Using the Community Park Audit Tool (CPAT) for Community-Based Advocacy and Environmental Change

Sonja A. Wilhelm Stanis, University of Missouri
Andrew T. Kaczynski, University of South Carolina
Gina M. Besenyi, University of South Carolina
Katherine B. Vaughan, Riley County Health Department

February 26, 2013
Workshop Agenda

9:00 Welcome & Introductions

9:15 Background

• Parks and physical activity background
• Development of the Community Park Audit Tool (CPAT)
• Details of the CPAT

10:00 Practice CPAT in a park

11:00 Reflection & Discussion

11:30 Action & Advocacy

11:45 Tips & Wrap-up
Participant Introductions

- Tell us about yourself!
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"Most of the communities where Americans live are important contributors to current public health problems. Simultaneously, they can also be the source of important solutions to these problems".

• 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)
Environmental Influences on Active Living

- Housing mix (Population Density)
- Land use mix (Diversity)
- Street connectivity (Design)
- Sidewalks
- Public transportation
- Neighbourhood connectedness
- Aesthetics
- Safety (from crime, traffic)
- Parks, trails, recreation facilities
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

Parks as Important Community Physical Activity Resources

• Most local and state 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 across all demographics and abilities
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)

- **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 (e.g., playgrounds, trails)
  - Quality of park and features (e.g., renovations)
  - Ease of accessing the park from surrounding neighborhood (e.g., street connectivity, traffic, crossings, public transportation)

- 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; Vaughan et al., 2013)
Measuring the Built Environment

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)
  - More time-intensive
  - Best for capturing micro-scale features not included in geographic databases (e.g., specific features, quality ratings, etc.)
  - Useful for engaging residents in the research process
  - Can be tested for reliability
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
Community Park Audit Tool (CPAT)

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)
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Development of the Community Park Audit Tool

- Despite several park audit tools, lacking a comprehensive yet user-friendly park audit tool focused on physical activity.

- **CPAT was developed to enable diverse stakeholders to quickly and reliably audit community parks for their potential to promote youth physical activity.**

- Developed in Kansas City, Missouri through a series of three workshops and field testing with 34 unique community stakeholders representing organizations from around the KC metro area.

- The initial workshops addressed the following questions:
  - 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**
Small Group Discussions

➢ What do YOU think is important to consider regarding park features or characteristics that could promote or hinder park-based physical activity?
Community Park Audit Tool (CPAT)

- Tool developed based on findings from workshop, review of strengths/weaknesses of previous tools, and past studies

- 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
  - Approximate 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

Park Name: ___________________ Observer Name or ID: ___________________
Park Address/Location: ___________________
Were you able to locate a map for this park? □ No □ Yes Was the park easy to find onsite? □ 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 definitions:
- 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 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
5. What types of parking are available for the park? (check all that are present)
   □ None □ Parking lot □ On-street parking □ Bike racks
6. Are there sidewalks on any roads adjacent to the park? (could be on opposite side of road) □ No □ Yes If yes, are they usable? □ All or most are usable □ About half □ None or few usable
7. Are there curb cuts and/or ramps on any sidewalks bordering or entering the park? □ No □ Yes
8. Is there an external trail or path connected to the park? □ No □ Yes If yes, is it usable? □ No □ Yes
9. Are there marked bike lanes on any roads adjacent to the park? □ No □ Yes
10. Are there nearby traffic signals on any roads adjacent to the park? (e.g., crosswalk, stop light/sign) □ No □ Yes If yes, are they on heavy traffic roads? □ No □ Yes □ There are not any heavy traffic roads
11. 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
12. 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 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.)
   □ 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:
### Community Park Audit Tool (CPAT)

#### 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.)

#### Activity Areas

<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>( # : _____)</td>
<td>☐ No ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Yes</td>
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<td>Good condition</td>
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<td>Comments:</td>
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<td>b. Sport Field (football/soccer)</td>
<td>( # : _____)</td>
<td>☐ No ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Yes</td>
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<td>c. Baseball Field</td>
<td>( # : _____)</td>
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<td>d. Swimming Pool</td>
<td>( # : _____)</td>
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<td>e. Splash Pad</td>
<td>( # : _____)</td>
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<td>f. Basketball Court</td>
<td>( # : _____)</td>
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<td>g. Tennis Court</td>
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</table>

**Comments on Park Activity Areas:**

- Have you included all activity areas?
- Are the ratings consistent with the physical conditions observed?
- Are there any additional activities or features that should be considered for inclusion in the audit?
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 a public restroom(s) or portable toilet(s) at the park? □ No □ Yes
   - If yes... Are the restroom(s) 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

14. Are there drinking fountain(s) at the park? □ No □ Yes
   - If yes... How many different fountain(s) are there? (e.g., units, not spouts) ______
   - Are the fountain(s) 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

17. Are trash cans in the park? □ No □ Yes
   - If yes... Are they overflowing with trash? □ All or most are overflowing □ About half □ None or few are 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? □ No □ Yes

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

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. Are there any dangerous spots in the park? (e.g., abandoned building, pit/holes) □ No □ Yes

29. 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

30. 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

Comments on Park Quality and Safety Issues:

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

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Community Park Audit Tool
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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 were made to clarify questions within the tool and instructions within the guidebook
Process-Related Outcomes Among Stakeholders

- **Networking and community building**
  - “[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.”
  - 86% of stakeholders reported their perceptions of the importance of both the built environment and parks for promoting physical activity had improved ‘moderately’ or ‘a lot’ over the course of the project

- **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.”
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- 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)
Section 2: Access and Surrounding Neighborhood

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? (could be on opposite side of road)
   - 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
Section 2: Access and Surrounding Neighborhood (continued)

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:
2013 Community Park Audit Tool (CPAT)
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.)
Community Park Audit Tool (CPAT)

2013
### Section 3: Park Activity Areas (continued)

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Area 1</th>
<th>Area 2</th>
<th>Area 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **b. Sport Field** (# :_____)
  (football/soccer) |
  Useable |
  Good condition |
  Comments: |
  | No | Yes |
  | No | Yes |
  | No | Yes |
  | No | Yes |
  | No | Yes |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Area 1</th>
<th>Area 2</th>
<th>Area 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **c. Baseball Field** (# :_____)
  |
  Useable |
  Good condition |
  Comments: |
  | No | Yes |
  | No | Yes |
  | No | Yes |
  | No | Yes |
  | No | Yes |

![Image of a sport field](image1.jpg)

![Image of a baseball field](image2.jpg)
## Section 3: Park Activity Areas (continued)

12. **Activity Areas # of Areas** | **Area 1** | **Area 2** | **Area 3**
--- | --- | --- | ---

d. **Swimming Pool (# :______)**
  Useable | ☐ No ☐ Yes | ☐ No ☐ Yes | ☐ No ☐ Yes
  Good condition | ☐ No ☐ Yes | ☐ No ☐ Yes | ☐ No ☐ Yes
  Comments:

e. **Splash Pad (# :______)**
  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>
<th>Area 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| f. Basketball Court (# :_____)
  Useable | □ No □ Yes | □ No □ Yes | □ No □ Yes |
  Good condition | □ No □ Yes | □ No □ Yes | □ No □ Yes |
  Comments: |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Area 1</th>
<th>Area 2</th>
<th>Area 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| g. Tennis Court (# :_____)
  Useable | □ No □ Yes | □ No □ Yes | □ No □ Yes |
  Good condition | □ No □ Yes | □ No □ Yes | □ No □ Yes |
  Comments: |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Area 1</th>
<th>Area 2</th>
<th>Area 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| h. Volleyball Court (# :_____)
  Useable | □ No □ Yes | □ No □ Yes | □ No □ Yes |
  Good condition | □ No □ Yes | □ No □ Yes | □ No □ Yes |
  Comments: |
## 12. Activity Areas # of Areas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area 1</th>
<th>Area 2</th>
<th>Area 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<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>Connected to activity areas</td>
<td>□ No □ Yes</td>
<td>□ No □ Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distance markers/sign</td>
<td>□ No □ Yes</td>
<td>□ No □ Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benches along trail</td>
<td>□ No □ Yes</td>
<td>□ No □ Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What is the trail surface? (check one)
- □ Paved
- □ Crushed stone
- □ Dirt/mulch

Comments:
## Section 3: Park Activity Areas (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity Areas # of Areas</th>
<th>Area 1</th>
<th>Area 2</th>
<th>Area 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>j. Fitness</strong> (# :______)</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>
<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>
<tr>
<td><strong>k. Skate Park</strong> (# :______)</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>
<tr>
<td><strong>l. Off-Leash Dog</strong> (# :______)</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?</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>o. Other</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(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.)
Section 4: Park Quality and Safety (continued)

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

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
Section 4: Park Quality and Safety (continued)

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
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
Section 4: Park Quality and Safety (continued)

26. From the center of the park, how visible is the surrounding neighborhood?
   □ Fully   □ Partially   □ Not at all

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.
Community Park Audit Tool (CPAT)

2013
Workshop Agenda

9:00 Welcome & Introductions

9:15 Background
  • Parks and physical activity background
  • Development of the Community Park Audit Tool (CPAT)
  • Details of the CPAT

10:00 Practice CPAT in a park

11:00 Reflection & Discussion

11:30 Action & Advocacy

11:45 Tips & Wrap-up
Let’s try out the CPAT in a local park ...

• Bring clipboard and pen/pencil. Grab coat, sweater, change of shoes if desired.

• We will meet briefly at the park before you begin

• Then, explore the park for 30 minutes to try out different sections of the tool

• We will then reconvene and return to the workshop to discuss any questions or issues that came up while using the tool.
Workshop Agenda

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9:15 Background
  • Parks and physical activity background
  • Development of the Community Park Audit Tool (CPAT)
  • Details of the CPAT

10:00 Practice CPAT in a park

11:00 Reflection & Discussion

11:30 Action & Advocacy

11:45 Wrap-up
CPAT Park Visit Discussion

• How did it go?
• Where there any sections/items you found challenging?
• Anything you would want to remember/consider for an actual park audit?
• Other questions/issues?
Workshop Agenda

9:00 Welcome & Introductions

9:15 Background

• Parks and physical activity background
• Development of the Community Park Audit Tool (CPAT)
• Details of the CPAT

10:00 Practice CPAT in a park

11:00 Reflection & Discussion

11:30 Action & Advocacy

11:45 Tips & Wrap-up
Top 10 Uses of CPAT

1. Use the CPAT as part of a master planning process to assess what facilities and amenities are available – and needed – in local parks and the surrounding neighborhood (e.g., playground, picnic shelter, lighting, sidewalk).

2. Create a website or other forum where residents can download the CPAT and upload their ratings or comments about neighborhood parks. You can also develop a searchable database that will help citizens choose community parks that meet their wants and needs (e.g., tennis court, restroom, shade).

3. Engage youth in conducting park audits as part of an extra-credit or youth organization project (e.g., 4H, Scouts) and have them share this information with the community and local policymakers.

4. Use CPAT audits to engage residents in a discussion of whether available park resources are appropriate for various groups in the neighborhood (e.g., different ages, cultures, abilities and disabilities, etc.).

5. Use data collected via the CPAT as the foundation for grant applications to organizations focused on issues such as youth, the environment, social justice, and health.
Top 10 Uses of CPAT

6. Incorporate park audits in parks, recreation, and tourism, public health, and urban planning classes as a teaching tool, as well as with middle/high school youth to educate them about the importance of healthy community design.

7. Use the CPAT to research whether parks and their attributes (e.g., features, quality) are equally distributed across cities and states and whether such patterns have implications for physical activity levels, obesity, depression, rates of chronic disease, and other health-related outcomes.

8. Engage local law enforcement and other organizations in discussions about how to increase real and perceived safety from crime and traffic in and around parks.

9. Use the CPAT data to showcase park attributes within the community as an economic development tool, making the case that your town is a great place to live and work with safe, attractive, and health-promoting parks.

10. Use CPAT findings as an evidence base for advocacy groups lobbying for better parks and outdoor recreation facilities to the city/county commission, parks and recreation board, urban planning board, or other decision-making body.
Participatory Action Research & 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 & Advocacy

Participatory Action Research Model

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

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

Participatory Action Research & 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
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 the CPAT

4. **Empowerment:** Develop a plan to address your issue

5. **Advocacy:** Engagement of citizens in goal attainment
Workshop Agenda

9:00 Welcome & Introductions

9:15 Background

• Parks and physical activity background
• Development of the Community Park Audit Tool (CPAT)
• Details of the CPAT

10:00 Practice CPAT in a park

11:00 Reflection & Discussion

11:30 Action & Advocacy

11:45 Tips & Wrap-up
Conduct a CPAT Workshop in Your Community!

- **Who to Invite**
  - Participants
  - Promotion

- **Organizing the Workshop (~3hrs)**
  - Welcome and introductions (10-15 min)
  - Background about parks and physical activity (15-30 min)
  - Overview of the CPAT sections and questions (20-30 min)
  - Use CPAT in a practice park (45-75 min)
  - Reflection and discussion (20-30 min)
  - Action and advocacy (20-30 min)

- **Practicing in a Park**
  - Park selection
  - Transportation
  - What to do at the park

- **Suggested Additional Readings**
Questions? Discussion!

- We would love to hear your thoughts on how the CPAT could be used in your community for research, action, advocacy, etc.
Summary

- Parks are important resources for physical activity, but they can 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 and potential areas of need, but also improved community health.
Acknowledgements

• The Community Park Audit Tool (CPAT) and Training were developed by:
  
  Andrew Kaczynski, PhD  
  Department of Health Promotion, Education, and Behavior  
  Arnold School of Public Health  
  University of South Carolina  
  atkaczyn@mailbox.sc.edu  
  (803) 777-7063

  Sonja Wilhelm Stanis, PhD  
  Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism  
  School of Natural Resources  
  University of Missouri  
  sonjaws@missouri.edu  
  (573) 882-9524

• For more information on this and other projects, please visit the Kansas City Parks and Physical Activity Project website:  
  http://web.missouri.edu/~wilhelmstaniss/KCParksPA/Welcome.html

• The CPAT development was funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Active Living Research program

Robert Wood Johnson Foundation