ParkIndex

A tool for advancing parks and public health research and practice

Key Informant Interviews Summary

October 2016 – December 2016

PURPOSE:

To more fully inform the development of ParkIndex, a community advisory board was assembled featuring leaders in research and practice from the fields of parks and recreation, public health, physical activity, and community design. Advisory board members will provide ongoing input and function as partners throughout the study.

As the first phase of development, advisory board members and other experts participated in key informant interviews where they were asked to share their expertise and insights on four specific topics pertaining to the development of ParkIndex.

QUESTIONS:

Interview questions focused on four general topics:

- CONTENT: What should be included in ParkIndex? What park access/park use factors?
- VALUE: How can ParkIndex contribute? How can it be improved to add value?
- FEASIBILITY: What challenges will the project face? What could improve feasibility?
- DISSEMINATION: What factors will positively or negatively influence dissemination?

METHODS and ANALYSIS:

Twelve interviews were conducted during Fall 2016. All Interviews were recorded, transcribed, and coded by ParkIndex team members. Specifically, trained research assistants employed double- coding methods, using a common code list developed from preliminary reviews of each interview. Emergent (reading the text several times to identify themes), open (labeling concepts and defining categories), and axial (relating codes to each other) coding methods were employed to identify key terms. Following coding, the research team reviewed the resulting data to determine common themes, new insights, and other valuable information for further study.

The information gathered from this analysis will be used to inform the ParkIndex model and improve data collection procedures as the project moves forward.

Next Steps: Pilot testing in four communities:

- Greenville County, SC
- Raleigh, N
- King County (Seattle), WA
- New York City, NY

SELECTED QUOTES:

- "It's not about one park that does it all. It's about making sure you've got a series of spaces available that can accommodate a variety of different activities, programs and needs."

- "I really do think that the end product will be really awesome, something that could be used by so many different people. It's kind of exciting to think about it. If it's a good product, people are going to want to use it."

- "We're becoming a more and more diverse country and just ensuring that this tool is being pilot tested in [diverse] communities would add a lot of value to ensuring that it's going to be a useful tool."

- "The more you can talk to local-level people, like the parks department, the more robust this tool can become. [The] more reviews and pilots you do, the stronger it can become."

CONTACT US

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ParkIndex Key Informant Interviews - THEMES

CONTENT OF PARKINDEX

Park **ACCESS** measures important for park use

- Distance to park
- Neighborhood attributes
- Park characteristics
- Travel mode to park
- Route to park
- Safety

Park **ELEMENTS** important for park use

- Activity spaces
- Quality
- Amenities
- Programming
- Community engagement and representation
- Park management
- Context specific

VALUE OF PARKINDEX

Ways ParkIndex could **ADD TO** organizations, departments, and cities

- Park planning and development
- Useful in general
- Community development
- Consistent, standardized practice
- Objective methods

Suggestions to **IMPROVE** ParkIndex **TO BETTER ADD** value to research and practice

- Clarity in tool's abilities and procedures
- Advice on integrating local perspective
- Integrate into organizational standards
- Integrating additional data
- Stand-alone park components
- Park use data

FEASIBIILTY OF PARKINDEX

CHALLENGES in developing ParkIndex

- Variability in communities
- Difficulty integrating into practice
- Inconsistent metrics or data formats
- Variability in park types and users
- Communicating the measure
- Climate and seasonality factors

Factors and **ORGANIZATIONS** to help **IMPROVE** the feasibility of ParkIndex

- Defined purpose, capability, data
- Partnerships with park agencies
- Organizational champions

DISSEMINATION OF PARKINDEX

Factors that will **POSITIVELY INFLUENCE** the dissemination of ParkIndex

- Ease of use
- Diverse stakeholders
- Early involvement
- Good communication
- Momentum

Potential **CHALLENGES** to the dissemination of ParkIndex

- Division between academia and practice
- Updating, collecting data
- Differentiating the tool