

**QUESTIONS FOR WEBINAR:**

**Effective Programs to Improve Access to and Use of Trails for Youth From Under-Resources**

**Communities**

**April 22, 2021**

**Antonia asks:** How are you mitigating the risk of green gentrification when the trails/ amenities added to support under-resourced communities unintentionally leads to increased prices and displacement?

**Mike Hill:** Antonia, this is a great question and one I think about a lot. In a previous job, I worked with teens on community design projects in Shaw, a prominent, historically Black neighborhood in DC. I watched as those kids spent months working on community improvement projects while they were simultaneously being priced out of the neighborhood that they grew up in.

And it's not a process exclusive to low-income, minority neighborhoods in cities. The same forces related to the outdoor recreation industry make it impossible for the folks who work in places like Vail CO, or Yellowstone to actually live where they work.

To me, the issue of green gentrification is bound up in general gentrification – so it is imperative to have community voices and organizations in the mix if urban planning improvements (greenspace, trails) are being discussed. This is especially true for community development and housing equity organizations. I think bringing environmental justice and health equity groups to the table makes for a broader coalition and a more persuasive argument. It's incumbent upon recreation providers and activists to make sure that people understand that a trail or a new park can have the same destabilizing impact that a new shopping center or entertainment district has on gentrification. I think those things can sometimes be looked at as 'kids stuff' until it's too late.

**David Brown:** Antonia, your question about gentrification and displacement is an extremely important question facing Physical Activity and Public Health. It is a question CDC is very concerned about finding answers. As neighborhoods become more physical activity-friendly, including adding pedestrian and bicycle trails or improved public transportation, preventing displacement of residents who have lived in their neighborhoods for many years and, in many cases, all of their lives, is of paramount importance. As you point out, we are trying to reduce disparities, and not make them worse. We are searching to identify policy interventions and other strategies and actions that have worked in communities to protect against displacement. You raise a question that, in my opinion, public health cannot answer alone. Mike's response above reinforces this point. Public Health will need to address affordable housing and displacement along with community members, elected officials, housing, planners, developers, transportation, and recreation, parks, and trails professionals to successfully prevent displacement. Identifying success stories that have worked in communities is important. Please let me know, if in your work you have examples of policies and actions that have been successful. ([drb8@cdc.gov](mailto:drb8@cdc.gov)).

**Bill asks:** I'd like to know (if it is not already part of the presentation) how people with disabilities are addressed.

**Yves:** In San José we design our trails per the ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) to ensure access. This means that slopes at under-crossings tend to be less than 5%. If exceeding that design goal, clear signage is posted with guidance to alternative routes – this can be the case if the trail is following a flood-controlled channel where channel capacity demands a steeper slope. We include Wheelchair ramps at the transition from street to trail, and alternatively use a signed/marked Bike Ramp detail if a crossing is not intended at the location. There are many design decisions that support access. We

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have tried to document those decisions with our Toolkit:

<https://www.sanjoseca.gov/home/showdocument?id=9705>

David Brown: Bill, Great question! It is very important to be inclusive of people with disabilities (including wheeling) and older adults with mobility limitations in our walking, hiking, trails, and public transportation work. The San Jose Toolkit sounds like a great resource, Yves. I look forward to reading it. I have also found the US Forest Service (USFS) Trails for Accessibility Guidelines and other resources to be excellent and helpful. Also, the National Center on Health, Physical Activity, and Disability (NCHPAD) is a great organization for information and resources on physical activity and inclusive communities, and NCHPAD has been involved in promoting trails that are accessible to people with disabilities. When the Step it Up! the Surgeon General's Call to Action to Promote Walking and Walkable Communities was released, NCHPAD developed a great communication campaign branded "This is how I Walk". Links to the USFS resources and NCHPAD are below:

1. <https://www.americantrails.org/resources/forest-service-trail-accessibility-guidelines-fstag>

2. [Accessibility Resources | US Forest Service](https://www.fs.usda.gov/managing-land/national...)

<https://www.fs.usda.gov/managing-land/national...>

The Forest Service Trail Accessibility Guidelines (FSTAG) apply to new or altered trails that are designed for pedestrian hiking and which connect directly to a trailhead or to another trail that currently complies with these guidelines. The goal is to maximize accessibility while not changing the character or experience of the trail setting.

3. [National Center on Health, Physical Activity and Disability](https://www.nchpad.org/)

<https://www.nchpad.org/>

Cate asks: Do you anticipate an update to the community guide related to access to trails for physical activity?

David Brown: Cate, are you referring to the Task Force recommendation (below link) I highlighted in my talk? <https://www.thecommunityguide.org/findings/physical-activity-built-environment-approaches>

If yes, I do not "anticipate an update to the Community Guide related to access to trails for physical activity" in the near future. However, the Community for Preventive Services Task Force (CPSTF) is currently conducting a systematic review to evaluate the "Effectiveness of Park, Trail, Greenway, and Greenspace Interventions to Increase Physical Activity and Improve Health and Quality of Life" (probably in June). I point out also that the Task Force recommends interventions that create or enhance access to places for physical activity, combined with informational outreach activities. <https://www.thecommunityguide.org/findings/physical-activity-creating-or-improving-places-physical-activity>

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**Creating or enhancing programs for youth that encourage trails use and promoting the programs (as we are highlighting in our NCCOR project), would be an example of an intervention that meets the spirit of this Task Force recommendation.**

**Christina asks:** A lot of this sounds like white guys talking ABOUT under resourced communities - how are you including those voices in your work and involving them and not just telling them what to do?

**Yves:** Our network approach to trail development has alignments existing and planned in all neighborhoods of the City. We are proud that our network which is 62% developed already meets or exceeds the Rails-to-Trails Conservancies goal of trails within 3 miles. We seek to engage as many community members when planning trail alignments. We use traditional techniques, like mailers to residents within 1,000 ft of the project, along the entire alignment. We supplement that with social media posts to persons seeking to follow the accounts, but broaden the posts to include our Parks accounts as well. Meetings are posted on the City's Calendar and noticed through our Parks and Recreation Commission. And we work closely with known neighborhood groups by interfacing with each Council Office, and directly with local advocacy groups that we've built relationships with over the years. We translate our meetings in Spanish and Vietnamese, and offer Tagalog, Cantonese and other languages upon request. One of our project managers recently visited a park as part of our planning effort for a \$3,000,000 All-Inclusive Playground project to meet with parents, guardians and children to see how they wished to see the park evolve. She spoke to the community in both English and Spanish. As I noted, we work with our friends Steve, Deb and Jason as they work very closely with the community and outreach to under-served neighborhoods and schools. They are informed of our meetings and we count on their support.

**David Brown: Christina,**

I think that I understand the point you are making. As a white man, I do not have the same lived experiences that you and other Black, Indigenous, and People of Color have and, therefore, need to work with and engage community members themselves, so they make the decisions about what is best for their community. We couldn't agree more. The NCCOR Project, however, is a review of the scientific and practice-based literature, and not a community intervention study. I believe that we have to know "about" the state-of-the-art, current evidence, and where the field is at currently related to this topic, in order to guide us as to where we are going in the future. The purpose of the NCCOR project was to review the scientific and practice-based literature to see if we could identify efficacious or effective trail use programs that were successfully inclusive of youth from low income or under-resourced communities, and of Black, Indigenous, and Youth of Color. Our goal was to identify one or more programs that were effective and learn from their successes, or failures (i.e., lessons learned). Perhaps, then, other neighborhoods and communities could tailor the program(s) for use in their community contexts to expand the program(s) reach, and make a greater public health difference. At that point, we would be moving our efforts from a review of the literature to a practice or intervention phase and, you are correct, that everything we know from public health would be imperative. This would include community engagement (e.g., including key stakeholders, community members, and lay health workers), community partnership and coalition building, community needs assessments, and other activities that are critical to tailoring interventions or programs to the needs and preferences of a specific community. Our Workgroup is interdisciplinary in nature and includes professionals from multiple sectors with diverse backgrounds and perspectives, and our work has

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always been guided by using a health equity lens and a sensitivity to disparities, racism, discrimination, and the social determinants of health. CDC has an entire funding program for Racial and Ethnic Approaches to Community Health (REACH), you may find of interest. REACH rests on a foundation of community engagement, and also addresses concerns you are raising.

**REACH:**

**Racial and Ethnic Approaches to Community Health | DNPAO | CDC**

<https://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpano/state-local-programs/reach>

- REACH is a national program administered by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to reduce racial and ethnic health disparities. REACH celebrated its 20th anniversary in 2019. Through REACH, recipients plan and carry out local, culturally appropriate programs to address a wide range of health issues among African Americans, American Indians, Hispanics/Latinos, Asian Americans, Alaska ...

**David Berrigan:** Adding to what David Brown has said, NCCOR has made a substantial effort to think about measurement and evaluation needs for diverse populations – including a 2020 workshop on Advancing Measurement for High-Risk Populations and Communities Related to Childhood Obesity described in a white paper available here - <https://www.nccor.org/projects/measurement-workshop-series/> and a Decision Tree tool to help with measures adaptation - <https://www.nccor.org/projects/measures-for-children-at-high-risk-for-obesity/>

The NCCOR Program brief - [https://www.nccor.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/NCCOR\\_Trail\\_Use\\_Program\\_Brief\\_Final1.pdf](https://www.nccor.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/NCCOR_Trail_Use_Program_Brief_Final1.pdf) highlights a number of neat programs from across the country, which have local leadership - Nature for All is a nice example - <https://lanatureforall.org/what-we-do/>

The Greenville, SC and San Jose, CA projects highlighted in our webinar made real efforts to engage the whole community in planning and implementation of the trail projects, and continue to do so.

**Christopher asks:** What about non-academic research? I am aware of other best practices for park equity and access to outdoor recreation not connected to academic research. So much of what we are doing is disconnected from universities.

**David Brown:** Christopher, We reviewed the scientific-based (peer reviewed published) literature and practice-base literature (e.g., website, reports, etc.). We are very interested in evidence-based interventions that can be translated to programs and practice. We are also interested in locating practice-based interventions with evaluation data that can inform future research, or be promoted as community interventions, if they show evidence that they are working. Our work related to the practiced-based literature is published as a brief on the NCCOR website. We may have missed programs that “work”. If you are aware of programs that show evidence of their success, even if not published in the scientific literature, we would be very interested in knowing about them. Your point is well taken. Thank you!

From David Berrigan: The NCCOR Program brief - [https://www.nccor.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/NCCOR\\_Trail\\_Use\\_Program\\_Brief\\_Final1.pdf](https://www.nccor.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/NCCOR_Trail_Use_Program_Brief_Final1.pdf) highlights a number of neat

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**Question for Ty:** Is there website or other information for the ART and Circle program in Greenville?

**Ty answered: Visit this link for more information:**

<https://www.americantrails.org/images/documents/ART-Circles-Summary.pdf>

Together for Brothers includes a biking and outdoor recreation program for young men of color. T4B is focused on individual and group level programming but also systemic change and community organizing. We are working with local and state agencies. A big issue is the resources for programs like ours. We did receive a grant from the New Mexico Outdoor Equity Fund but we are seeing overwhelmingly little resources for access and equity for low income people and people of color. How do we advocate nationally and all levels to have more resources for community and equity programs?

**Yves: Definitely look nationally, but don't miss some local resources that may not first come to mind.** In San Jose, the Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority has worked directly with the community to grant them \$250,000 to build an in-fill park upon remnant State highway property. We've been working with the community direction and OSA to navigate the complexity of the site, and are now leading on behalf of the community a short-term effort to lease and clean-up the site so the playground can be installed, and also working on the long-term (3-year) acquisition. Organizations like an Open Space agency might be seen as motivated by "hike in the woods" projects, but may be shifting more to build access within the cities. In San Jose, that's definitely the case and the City is proud to play a supportive role to deal with technical challenges that may not be fully understood or easy to navigate by grantee or grantor.

**Dania asks Julian:** Any recommendations for helping agencies gather data on visitor use?

**Yves: We conduct an annual survey and count of trail users. This effort has no funding and is highly dependent upon our team blocking time from Trail Planning and Development to pivot on data collection.** We have support from our Adopt-A-Trail Coordinator and over 15 years, have built a great team of 30 to 40 volunteers that help us sustain and expand count stations annually. For more about Trail Count – find link here: <https://www.sanjoseca.gov/your-government/departments/parks-recreation-neighborhood-services/outdoor-activities/trail-network/trail-count> This data collection has its positive; long-term, consistent, produces data. It has some weak points....it doesn't cover all trails due to staffing and budget, and can only occur once annually. But some data is much better than no data. Start small, experiment and promote your findings whatever they may be. In the past few years, we've been seeing a decline in use. We aren't shy about reporting that data....we seek to use it to advocate for more maintenance and Rangers.

**Julian answered:** THIS IS A GREAT QUESTION AND AN IMPORANT ONE. SOME EASY LOW TECH WAYS ARE THROUGH DIRECT OBSERVATION. I SUGGEST LOOKING AT AN INSTRUMENT CALLED SOPARC (JUST GOOGLE SOPARC). I CAN ALSO HELP YOU, FEEL FREE TO EMAIL ME AT [JULIAN.REED@FURMAN.EDU](mailto:JULIAN.REED@FURMAN.EDU). ANOTHER WAY IS TO HAVE A SIMPLE SURVEY THAT PEOPLE CAN COMPLETE WHEN THEY ENTER A PARK,

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TRAIL OR HAVE A QR CODE AT A KIOSK TO ASK THEM TO COMPLETE SOME BASIC INFORMATION. HAPPY TO DISCUSS FURTHER, SINCE I HAVE SOME OTHER IDEAS TO SHARE.

**Question for Yves:** Are there existing examples of trail safety plans?

Yves answered: I'll mention, we are working on our trail safety plan right now. And we expect to have something published I'm going to say three months' time, three to four months. We're aligning our safety plan with the opening of three miles of trail and we'll be exercising that plan in a pilot mode. So we're going to collect data over a year to see what's working, is it properly staffed, is it funded appropriately, and what changes should we make to improve it before we go to our city council and suggest our trail safety plan become a norm for the entire network. And so that's one example. Not published yet but if you watch Twitter or follow up with me in a few months, I'm sure I can get something out to you. We will post the completed report on this page:

<https://www.sanjoseca.gov/your-government/departments-offices/parks-recreation-neighborhood-services/general-information/policies-reports/policy-reports-for-developers> Please feel free to calendar a reminder, and email me in 3 months so I can provide or give you a status report.

**Dayamiris asks Julian:** How we, as organizations offering trail programs, and therefore potentially amplifying the opportunities to address knowledge gaps, can contribute better to experts interested in increasing the body of evidence? We have ample empirical evidence that we can contribute.

**Julian answered:** WOW THIS IS GREAT, AND WE DON'T HAVE A GREAT WAY TO ACCOMPLISH THIS AND WE NEED THIS INFORMATION. ONE WAY IS TO SHARE THIS INFORMATION WITH AMERICAN TRAILS SO THEY CAN DISSEMINATE THE DATA. AS A TRAIL RESEARCHER I USE THEIR WEBSITE TO FIND INFORMATION. I HAVE SOME OTHER IDEAS, PLEASE EMAIL ME AT JULIAN.REED@FURMAN.EDU SO WE CAN DISCUSS.

**Question for Yves,** have you had a community that after all community engagements on your behalf, has denied a trail project? What are some lessons-learned to address those situations?

Yves: This is a webinar in itself. Most community meetings start with concern about the negative impacts of a trail. It is completely understandable because residents think about an existing condition. They may be suffering with an unmonitored creek corridor, and abandoned railway, or quasi-public land that has no assigned steward agency. I seek to convey that the challenges currently faced might remain the same with a trail, but per Trail Count will likely be used by fitness-motivated users several times per week or active transportation users 5x week. The development of the trail will confirm that the site is managed by the Parks Department, with clear points of contact and maintenance teams. And we share past project experiences, with a portfolio that shows positive changes in the neighborhood, and evidence of neighbor support with pedestrian gates being installed or solid backyard fences being pulled down in favor of open fence systems. With many quality trails built, in recent years, we often see more people in support of trails, and often asking "What's taking so long?" and "Why are you planning it? Just call a contractor".

**Emily asks:** As a land trust, how can we best help support this work and learn more to provide opportunities for community members in our region?

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**David Brown: Emily, This sounds exciting! Depending on your region you may want to consider things like partnering with your:**

- Local recreation and parks department to establish a parks program to promote use of your land trust (e.g., green space?)
- Local health department or health care system(s) to establish a Park Prescription program
- Local or neighborhood school(s); schools may be interested in day trips, field trips, connecting educational opportunities to nature (e.g., biology curriculum to your natural environment)  
Perhaps this can be done in conjunction with STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) or STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics) certified schools
- Boys and Girls Clubs of America, or YMCA's to provide youth programs
- Area Agency on Aging, local AARP affiliate, or senior community centers to promote use of your land trust by older adults
- Local disability organizations; to develop a trail or picnic area accessible to people with disabilities

**Ernest asks:** Do you have recognition programs for organizations who partner to develop infrastructure for youth trails programing?

**Julian answered:** That's a great question. And David Brown and David Berrigan, feel free, and Michael, to join here because I think you could add some good context. There are agencies out there from the federal government that do support research on physical activity and then specifically in the natural environment and natural experiments. And I have actually applied for one and have not been funded. They're very competitive. So we have federal mechanisms. But there are also private foundations and as well as private businesses that do give back to their local community and by doing so, sometimes have money to build a spur trail, for instance, off a large trail into a neighborhood. I've been more successful in getting funding from private partners for evaluation as well as some dollars to build. So there are ways to do it both on the private side and as well as going to your federal or state and local, even -- and there is the Recreational Trail Program, the Federal Recreational Trail Program that Ty has been very successful with and at Furman we applied as well years ago and we were successful in getting some money to build some access points. So that's what I off the top of my head right now.

David Brown answered: I wanted to reinforce what Julian said. I don't know whether Christopher Douwes is on the line now, but the recreational trails programs that DOT, Christopher, funds is I think an excellent avenue to look for support. Christopher, might want to comment.

**Additional comment made on 4/23:** Ernest: Unfortunately, I do not know of "recognition programs for organizations who partner to develop infrastructure for youth trails programing". This is an intriguing idea, though. I do believe that America Walks recognizes and highlights some success stories. See America Walks at:

<https://americawalks.org/>

**Christopher answered:** Yeah. And you would be applying through your State agency that administers the program. So, Candace, I'll put that link in the chat where you can find your State trail administrator.

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**Recreational Trails Program website:** [https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/recreational\\_trails/](https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/recreational_trails/)

- Contact: [https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/recreational\\_trails/rtpstate.cfm](https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/recreational_trails/rtpstate.cfm)
- **Transportation Alternatives:**  
[https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/transportation\\_alternatives/](https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/transportation_alternatives/)
- Contact:  
[https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/transportation\\_alternatives/state\\_contacts.cfm](https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/transportation_alternatives/state_contacts.cfm)

**Jacqueline asks:** Have there been opportunities for BIPOC to have a voice/role in the different projects and research that were mentioned? If so, how? If not, what is the plan to include more diverse voices?

**Michael answered:** So BIPOC stands for, I believe, biracial, indigenous and people of color. >> Black -- >> Black, indigenous, and people of color. So when we were looking at organizations to include in kind of our gray paper literature about organizations that were having success, we had criteria for those organizations. And one of the criteria was, is that the staff and leadership of organizations would reflect the diverse communities that they were in. So for the organizations that we studied, one thing that I would say is that we've kind of already focused on including organizations that were -- they were leading from inside the community rather than, say, leading from outside the community as an organization that might be coming in to a diverse or underserved community and saying, "This is what you need to be doing and this is what's good for your kids and we know what's right." We also had criteria in terms of we wanted to prioritize finding out information from organization that had multiple touchpoints. We figured out early on that organizations that do a one-and-done program, repetitions and multiple touches and multiple opportunities to engage in a behavior is what builds a habit. And what we're talking about is how you build a habit of trail use. So I would say that we have kind of prioritized that and we would want to do it more. I think if you're talking about in terms of the entire trails community and the trails industry, I think that that's kind of an institutional change and culture change that we're at the beginning of. Hopefully, organizations like mine, like the forest service and land management agencies in coming years will be really focused on that kind of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion stuff to kind of mandate that because you have -- people do what's easy. It's very easy to say, we're going to have the meeting and whoever hears about it, those are the people who show up and those are the people whose input we'll take. But if you're only sending out the information in English or if you're only sending out the information electronically, you've already built in some barriers that may have a class or race implication into the way that you're bringing people into your meeting. And you've got to be constantly vigilant about interrogating -- all of us have to be constantly vigilant about interrogating our own biases and how we're reaching out and whether the way that is we're reaching out and engaging people in trail use is excluding anybody.

**Ty answered:** Momentum bike club follows those principles of repetition. When they got started, David Taylor from Clemson University is a white man. He got the program started but he always had the intention of getting people of color in these (inaudible) leadership programs. (Inaudible) school based. We have been fortunate enough to find teachers. The program's grown through some fundraising efforts in order to give some salary support to those teachers. But that's -- that's what we (inaudible) is that repetition, especially with these under-resourced communities. A lot of resources, a lot of history of broken families, that repetition is critical and that's why in my presentation I mentioned how they start in middle school and go through 18 with the intent of following them through college. And obviously that puts them all over the world. But again, it's (inaudible) interest in that and I think Candace is putting

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up their website that I encourage you to check out and learn from their actions and successes because it seems very repeatable, just maybe just different scales for different communities.

**Julian answered:** And we identified momentum in our program brief that is on NCCOR's website. In addition to the repetition, what's great about momentum as well is the modeling, the positive modeling, because they have the different clubs. And then people affiliated with that area also join and many of those people are adults. And so they see that modeling. So that's a really great program.

**Michael answered:** They're also really empowering people through their partners to -- it's a great thing to take kids for a bike ride. You've really done something when you've given a kid an opportunity to have experiences where they value a bike and opportunities to earn a bike. And then they can go for a ride any time they want. One of the challenges that we had, and I would ask anybody out there, especially people who are first-contact workers working directly with folks, one of the challenges that we had was the type of information that we were able to gather. A lot of organizations focus on the experiential side of we're exposing kids to these kind of experiences. In terms of -- and anybody who's -- any of our health researchers jump in if I'm off. We were really looking for more information that spoke to duration, repetition, and miles. How long were kids out hiking or riding, how many miles did they do, how often did they do it, because that type of data is what's tied to the health benefits. And so, I would just put out there, we would love to be able to work with some folks who -- and figure out how to gather that information in a way that's culturally sensitive and speaks to people's want, need for -- to not have a lot of their health information or their personal information out there.

David Brown answered: I agree, Mike. And I think this brings us back to the first question about the safety issues and safety plans I think will be critical to other data that you just mentioned collecting in terms of intensity and duration and other sustainable types of metrics.

**Additional comment made on 4/23. It is critical for Blacks, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) to have a voice in our trails work and promotion efforts. In my opinion, we have to address barriers such as transportation (i.e., access - and getting people to the trails, or the trails to people [e.g., connect trails to youth trails programs that may potentially be located in schools, Boys and Girls Clubs of America, YMCA's, other]), representation (i.e., people who look like me on the trails), and safety issues (whether birdwatching in NY, running in GA, policing, hate crimes against Black/African-Americans, Asians, and people of all races and ethnicities). People most affected by the above barriers have to be part of process to address these barriers, in my opinion, or we risk failure due to a lack of building trust.**

**Michael answered:** We also have the issue of, you know, there's -- you can't -- when you're dealing with -- organizations that arise organically and authentically from diverse communities have the same kinds of challenges that those communities have. They have lacks of resources, lack of capital. They're trying to turn 50 cents into a dollar. They're understaffed. And oftentimes, they don't have people with health expertise. And it's hard to then pass those organizations with essentially saying, "We would love to give you some benefit to be named later, but right now we want you to start collecting this health data that's not in your wheelhouse." So we really need to and we really want to try and work across those barriers and figure out how to do that. We believe very strongly that if we can start to really say that's another way of selling those programs and saying that you've been successful is to be able to say, "We're getting

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kids out for an hour and a half every week and these are the health benefits associated to that time outdoors hiking."

**Christopher answered (chat):** American Trails has information on justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion at <https://www.americantrails.org/search/results?query=jedi>

**Jason asks:** My program, Kids in Parks, is a national data-tested program focused on addressing some of the barriers to green space use highlighted in the presentation from a programmatic strategy. We partner with land management agencies on national, state, and local levels to provide resources for visiting kids and families. Over the past decade we've collected a wealth of data on use of our program and use of public lands. NCCOR seems like a great collaboration of perspective. How can we contact someone to see if our work can help support this collaboration?

**David Brown answered:** I'm familiar with you and your work, which is outstanding. When I'm thinking about your program as well as those Ty and Yves are highlighting, it makes me realize that there is a lot of really neat things going on out there. We've got to figure out how to capture what everybody is doing and harness it, and somehow use it to increase trail use and representation/diversity on trails. But I think your program is expanding and I know a lot of your work is with states and communities. And I think, the collaborations that you're building and the networking you're doing is making a difference. I believe you're also working with the healthcare system(s). I'm not sure how much you are tied into State Health Departments, but working on continued collaborative opportunities with health departments I think is important. Your work is important for parks/trails, public health, etc., so being at the table with partnerships and coalitions, I think is one key to success.

Ty answered: I'm familiar with Jason's program too. Kind of to Michael's point earlier, just creating those inviting opportunities, kind of breaking down the barriers. That hesitation, this program seems it's well-suited for it. Jason and I were talking just recently. And I didn't have capacity right now to work with his program to implement something and Jason, this will probably open up the flood gates for you from people in this webinar. But Jason has money that he needs to spend right now is my understanding and I wasn't able to capitalize on it. But the program does sound great, like David mentioned. And there's a way, especially suburban and urban areas, just even simply walking a concrete path that is part of an existing parks system, changing the kind of dynamic that people are used to doing, and then they're naturally going to seek more. Jason, I look forward to working with you next cycle when I can, but it does sound like it's going to be a great program.

**Jeff asks Julian:** How do you get trail use data?

**Julian answered:** IT DEPENDS ON WHAT TYPE OF DATA YOU ARE INTERESTED IN. THIS IS A REALLY BROAD QUESTION AND EASIER TO ANSWER IF I HAVE SOME MORE INFORMATION. CAN YOU EMAIL ME AT [JULIAN.REED@FURMAN.EDU](mailto:JULIAN.REED@FURMAN.EDU) SO I CAN BETTER UNDERSTAND WHAT SPECIFIC DATA YOU ARE INTERESTED IN?

Can the speakers address the potential impact of addition users to the trail system particularly E-bikes and other micromobility devices. Many areas are facing demands to allow these devices, but based on

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each of your presentations, these may be providing another barrier. Do you recommend trails without electric assist?

**Christopher answered:** Micromobility devices are transforming urban transportation and may reduce the need for single occupant automobiles. Where I live (Fairfax VA), there are rental scooters, and there are robot delivery vehicles on the sidewalks (I saw one on a trail in a park). Some cities have ebike cargo delivery instead of delivery trucks and vans. The trails community is discussing the appropriate role for electric assist devices. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) is studying safety and other impacts of ebikes. We're likely to find there are places where electric devices are appropriate, and places where they aren't, and decisions may be best at the State, local, or trail manager level.

**Jeffrey asks:** Our office uses RTP grants and other grants to help fund trail design and construction. While we may not always receive money from the healthcare industry, they are always great in providing letters of support at a minimum which is helpful in obtaining the grants.

**Christopher answered:** Recreational Trails Program (RTP) funds can match or be matched by other Federal funds, see

[https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/recreational\\_trails/guidance/matchingfunds.cfm](https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/recreational_trails/guidance/matchingfunds.cfm).

**John asks:** What does the literature say about proven ways to bring under-represented groups to trails and keep their interest in a sustainable fashion?

**David Brown:** John, I think that “sustainable partnerships” will need to rest on a foundation of trust among partnership members, including key community members, and a shared vision and mission among partners. You may find the following article at the link below to be of interest:

[https://www.cdc.gov/pcd/issues/2019/19\\_0062.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/pcd/issues/2019/19_0062.htm)

State health departments are also doing some remarkable activities around physical activity and active communities (routes, trails, pathways). I am not sure what state you live in, but it may be worth checking with your state health department to see if they have resources related to your question. I offer as one example an Active Community Toolkit from Wisconsin. I am not endorsing this Toolkit over other states and their resources and products, but offer it as one example of what many states are doing in this area. You may find of interest the section on page 8 “Why would you want to do a survey or focus group”, and page 18, “Overarching Considerations: Health Equity”. I think that these sections relate to obtaining input from community members and, hopefully, sustaining their input and participation with advancing trails work.

<https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/publications/p0/p00036.pdf>

Active Community Toolkit- A tool to assist communities with implementing strategies proven to be effective in creating environments that encourage physical activity. The kit walks you through a six-step process for developing an Active Community Environment.

**Kelly asks:** I am especially interested in expanding knowledge on the benefits (health, emotional, etc.) of youth spending time in nature.

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**David Brown: Kelly, The reference Hiking Trails in America: Pathways to Health, American Hiking Society, May 2016, p. 3, is a good place to start, although, not specific to youth. Two papers you may find of interest are:**

- Impact of Green Space Exposure on Children's and Adolescents' Mental Health: A Systematic Review
- Gert-Jan Vanaken et al. Int J Environ Res Public Health. 2018, and
- McCormick R. Does Access to Green Space Impact the Mental Well-being of Children: A Systematic Review (2017). Journal of Pediatric Nursing, Vol. 37:3-7

**Kyle asks Yves:** What was the name of Jason's program?

**Yves answered:** Their programming is focused on field trips in the park. They do that through programs that reach Title I schools. They have a B program for Beginning Environmental Explorers where they learn. And work with the Yahoo Employee Foundation and Open Space Authority to get grants so that children of all means can participate. There's in-person as well as virtual field trips with their programming.

**Linda asks:** How do folks push back on Not In My Backyard type arguments by those who prefer to see natural spaces limited or even closed others including to underserved groups?

**Christopher answered:** Remind people that if the public cannot visit and learn about natural spaces, the public will have less incentive to care about and protect natural spaces.

**David Brown: Linda,** In addition to Christopher's important point, my first question would be: is this a public place, available to all, or private lands? If public, you may have legal backing on your side. You raise a problem, though, that is not uncommon. Each situation is unique and challenging. In my opinion, partnerships, or trying to find community advocates or champions who support your efforts may give you more of a collective voice for promoting and making change. Data speaks volumes and doing community assessments, walking audits, or photovoice that identify needs, especially related to health benefits and improved safety for older adults and children may help convince folks about the importance of your work.

The toolkit below may help generate some ideas about how to build a core, critical mass, or broader consensus for the work you are doing.

<https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/publications/p0/p00036.pdf>

**Active Community Toolkit-** A tool to assist communities with implementing strategies proven to be effective in creating environments that encourage physical activity. The kit walks you through a six-step process for developing an Active Community Environment.

**Lynn asks Julian:** Can you redefine 'active travel intervention'?

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**Julian answered:** ACTIVE TRAVEL INTERVENTION IS A SPECIFIC INTERVENTION THAT IS DESIGNED TO INCREASE YOUTH AND ADULTS USING TRAILS, ETC. TO GET FROM POINT A TO POINT B THAT IS FOR TRANSIT NOT NECESSARILY RECREATION.

**Megan asks Van:** Can you provide the references for your graphs. These are fascinating but a little hard to read.

**Van answered:** I'm assuming the graph that you're referring to is the childhood obesity graphic. Yes, let me find a link. I'll pop something into the chat. I think the CDC has a lot more information on the prevalence of childhood obesity. <https://www.cdc.gov/obesity/data/childhood.html>

**David Brown:** Confirming what Van said. The CDC's Division of Nutrition, Physical Activity and Obesity has many products and resources related to obesity, and our other content areas at <https://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpao>

**Melissa asks Yves:** Do you have examples of cities that consist of primarily under resourced communities with very little open space that have successfully increased access for youth to trails in open space areas that may not be close or easily accessible?

**Yves:** Thank you for the question. My focus has been on trail development in San Jose so I need to respond with a couple local examples. The Lower Silver Creek channel in San Jose is a disconnected waterway, with heavily engineered channels in some areas and buried pipe in others. The creek travels through and under-served neighborhood. Our outreach work began when the community was organized through a Strong Neighborhood Initiative. That funding went away as Redevelopment Agencies were disbanded. I worked with our local Open Space Agency to secure a \$500,000 budget to master plan and resolve many complex technical issues with our local Water District (SCVWD) and Utility (PG&E). My work involved meeting with the community for series of workshops in multiple languages, and learning about their goals, destinations and challenges that would need to be resolved per the plan. Its potential as a scenic trail was best resolved by considering access to parks and a few spaces where the corridor expanded. We've built about 50% of the trail so far, and working to resolve property acquisition at a few sites and building budget for the more costly work ahead. I guess the best response I have, is that some sites are really complicated, but that shouldn't make the infeasible. Rather, start with studies or a master planning exercise to build knowledge of what can be done, and for how much. That planning work can build a local coalition and helps to invest the City Council in the project, so it will find further momentum. And tip, don't try to build it all at once. Build it block by block as affordable, and people will start asking "what's next?", rather than, "this can't be done".

**Link to Master Plan:**

<https://www.sanjoseca.gov/Home/Components/FacilityDirectory/FacilityDirectory/3013/2058?npage=2>

**Robert asks Yves:** Did San Jose insert mileage markers along the trail i.e. carsonite with decals, etc.?

**Yves:** We developed our own Mileage Marker program. Proud to have been received award at International Trail Symposium for that effort. This was completed years ago before vendors had options. Our system is GIS-located and addressed as "roadways" for the 911 Center. I'll share FAQ

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and Guidelines....but feel free to email me at [Yves.Zsutty@sanjoseca.gov](mailto:Yves.Zsutty@sanjoseca.gov) if you want to discuss details.

**FAQ:** <https://www.sanjoseca.gov/home/showdocument?id=9801>

**Guidelines:** <https://www.sanjoseca.gov/home/showdocument?id=9855>

**Trevor asks Julian:** How were "trails" defined for this research? Was there a nature-based requirement, or requirement for a certain amount of vegetation to be present? Were paved, multi-use, off-street paths in urban areas counted?

**Julian answered:** THANKS TREVOR, YES ALL TYPES OF TRAILS WERE INCLUDED. PAVED AND NATURAL SURFACE TRAILS. THERE WAS NO NATURE-BASED REQUIRMENT FOR THIS REVIEW.

**Tricia asks:** Have any of you worked in small rural communities? I'm in rural SE KY.

**David Brown:** Tricia, Rural areas are one of my interests and focus areas. I find rural areas to be quite challenging in that one size definitely does not fit all, as you very well know (e.g., "Rural" may include rural, indigenous, and frontier communities (all very different with very different needs), and range from small cross roads to town centers and main streets. I recommend that you check with your state or local health departments to see if they have resources and guidance they can provide. The University of Kentucky, I believe has an Extension Services Program. Many Extension Services are now doing great work around physical activity promotion, and have reach into rural communities. It may be worth checking with your Extension Services representative, to see about any possibility of forming a partnership. Also gateway communities nearby Kentucky recreational trails may have examples of community-based activities that you may be able to adopt or adapt for use in your community. Christopher Douwes has also provided the below links that may be valuable: Perhaps, check to see who your state contact is for the Recreational Trails Program.

Recreational Trails Program website:

Recreational Trails Program (RTP) funds can match or be matched by other Federal funds, see [https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/recreational\\_trails/guidance/matchingfunds.cfm](https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/recreational_trails/guidance/matchingfunds.cfm).

[https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/recreational\\_trails/](https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/recreational_trails/)

- Contact: [https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/recreational\\_trails/rtpstate.cfm](https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/recreational_trails/rtpstate.cfm)
- Transportation Alternatives:  
[https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/transportation\\_alternatives/](https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/transportation_alternatives/)
- Contact:  
[https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/transportation\\_alternatives/state\\_contacts.cfm](https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/transportation_alternatives/state_contacts.cfm)

I am not sure about your unique rural community context, but some additional resources I have relied on that may help support your work or give insights into trails/paths and much more are:

- <http://ruraltransportation.org/fhwa-releases-small-town-and-rural-multimodal-networks-guide/>
- [Complete Streets: Rural Areas and Small Towns | Smart ...](#)

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<https://smartgrowthamerica.org/resources/complete...>

- <https://www.ruralhealthinfo.org/toolkits/health-promotion/3/partnerships-coalitions>