

An aerial satellite photograph of a city, likely Chula Vista, California, showing a mix of urban development, roads, and green spaces. A large white rectangular box is centered over the image, containing the title and author information.

Resident Advocacy for Parks and Open Space:

Lessons Learned from the Healthy Eating, Active Communities Initiative in Chula Vista, CA

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Chula Vista HEAC

PRESENTATION OVERVIEW

- Discovering community needs
- Advocacy, direct and indirect
- Collective victory

Discovering community needs

NCI and the Community Collaborative

Chula Vista: Healthy Places, Healthy Futures



NCI members participate in collaborative meetings by bringing forward concerns from the community and sharing their work with other residents.

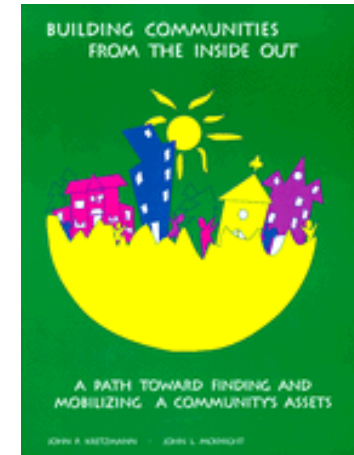
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Discovering community needs

Chula Vista: Healthy Places, Healthy Futures

Door-to-door Survey

400 surveys collected



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Discovering community needs

Door-to-door Survey: Results



Household Asset Inventories Key Findings: Local Residents Possess Wide Range of Skills and Willingness to Contribute

Asset inventories were completed with 258 households in the five Adopt-A-Block areas throughout Chula Vista. By the end of April, more than 300 inventories will be completed (60 from each Neighborhood Council).

- In 103 of the 258 households (40%), at least one person identified themselves as a willing volunteer for future community projects.
- The ten most commonly identified skills/assets of local residents were:
 1. Household cleaning (135 residents)
 2. Typing and/or computer skills (122)
 3. Translation (97)
 4. Leading youth activities or field trips (90)
 5. Assisting in K-12 classrooms (89)
 6. Cooking / baking (87)
 7. Lawn care / gardening (75)
 8. Home repair / carpentry (71)
 9. Car repair (63)
 10. Caring for the elderly, children, or other persons with special needs (60)
- When asked what kind of relationship residents would like to have with their neighbors:
 1. 90% said they would like a more cordial / friendlier relationship.
 2. 85% said they would like a more caring relationship and one in which neighbors help each other more.
 3. 54% said they want more social interaction with their neighbors.
 4. Only 3% said they wanted no relationship with their neighbors.
- Respondents identified the key resources of a prosperous community. The top ten resources, in order of importance, are:

1. Schools	6. Hospitals
2. Youth centers	7. Bookstores
3. Churches	8. Colleges / universities
4. Public parks	9. Cultural institutions
5. Libraries	10. Businesses

Each Neighborhood Council found unique circumstances and qualities within their adopted blocks. The Council from BEACON Family Resource Center, for example, found a large number of isolated seniors. The group from New Directions FRC found several residents struggling with cancer and inadequate healthcare resources, but they also made contact with a woman who has begun offering sewing classes at the FRC. In the future, each Council group will reestablish contact with residents who are in need of resources or who would like to volunteer in the community.



Anonymous Health Survey Key Findings: New Information on Community Health Concerns and Family Norms Around Substance Use

172 surveys have been collected to date.
Results of those surveys are summarized below.

Health Insurance and Health Care

- 73% of respondents had a family doctor
- 72% reported that they have health insurance coverage
- 76% of respondents said services are delivered in a culturally appropriate manner
- only 66% of respondents said that members of their family receive regular check-ups recommended by doctors (E.g., mammograms, prostate screening)

Neighborhood Safety

- 89% of respondents said they live in a safe neighborhood

Healthy Behaviors

- 71% reported that they exercise regularly

Norms Related to Use of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drugs

- 70% of respondents said that in their home it is considered manly or macho to be able to drink a lot
- 42% said that they had warned their children about smoking while smoking and 46% said that they had warned their children about drinking while drinking
- 7% of respondents said: (a) that people in their house joke about getting drunk and doing crazy things in the presence of children, (b) that their children have heard adults in the home arguing about one or the other having too much to drink, and (c) that they gravitate toward social functions where there is a lot of drinking and away from social functions where there is little or no drinking

Prioritization of health concerns

(% of respondents identifying issue as top three concern)

1. health insurance for adults (57%)
2. dental insurance (48%)
3. health insurance for children (46%)
4. prevention of domestic and juvenile violence (32%)
5. basic medical care / family medicine (28%)
6. nutrition education (24%)

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Volunteerism



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Fundraising



Community Events



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Advocacy, direct and indirect

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Block Parties

Presentation findings and celebration of community



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Unpaved alleys in older neighborhoods

Vacant lot where a park could be



Lack of sidewalks

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Advocacy, direct and indirect

Direct Advocacy (assisted)

- Presentation to collaborative members
- Meetings with city officials
- Spanish language design forum

Indirect Advocacy (undirected)

- Behind-the-scenes support from collaborative leader
- City opportunity for priority adjustment

Collective victory

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The greening of Chula Vista

By Shannon McMahon
STAFF WRITER

February 5, 2006

CHULA VISTA – More parks are being built or designed in Chula Vista than at any other time in the city's history. On the city's east and west sides, at its bayfront and along its periphery, parks are being drafted into the city's plans and carved into its landscape.

"This is something to be proud of," City Manager Dave Rowlands said. "This shows how Chula Vista works."

The bulk of the park boom is on the city's newer east side, where more than \$55 million in construction is taking place at seven parks. In the west, the city is building its first urban park in more than 25 years.

Other parks, including those along the bayfront and a trail of parks that will loop around the city, will take at least 10 years to complete.

"Some of these parks are just amazing, aren't they?" Recreation Director Buck Martin said.

In the northeast part of the city is Mount Miguel Park, a \$6.2 million project set to finish in January 2008. The park, which will have three softball fields and a skate park, offers sweeping views of San Diego, Tijuana and the bay.

Farther east is Monteville Park, a \$15 million project with tennis courts, soccer fields, basketball courts and classrooms for arts, crafts and ballet. That park is scheduled to be done in April.

Along the Otay Reservoir is the \$4.3 million Mountain Hawk Park, nicknamed "Wedding Picture Park" by city staff members for its picturesque views of nearby mountains; it will be ready in March.

"This is what you get when you have a well-planned city," General Services Director Jack Griffin said on a tour of the parks.

Every park under construction on the city's east side has been paid for by the developers who built the adjoining neighborhoods. Upon completion, the parks are handed over to the city.

On the city's west side, which city staff members call "the next frontier" in park construction, land must be acquired and developed with city funds, making construction a slower task.

Harborside Park, a \$2.1 million park a few blocks from Interstate 5, is under construction and is slated to be ready by the end of this month.

Before the city purchased the land for Harborside, the 5-acre site was a dumping ground for debris, covered with overgrown weeds. Now there are gazebos, benches, slides, swings and a restroom. In addition, there are basketball courts, a skate park and a walking path that stretches from Naples Street to the residential areas on the other side of the park.

"I'm very happy we could come up with a way to build something down here," Griffin said.

<http://signonsandiego.printhis.clickability.com/pt/cpt?action=cpt&title=The+greening+of+Chula...> 10/29/2007

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Summary

- **Community participation is the central concept, advocacy is one avenue**
- **Advocacy can be direct and indirect – when all horses are pulling together it is impossible to tell who carries what load**
- **Victories achieved in the community interest can be owned by everyone**