

SCORP Advisory Council  
Santa Clarita Focus Group  
September 16, 2016

**Health Sector**

- This is a great idea, quantifying the benefits of recreation can be a struggle that LA has been working on.
- Knowledge of health programs with grants isn't readily available, this makes us realize that we are missing a section.
- California Interview Health Survey with UCLA
- Grant funding for rapid health impact assessment, there is a report available. Federal funding that is coming down through the local level.
- Health focused foundations are interested in supporting the built environment and access to recreation, healthy food... etc. There may be funding available to do some research.
- In the County wide health assessment there is health data, including air quality data. In talking about health, we should continue to talk about healthier environments as well.
- Health Atlas for the City of LA has some really good data
- Access to healthy food, First Five LA, Professor at UCLA is studying people growing their own food, and the larger connections associated with health.
- One of the biggest things that they found in research in parks is that programs are many times way more important than the physical space. There is a huge gap in this support for parks.
- Cost effectiveness is difficult; the estimates are all over the place. In looking at the assumptions, they are putting the cost effectiveness on the cost of a human being. If you could calculate the extra years that you may live if you are physically active, it could really change.
- There is no value for children; they are not going to die from being "physically inactive".
- Some information for cost effectiveness may be beneficial, some may not be as beneficial.
- One of the pieces that we are missing is the health care industry. They have already taken a leadership role in reducing health care costs. They are already going to their members to tell them that they need to be more active. Kaiser and Anthem Blue Cross may have research available.
- Kaiser is a place to find sponsorship dollars, as well as insurance agencies. A private health industry beyond public health is something to research. They want to be in parks and recreation.
- You have to position parks and recreation as the health care provider to the community. Make the case that you are an essential public service.
- If we can intrinsically connect parks and rec to health that would be important. We need the data to be able to show that. Having this tool to be able to talk more about health and parks more concretely will start to push parks and rec as more of a necessity to communities. Right now, lots of budgets do not recognize that.

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- Work together to change the culture. Producing a report would be beneficial. Parks were not in the discussion of health until they started writing about it 10 years ago.
- Advocacy is a way to bring about change. Build campaigns and coalitions.
- Money needs to be in the budget to keep it going.
- On each campus in the CSU system is a health center. Look at these centers and those opportunities for recreation for students. Get them thinking about their future and being healthy for the long term. The pieces are already in place on campus, but nothing that helps students in that transition back into the real world.
- Most of our parks are really underutilized. There is not much there that really brings them in. Electronics is what people do during their leisure time. Parks need to be at least as interesting as that.
- City of Santa Monica did a study of well-being and the best indicator of well-being is spending time in parks. Parks need to be seen as more valuable
- Availability and accessibility is something that parks and recreation departments struggle with. Where is the priority? What are the needs? Maybe we need to focus on different places.
- Most parks target their activities at younger people, not much for adults and even less for seniors. Seniors are very underrepresented at parks. Girls as well.
- Looking at ratings of places to live; one of the factors is parks and recreation. USA Today and CNN do those polls and may have data available.
- TCE has building healthy communities within California. They might have access to data as they developed those communities.
- Rural assistance, county public health, may have information about rural areas and communities
- It might be good to acknowledge additional benefits of urban greening including in relation to the climate. When looking at funding, that is an additional area. There are overlaps in the health discussion regarding urban greening; building a larger healthier community.
- Urban forestry opportunities also, need to figure out a way to fit it all together.
- TPL has done post document evaluations of their parks, this is the only way that they can come up with a best guess as to the value of parks.
- There is a dollar figure attached to exercise in parks, specifically focused on adults exercising, but there are a lot of constraints.
- Work of NRPA and the housing values increasing based on parks in the area.
- Add in a safety factor to the calculations.
- Money saved by not having to pay for a gym membership.
- Incorporate into CFF numbers for people under the age of 5, and other age levels.
- Figure out the optimal configuration of parks and figure out the gaps in what parks need.
- Use the LA County assessment categories and add more such as programming. Have multiple indicators to work towards the value.

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- How do we look at turning a contaminated space into a safe and accessible green space, what is the value of that?
- It would be important to see levels of obesity and diabetes by age level as a tool; health trends.
- Different benefits to new parks and renovated/improved parks. It would be hard to assign a price tag to an active park versus a more passive park.
- Parks with walking loops get 80% more users than parks without them
- Parks with more amenities get more use. And outreach and marketing can influence
- Community gathering aspect of parks where the park becomes the place to go.
- Partnering with mental health to co-locate some of their services at our parks.

### Public Survey

- Demographic information is important to help identify respondents, optional and anonymous
  - Ethnicity
  - Age
  - Car ownership
  - Languages spoken
- Offer help completing the survey
- Open ended questions to include what's needed in the park
- Dr. Cohen can share surveys: how will the survey be administered, questions, and results from CA: Fresno, LA, Victorville, etc.
- Report card on LA parks based on online survey from Dr. Cohen
- Considerations on costs to administer survey
- Language differences regarding park amenities – suggesting use specific language for each question
- Drop downs for low use people to automatically move to the appropriate question
- Parks versus programs
- What about beaches! Trails, etc.
- Nest the survey within elementary schools, high schools, hospitals, medical offices, other outside the box locations to standardize the delivery of the survey
- Embedding survey and other parks marketing to help plant the seed or emphasize the importance of parks and recreation as a health factor at institutions like schools
- Other demographic questions: autism, mental health, medications, disabilities
  - Or layer in GIS
- Distance of respondent to “their local park”
- Reaching non-users at malls, theaters, senior centers, schools, home owners association
- Separate questions based on certain demographics? If you have the budget for it then yes because it helps develop more detailed data and analysis

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- Go to private recreation providers (e.g., Zumba)
- Distance and geographic barriers to the parks (e.g., highways, mountain range, river) need to explore
- Psychological barrier
- What are we trying to get out of the survey – park providers to learn more about the needs of the community, access, facilities, amenities, etc.
- Marketing survey – use the survey as an advocacy tool
- Create a comparative tool for local agencies to see results of one community to the next
- Define what “close” means to you
- Affordability in program participation and awareness and how to find out about programs and preference to learning about park and rec programs
- Why do people go to parks (include park visitors in survey) – differentiate between users (self versus children)
- Analysis of populations that are not using parks and why
- Interpretive signage for walking paths to help with health and wellness – is your park signed? Signage is an important issue in large parks. Survey may help tap into identifying barriers and encourage healthy behaviors
- Word maintenance question to capture the need rather than the attitude of the park user
- Combine questions to condense – survey user can prioritize park needs and answer questions based on their priorities
- Include safety in survey – crime & delinquency might be the wrong verbiage
- Address homelessness in survey
- Mental health aspect for park use: park use as a place of solace however parks are trending towards surveillance
- Survey question addressing marketing and advocating
- Ensure reaching enough people in a particular community to ensure an accurate representation of the community needs
- Some questions are intuitive and is it possible to remove the question or restructure the question to indicate priorities
- How to identify parks as a critical need for a community – comparative model to show that parks are the priority
- Designing the survey by group is a slippery slope
- The need for funding as education not advocacy and how the question can be phrased
- Recent report indicates average cost of parks and survey asks willingness to pay more into parks – include information regarding funding (associated costs)
- Questions including health and wellness and park’s role
- Question regarding where people are exercising
- In person survey, preliminary survey that leads to more focused questions – ideas to how to administer
- Focus groups can help compliment the survey

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**Local Needs Assessment**

- Large reluctance to get out in front of the local elected leaders – need to respect the local political process – look at the already identified priorities and unmet needs
  - Typically parks and roads, maybe an avenue to come through the back door
- \$25.5 billion in need identified through TPL
- Voluntary involvement – tie grants to participation
- List cities that did not participate
- Publish how the results were reached

**Keep the conversation going:**

- Leadership emphasizes importance of parks as well as transportation
- Green space is part of infrastructure priorities
- Marketing is an important piece to successful park programming
- Branding parks as a wellness resource versus viewing recreation as an afterthought or “throw away” activity
- The importance of using sick time/vacation time to help change the paradigm or perception of healthier living (including parks)
- Parks and recreation creates communities!
- League of California cities survey for parks changing name to community services