had significantly more playgrounds per park than low or medium income census tracts
Summary

- Parks are important resources for physical activity, but they differ dramatically with respect to their facilities, amenities, quality, and neighborhood context.

- The Community Park Audit Tool provides diverse constituencies with a user-friendly yet content valid and reliable means of assessing the characteristics of local parks.

- Such actions may lead to not only increased awareness of the state of local resources, but also greater environmental justice and improved community health.
Agenda for today...

- Parks and physical activity background
- Development of the Community Park Audit Tool (CPAT)
- Details of the CPAT
- Next steps
- Discussion
Discussion: Future Use of the Community Park Audit Tool

We would love your input on future use of the Community Park Audit Tool. For example, in small groups please consider the following questions ...

• What groups would the CPAT be of use to in your community or beyond?

• How would/could the CPAT be used with those groups to promote civic advocacy?

• How can we disseminate the CPAT (locally or more broadly)?
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Acknowledgements

- Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Active Living Research program
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- Dr. Andrew Mowen, Pennsylvania State University
- Dr. Brian Saelens, University of Washington
- Katy Vaughan, Department of Kinesiology, Kansas State University
- Over 30 Kansas City community stakeholders
CPAT in YOUR community

Contact us if you would like assistance in getting started!

- Help get you going for advocacy and/or research in your community
- Provide onsite training and consultation
Evaluating Park Environments for Physical Activity

Kansas City Parks and Physical Activity Project:
www.ksu.edu/kines/kansas-city-parks-and-physical-activity-project.html

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