PARKS ARE AN ESSENTIAL BUSINESS
TODAY’S SPEAKERS

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1 | Lessons Learned from 2020
2 | How Have Cities Responded?
3 | How Can Columbus Improve?
4 | What Could the Future Look Like?
1 | LESSONS LEARNED FROM 2020
SOCIAL EQUITY: Equal treatment to which all are entitled by virtue of being human.


IMPLICIT BIAS: Refers to the attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions, and decisions in an unconscious manner. These biases, which encompass both favorable and unfavorable assessments, are activated involuntarily and without an individual’s awareness or intentional control.

Source: Kirwan Institute, CNN
SOCIAL EQUITY, IMPLICIT BIAS AND PUBLIC SPACES

Source: theundefeated.com
SOCIAL EQUITY, IMPLICIT BIAS AND PUBLIC SPACES

CHRISTIAN COOPER
New York Audubon

Source: New York Times
“Twice a day, I walk my dog Ace around my neighborhood with one, or both, of my girls. I know that doesn’t seem noteworthy, but here’s something that I must admit: I would be scared to death to take these walks without my girls and my dog. In fact, in the four years living in my house, I have never taken a walk around my neighborhood alone (and probably never will)...

It’s equal parts exhausting and depressing to feel like I can’t walk around outside alone, for fear of being targeted.”

SHOLA RICHARDS
Los Angeles, California
SOCIAL EQUITY, IMPLICIT BIAS AND PUBLIC SPACES
PUBLIC SPACE IS FOR PUBLIC DISCOURSE

Jefferson Square | Louisville, KY
Source: WLKY
PUBLIC SPACE IS FOR PUBLIC DISCOURSE
LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE PANDEMIC

181.7 MILLION WORLDWIDE CASES

599,089 DEATHS IN THE U.S.

42.6 MILLION UNEMPLOYMENT CLAIMS

3.5% GDP DECLINE IN 2020

Source: WHO
Source: WHO
Source: CNBC
Source: Reuters
Disproportionate Death Rates Among African American Population

Proportion of African Americans in Overall Population vs. Percentage of COVID-19 Deaths (as of May 2020)

- **Michigan**: 14% of the population and 40% of deaths
- **Wisconsin**: 7% of the population and 33% of deaths
- **Ohio**: 12% of the population and 20% of deaths

Underlying health conditions that increase vulnerability to COVID-19:

- Hypertension & Cardiovascular Disease
- Obesity
- Diabetes
- Chronic Lung Disease

Source: New York Times/Columbus Dispatch/CDC
LOW OPPORTUNITY NEIGHBORHOODS

Neighborhood tracts categorized as “very low” opportunity.

Life expectancy in the lowest income neighborhoods in Columbus is **26 years lower** than in the highest income neighborhoods.

Source: Kirwan Institute, New York Times
PHYSICAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH

Natural environment, such as green space (e.g., trees and grass) or weather (e.g., climate change)

Built environment, such as buildings, sidewalks, bike lanes, and roads

Worksites, schools, and recreational settings

Housing and community design

Exposure to toxic substances and other physical hazards

Physical barriers, especially for people with disabilities

Aesthetic elements (e.g., good lighting, trees, and benches)

Source: CDC
HEALTH BENEFITS OF PARKS

“An avalanche of findings over the past 30 years has bolstered with evidence what most of us feel the truth of in our bones... that nature can soothe, buoy, and restore.”

Colin Ellard, Neuroscientist
Urban Realities Laboratory
University of Waterloo, Toronto

- Improve immune function
- Speed recovery from injury & illness
- Reduce obesity
- Promote healthier cardiac patterns
- Lower stress
- Increase fitness
- Reduce prevalence of obesity, cancer, diabetes and heart disease
- Improve relaxation & restoration
- Increase neighborhood cohesion
- Promote pro-social behaviors
- Improve cognitive function
- Improve real and perceived safety
- Increase feelings of happiness
- Enhance trust, empathy & altruism
Health Benefits of Parks

- Getting enough physical activity could prevent 1 in 10 premature deaths

- Not Getting Enough Physical Activity Costs Money
  177 billion dollars in annual health care costs are associated with inadequate physical activity.

- Building active and walkable communities can help:
  Increase levels of retail economic activity and employment
  Increase property values
  Support neighborhood revitalization
  Reduce health care costs

Source: CDC
HEALTH BENEFITS OF PARKS

Benefits for Children
- Reduces risk of depression
- Improves aerobic fitness
- Improves muscular fitness
- Improves bone health

Benefits for Adults
- Promotes favorable body composition
- Improves attention and some measures of academic performance
- Lowers risk of high blood pressure
- Lowers risk of stroke
- Improves aerobic fitness

Benefits for Healthy Aging
- Improves mental health
- Improves cognitive function
- Reduces arthritis symptoms
- Prevents weight gain
- Improves sleep
- Reduces risk of falling
- Improves balance
- Improves joint mobility
- Extends years of active life
- Helps prevent weak bones and muscle loss
- Delays onset of cognitive decline

Source: CDC
IS ACCESS EQUITABLE?

ELK RUN PARK  JOAN PARK
"Living near blighted urban spaces generates recurrent surges in stress and, with them, ‘inflammatory changes and dysregulation of cardiovascular, neurological, and endocrine systems over a lifetime for persons repeatedly exposed.’"

Eric Klinenberg, Palaces for the People referencing Neighborhood Blight, Stress, and Health: A Walking Trial of Urban Greening and Ambulatory Heart Rate (South, Kondo, Cheney, Branas)
ARE OUR TRAILS WIDE ENOUGH?
ARE OUR TRAILS SAFE ENOUGH?
During the shelter-in-place orders in 2020, state data showed that:
Traffic volumes are lower
Crash rates are higher
Injury and fatality rates are higher
Evidence points to higher rates of speeding

From 2015 to 2019, 74 pedestrians and 4 bicyclists were killed in Columbus.
Source: Vision Zero Columbus Action Plan
DO WE HAVE ENOUGH **BIG PARKS?**

**WHETSTONE PARK**
DO WE HAVE ENOUGH **BIG PARKS?**
PAST PUBLIC HEALTH CRISSES INFLUENCED URBAN PLANNING AND DESIGN

“The urban parks movement, led by Olmsted, was built on the notion that green space was the respiratory apparatus for any urban environment, the prerequisite for expectations of sound collective health.”

- Ginia Bellafante, New York Times
2 | HOW HAVE CITIES RESPONDED?
HOW HAVE CITIES RESPONDED?
WORKING MORE,
GETTING OUTSIDE MORE

20x INCREASE IN
ZOOM USERS
(REUTERS)

3 HOURS EXTRA HOURS WORKED
PER DAY BY U.S. WORKERS
(NORDVPN TEAMS)

90% INCREASE IN DOG
FOSTERING
(HUMANE SOCIETY)

50% INCREASE IN
BIKE SALES
(APRIL SALES FIGURES, KENT INTERNATIONAL)
WORKING MORE, GETTING OUTSIDE MORE

THE SAME CAN BE SAID FOR PARKS IN OHIO

- 34% increase in Great Parks of Hamilton County visitors
- 83% increase in Great Parks of Hamilton County trail users
- 60% increase in Franklin County Metroparks visitors
INCREASING PEDESTRIAN SPACE
TRAVEL LANE CONVERSION: MILAN

After lockdown, Milan rolls out plan to open more streets to cyclists and pedestrians

The Strade Aperte plan, translated as “Open Roads,” is one of the world’s most dramatic examples of how city planners around the world, after COVID-19 lockdowns, are redesigning city streets to be friendlier to pedestrians and cyclists.

Source: Anna Kusme, PRI
**DESIGN GUIDELINES: NACTO**

**Streets for Pandemic Response & Recovery**

Provide space for essential workers and others to bike and roll safely while maintaining sufficient physical distance from others.

**CONTEXT**
- Multilane streets, streets with wide lanes where demand is high
- Streets that provide access to hospitals and other essential services, connector routes to parks and other open spaces

**KEY STEPS**
- Convert curbside parking or motor vehicle lane to bike lane. Optional: convert adjacent vehicle lane to parking
- Designate start of lane with a barrier and sign, positioned so as not to block cyclists
- Use reflective barriers such as traffic cones, flexible posts, bollards, plastic barriers, freestanding delineators, or traffic bollards

**TIMELINE:** Days to plan, hours to implement
**DURATION:** Days to months
The City of Oakland Slow Streets Program is intended to support safe physical activity by creating more space for physical distancing for all Oaklanders.

All Slow Streets with and without soft closure barriers are Closed to Through Traffic so that people can more comfortably use these low-traffic streets for physically distant walking, wheelchair rolling, jogging, and biking all across the City.

As of 6/5/2020, the City has installed over 20 miles of slow streets along 19 corridors.

Source:
https://www.oaklandca.gov/projects/oakland-slow-streets
The Essential Places initiative is an evolution of Slow Streets driven by community feedback and advocacy, especially from East Oakland residents and community groups.

While the Oakland Slow Streets program overall continues to receive overwhelming support among community survey respondents, those responding to surveys are more likely to be white, have high incomes and live in North Oakland.

Any potential installation of new Slow Streets would be the result of extensive community engagement in low income communities and communities of color.

Source: https://www.oaklandca.gov/projects/oakland-slow-streets
3 | HOW CAN COLUMBUS IMPROVE?
**TPL PARKSCORE**

### Columbus TPL Parkscore Scorecard

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National Rank for Columbus</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>Out of 100 Most Populated Cities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Points (Weighted)</td>
<td>48.6</td>
<td>Out of 100 Max</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Acreage</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Points for Acreage</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>Out of 100 Max</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Points for Median Park Size (7.7 Acres)</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>Out of 100 Max</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Points for Parkland as Percent of City Area (8.8%)</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>Out of 100 Max</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Services &amp; Investment</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Points for Investment</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>Out of 100 Max</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Points for Spending Per Capita ($100.60)</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>Out of 100 Max</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Access</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Points for Access</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>Out of 100 Max</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent of Columbus residents within a 10-minute walk from a Park</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Amenities</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Points for Amenities</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>Out of 100 Max</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Points for Playgrounds per 10,000 Residents (2.9 Playgrounds/10,000 Res.)</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>Out of 100 Max</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Points for Com. Centers per 10,000 Residents (0.7 Centers/10,000 Res.)</td>
<td>42.5</td>
<td>Out of 100 Max</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>About ParkScore Scoring</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Raw Score</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>Each city can earn a maximum of 400 points, which is then normalized to a scale out of 100.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Each city can earn a maximum of 400 points, which is then normalized to a scale out of 100.
The park and trail access analysis focuses on identifying how many residents are within a 10-minute walk of a CRPD park or trail. The analysis consisted of the following steps:

1. Identified CRPD facilities with public access.
2. Geolocated and mapped park access points for publicly-accessible parks.
3. Geolocated trailheads and created 0.25-mile trail intervals in all CRPD trails.
4. Created 10-minute walksheds from access points for parks, trailheads, and trails.
5. Calculated populations within a 10-minute walkshed of existing parks and trails, and identified “underserved” areas (those outside of the walkshed).
6. Looked at partners also serving City of Columbus residents (public schools, other jurisdictions, and Metro Parks), identifying facilities within a quarter-mile of the City of Columbus boundary and geolocating public access points.
7. Created 10-minute walkshed from partner access points, and calculated impact of these facilities on the percentage of population within a 10-minute walk of a park or trail.
8. Identified “properties of interest” for potential acquisition within City of Columbus boundaries and geolocated potential access points.
9. Using regional data, identified planned and potential trail connections, geolocating potential trailheads and access points.
10. Created 10-minute walksheds from access points for potential/planned parks, trailheads, and trails.
11. Calculated the impact of potential trails and “properties of interest” on population within a 10-minute walk from a park or trail.
EXISTING ACCESS

Walkshed Analysis: Existing (2018)

Residents within Walkshed: 64.5%
Residents Outside Walkshed: 35.5%
EXISTING ACCESS

Walkshed Analysis: Existing (2018)

1950 Corporate Boundary
Social Vulnerability Index

The Social Vulnerability Index (SVI) was created by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) using U.S. Census data to determine the social vulnerability of every census tract.

The list below ranks planning areas from least vulnerable to most vulnerable, according to the average SVI of census tracts within their respective boundaries:

1. Southeast Planning Area | Average SVI of 0.63 (Highest Vulnerability)
2. Southwest Planning Area | Average SVI of 0.55
3. Central Planning Area | Average SVI of 0.54
4. In-Town Planning Area | Average SVI of 0.51
5. Northeast Planning Area | Average SVI of 0.44
6. Northwest Planning Area | Average SVI of 0.21 (Lowest Vulnerability)
LOW OPPORTUNITY
NEIGHBORHOODS

Neighborhood tracts categorized as “very low” opportunity.
Source: kirwan institute 2019
SIDEWALK GAPS

Density of areas with streets without sidewalks.

Source: MORPC
PEDESTRIAN SAFETY

Accidents involving pedestrians. 2015-2019

Source: ODOT
BIKE SAFETY

Heat map of accidents involving cyclists. 2015-2019

Source: ODOT
BIKE COMFORT

Roadway level of stress rating for cyclists.
Source: MORPC
35 miles of low-stress neighborhood bikeways

Five neighborhoods:
- Clintonville
- Hilltop
- Near East
- North Linden
- Southside
NEIGHBORHOOD BIKEWAYS: CLINTONVILLE
The City of Columbus recently conducted a Vision Zero Columbus initiative, part of a global initiative to eliminate all roadway deaths and severe injuries, while ensuring safe, equitable mobility for all.

The program analyzed data and engaged the public to understand the locations, severity, and types of crashes throughout the city.

The City analyzed crash data over the past 4 years to identify a “High Injury Network” – streets with a history of crashes involving fatalities, serious injuries, and vulnerable roadway users (i.e. pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorcyclists).

The city adopted an action plan this spring to improve safety throughout the network. 
https://vision-zero-columbus.hub.arcgis.com/
The City of Columbus is partnering with COTA, MORPC and other funding partners to advance the first of these corridors – the Northwest Corridor to create an implementation strategy for a complete multi-modal transportation system in the corridor. This will:

- **Promote a balanced, complete, safe, and integrated transportation system** that meets the needs for all travel modes
- **Address the connection** between multi-modal transportation demands and changing land use patterns
- **Prioritize pedestrian, bicycle, transit, and vehicular transportation improvements** for implementation

This project is intended to also serve as a precedent for other corridor efforts, with an emphasis on connecting people to jobs and opportunity and providing equitable transportation investments throughout the city.
LINKUS: NORTHWEST CORRIDOR

NORTHWEST CORRIDOR
MOBILITY STUDY
PHASE 1 SUMMARY REPORT
Center-running Bus Rapid Transit with Multi-Use Sidewalk

This concept provides additional protection for both pedestrians and cyclists by replacing the sidewalk on one side of the road with a multiuse facility.
BUILDING **TRANSIT SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENTS**
WHAT COULD THE FUTURE LOOK LIKE?
CENTRAL OHIO GREENWAYS VISION

11.6M TRAIL MILES TRAVELED IN 2017

500 TRAIL MILES PLANNED

Regional Trail of Significance
- Existing Multi-Use Path
- Proposed/Future

733 Total Miles
233 Existing Multi-use Path
500 Proposed/Future
CRPD LAND PLAN
EXISTING ACCESS

Walkshed Analysis: Existing (2018)

Residents within Walkshed: 64.5%
Residents Outside Walkshed: 35.5%
POTENTIAL ACCESS

Walkshed Analysis: Potential with Properties of Interest & Trails (2023)

2023 Percent within Walkshed: 79%
2023 Percent Outside Walkshed: 21%

POI Acres: 2,263 Acres
Potential Trail Miles: 96 Miles
POI & Pot. Trail Impact: +14.5%
EXISTING VS. POTENTIAL ACCESS

CENTRAL PLANNING AREA
Residents within Walkshed: 70.46%
Residents Outside Walkshed: 29.54%

CENTRAL PLANNING AREA
2023 Percent within Walkshed: 86.3%
2023 Percent Outside Walkshed: 13.7%
RAPID 5:
REDEFINING OUR REGION
**Project Funders**

**Platinum:**
Advanced Drainage Systems (ADS) Foundation
City of Columbus
The Columbus Foundation
The Ohio State University
Thrive Companies

**Gold:**
City of Dublin
COTA
Columbus and Franklin County Metro Parks
Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission
Nationwide Realty Investors and Capital Square, Ltd

**Silver:**
AEP
CASTO
City of Bexley
City of Gahanna
City of Grove City
City of Hilliard
City of New Albany
City of Obetz
City of Reynoldsburg
City of Upper Arlington
City of Westerville
City of Whitehall
City of Worthington

CDDC
Corna Kokosing
ENGIE
Franklin County Engineer
M/I Homes
Nationwide
One Columbus
Our greenways and waterways are the future of connection between environment, recreation, and Central Ohio’s communities. The RAPID Project aims to create a vision for one regional park network.
THE BUILDING BLOCKS
OF OUR OPEN SPACE SYSTEM

146 Miles
Blueways and Riparian Corridors

38,300 Acres
Parks and Greenspace

143 Miles
Trails and Connections

315 Miles
On-street Bike/PED Facilities
GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES IN FRANKLIN COUNTY

100 New Residents added every day to Franklin County in 2018

30,000 Residents added to Franklin County in 2018 alone

695,000 Additional Residents expected by 2050
BENEFITS IMPROVING OUR COMMUNITY

- Health & Wellness
- Mobility Choice
- Environmental Stewardship
- Economic Vitality
- Social Equity
PEOPLE & PLACES IMPACTED

- Schools & Students
- Businesses & Employees
- Residents & Neighborhoods
- Cultural Institutions
- Marginalized Communities
OUR SYSTEM TODAY

275 schools within 1/4 mile of existing park or trail

524k jobs within 1/4 mile of existing park or trail

840k residents within 1/4 mile of existing park or trail

500 activity centers within 1/4 mile of existing park or trail

less than 60% of very low opportunity neighborhoods within 1/4 mile of existing park or trail
OUR SYSTEM TOMORROW

320 Schools within 1/4 mile of existing park or trail
45 (16%) more than today

660k jobs within 1/4 mile of existing park or trail
135k (26%) more than today

1.108m residents within 1/4 mile of existing park or trail
268k (32%) more than today

590 activity centers within 1/4 mile of existing park or trail
90 (18%) more than today

more than 77% of very low opportunity neighborhoods within 1/4 mile of existing park or trail
28% more than today
Every Franklin County resident will be within 1.5 miles of a park or greenway.
JOIN US ON WEDNESDAY, JULY 21

Rapid 5: The Power of Parks and Waterways

Networking & Registration
Cocktails and Networking 4:30 pm

Program
Program 5:00 pm

REGISTER at https://columbusmetroclub.org/
“We can start working on the gaps in everyday livability that have been exposed by the coronavirus—and today’s livability is tomorrow’s resilience.” - Tom Vanderbilt