HISPANIC OR LATINO THOUGHT LEADERS' PERSPECTIVES IN TRANSPORTATION, PUBLIC HEALTH, AND LAND USE

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CREATING AN ACTIVE AMERICA, TOGETHER
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The project *Hispanic or Latino Transportation and Land Use Thought Leaders Perspectives in Transportation, Public Health, and Land Use* was a collaboration between the Society of Public Health Education (SOPHE) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The work was performed by contractors from Fernandez Research Group, LLC. The project's three goals were to: (1) increase the knowledge, awareness, and understanding of Hispanic or Latino transportation and land use thought leaders' lived and professional experience around barriers in Hispanic or Latino communities to walking and other forms of community-based physical activity; (2) synthesize reported experience of these Hispanic or Latino thought leaders related to barriers and inequities to walking and community-based physical activity as well as possible recommendations to improve activity-friendly routes to everyday destinations; and (3) identify possible policy, systems, and environmental (PSE) approaches to promote walking and other forms of community-based physical activity.

Method

To fulfill the goals of the project, a qualitative multi-method research design was used. The project had two phases: an environmental scan of "gray" or non-peer reviewed research literature including reports, articles, and media plus individual interviews with thought leaders.

Phase 1 consisted of an environmental scan of gray literature produced from January 2016 to January 2022. The scan consisted of English and Spanish content produced by Hispanic or Latino thought leaders from the United States and select Hispanic or Latino-focused organizations related to the activity-friendly routes to everyday destinations (routes to destinations) (Activity-Friendly Routes to Everyday Destinations). The scan was instrumental in identifying

Hispanic or Latino thought leaders and generating the interview protocol questions used during the second phase of the project.

Phase 2 of the study consisted of interviewing nine Hispanic or Latino thought leaders with relevance for the routes to destinations strategy. Interviews were recorded and automatically transcribed by Zoom (Zoom Video Communications, Inc., 2020, Version 5.11.6). Data (gray literature and interview transcripts) were synthesized into themes. This report includes the summary and implications of this work.

Results

Barriers: The interview and environmental scan findings indicated four major themes regarding barriers that have discouraged physical activity among Hispanics or Latinos:

- land use policies;
- infrastructure;
- gentrification and displacement; and
- safety.

Facilitators: Examination of the thought leader interviews and environmental scan centered on three major themes related to facilitators to physical activity for Hispanic or Latino residents:

- community and national initiatives;
- community investments; and
- community engagement.

Policy, Systems, and Environmental Approaches

The public health sector plays an important role in increasing levels of physical activity in communities across the United States. This sector includes a variety of professionals—such as public health practitioners, health scientists, health policy advisors, communications specialists, program coordinators, and researchers—working in local, state, and federal government agencies and

nongovernmental organizations. The findings in this project have important implications for public health workers promoting physical activity among Hispanic or Latino communities. These approaches include:

Conduct research to determine barriers and facilitators of physical activity and activity-friendly communities among Hispanics or Latinos.

- Conduct research to understand the consequences of land use policies on Hispanics or Latinos' health behaviors and outcomes.
- Identify specific geographic areas within Hispanic or Latino neighborhoods experiencing the most disparities in physical activity.
- Implement and evaluate community initiatives designed to promote physical activity among Hispanic or Latino communities.

Educate people about the barriers, facilitators, and benefits of physical activity and connect Hispanic or Latino people to resources that can help them increase their activity levels.

- Educate people about the impacts of historical land use polices and infrastructure on the health behaviors and outcomes of Hispanic or Latino people.
- Summarize and share findings about what community initiatives work to increase and sustain physical activity among Hispanic or Latino communities.
- Disseminate information on bicycle regulations to ease fears surrounding bike riding among Hispanic or Latino people.

Build partnerships and community coalitions to create and promote policies, programs, and initiatives that support physical activity among Hispanic or Latino communities.

- Collaborate with other sectors to support joint-use agreements that increase the availability of safe and accessible community locations and programs that support physical activity.

- Promote the availability of safe and accessible community locations and programs that support physical activity.
- Provide technical assistance to Hispanic or Latino communities as they put strategies in place to increase physical activity.

Policy, Systems, and Environmental Change (PSE) approaches may not be successful without community engagement. This report provides strategies for community engagement using an environmental justice lens. The PSE approaches and community engagement strategies presented in this report aim to achieve health equity and justice in Hispanic or Latino communities by addressing historical and contemporary racial inequities that have impacted physical activity. Doing so can decrease health disparities and improve the overall health of this group.

INTRODUCTION

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Achieving health equity, eliminating disparities, and improving the health of all groups is an overarching goal for *Healthy People 2030* and a top priority for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Health equity is achieved when every person has the opportunity to "attain his or her full health potential" and no one is "disadvantaged from achieving this potential because of social position or other socially determined circumstances" (CDC, 2022a, para. 1). Health equity remains particularly relevant for Hispanic or Latino communities, which represent the largest racial and ethnic minority population in the United States (Census, 2021).

This project uses the term Hispanic or Latino. The U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB) requires federal agencies to use a minimum of two ethnicities in collecting and reporting data: Hispanic or Latino and Not Hispanic or Latino (United States Census Bureau, 2022, para. 1). Hispanic or Latino individuals are those Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin regardless of race.

Physical activity is one of the best things people can do to improve their health (CDC, 2022b). It is vital for healthy aging and can reduce the burden of chronic diseases and prevent early death. In comparison to non-Hispanic Whites, Hispanic or Latinos have a physical inactivity prevalence of approximately 32% (CDC, 2022c), which is higher than non-Hispanic Whites, Blacks, and American Indian/Alaskan Natives. Neighborhood supports (or lack thereof) impact Hispanic or Latinos' ability to be physically active, and inequities in access to opportunities for safe physical activity for Hispanics or Latinos may contribute to disparities in multiple health conditions.

Various community strategies have been proposed to ensure that all people regardless of age, race, income, socio-economic status, disability status, and geographic location have equitable and inclusive access to physical activity. CDC's Active People, Healthy Nation^{SM} is a national initiative to help 27 million Americans become

more physically active by 2027. The initiative provides a comprehensive approach to physical activity promotion and contains evidence-based strategies to increase physical activity across sectors and settings. One strategy, activity-friendly routes to everyday destinations, improves the design of communities by connecting routes such as sidewalks, trails, bicycle lanes, and public transit to destinations such as grocery stores, schools, worksites, libraries, parks, or health care facilities. This strategy enhances physical activity within a community and makes it easier and safer to walk, bicycle, or wheelchair roll for people of all ages and abilities. Addressing barriers to physical activity faced by Hispanic or Latino communities and inequities to creating activity-friendly places in these communities may enhance the effectiveness of this strategy for this priority population.

PSE approaches are essential to achieve health equity. These "may offer an economical and sustainable approach to making healthful choices the convenient and most frequently selected choices" (Kegler et al., 2015). According to Prevention Institute (2021), PSE approaches "prioritize investing in the capacity of people closest to the problem as key to building an effective movement" (p. 1). As such, this project assessed Hispanic or Latino thought leaders' perspectives on transportation, public health, and land use. The project was designed to increase the knowledge, awareness, and understanding of Hispanic or Latino transportation and land use thought leaders' lived and professional experience around barriers and facilitators in Hispanic or Latino communities to walking and other forms of community-based physical activity.

This study addressed the following questions:

- What are the barriers to physical activity for Hispanic or Latino persons and/or communities?

- What are the facilitators of physical activity for Hispanic or Latino persons and/or communities?

This report proposes potential PSE approaches related to activity-friendly routes to everyday destinations that can improve equitable and inclusive access to physical activity for Hispanic or Latino communities. Such approaches are important for those working in public health, including public health practitioners, health scientists, health policy advisors, communications specialists, program coordinators, and researchers— working in local, state, and federal government agencies and nongovernmental organizations.

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE LENS

The inequities found in Hispanic or Latino communities have been considered environmental injustices by some researchers and Hispanic or Latino community members (Grineski et al., 2013; Minkler et al., 2010; Rainosek, 2022; Rigolon et al., 2018; Rigolon, 2017). The United States Environmental Protection Agency (2022) defines environmental justice as:

> the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income, with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies. (para. 1)

According to CDC Director Rochelle P. Walensky, MD, MPH, “Addressing environmental injustice is critical to advancing health equity." The goal of environmental justice efforts is to ensure that everyone enjoys the same degree of protection from environmental and health hazards, and equal access to the decision-making process to live, learn, and work in a healthy environment. This project was guided by an environmental justice lens that also recognizes that PSE approaches are needed to address inequities in Hispanic or Latino communities.

IMPORTANCE OF STUDY

The Hispanic or Latino population in the United States is approximately 62.1 million (Pew Institute, 2022). Hispanics or Latinos have decreased levels of physical activity and increased levels of obesity, diabetes, and hypertension (Northwest Medicine, n.d.) which can be addressed with diet and physical activity. Evidence shows that activity-friendly routes to everyday destinations can increase population levels of physical activity (Community Guide). Increased physical activity is associated with a range of health benefits (see *Physical Activity Guidelines* by United States Department of Health and Human Services, 2018; also see Kokkinos, 2012; Warburton et al., 2006). One study, for example, found that those who cycle to work were less stressed than those who drove to work (Brutus et al., 2017). Collaborative action from various fields can improve equitable and inclusive access to physical activity for Hispanic or Latino communities.

METHOD

To address the study objectives, a qualitative multi-method research design was used. The project had two phases: an environmental scan of gray literature plus individual interviews.

PHASE 1: ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN

The first phase of the project included an environmental scan of gray literature produced from January 2016 to January 2022. The scan consisted of English and Spanish content produced by Hispanic or Latino thought leaders from the United States and select Hispanic or Latino-focused organizations related to the Routes to Destinations Strategy.

According to the National Institute of Health (2021), gray literature refers to the "information that falls outside the mainstream of published journal and monograph literature, not controlled by commercial publishers." Examples of gray literature include reports, conference papers, technical reports, blogs, webinars, among other sources.

Four reviewers and the Clemson University Social Media Lab conducted the scans. Reviewers retrieved content from three sources: Hispanic- and Latino-serving organizations' websites, gray literature databases, and Google searches. The Clemson University Social Media Lab used the social media scanning software Sprinklr (Sprinklr, n.d., Version 16.5) to retrieve content.

In developing search terms, the team identified categories that were pertinent to the project objectives. Categories included Identity, Routes to Destinations, Specific Challenges to Population, Destination Sites, Physical Activity, and Other Key Terms. See Table 1 for examples of key words that were used for each category. The search terms were also given to the personnel at the Social Media Lab to be entered into the Sprinklr software. The scan was instrumental in identifying Hispanic or Latino thought leaders and generating the interview protocol questions used during the second phase of the project (see Appendix A).

Table 1: Categories and Keywords

Category	Keywords
Identity	Hispanic, Latino, Latina, Latinx, Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican
Routes to destination	safe streets, open streets, slow streets, safe routes, streets, sidewalks, crosswalks, biking, bicycle lanes, traffic, trails, greenway, rail to trail, light, crossroads, bus, streets, open streets, transportation
Challenges	safety, neighborhood safety, violence, immigration, racial profiling, profiling, border patrol, driver's license, driving, undocumented
Destinations	parks, schools, work
Physical activity	physical activity, exercise, leisure-time physical activity (LTPA), work time physical activity
Other	built environment, walkable, walkability, urban, rural, suburban, land use

PHASE 2: THOUGHT LEADER INTERVIEWS

The research team identified Hispanic or Latino thought leaders working in the United States who produced material that was discovered during the environmental scan (see Appendix A). Additional Hispanic or Latino thought leaders were identified through a search of peer-reviewed literature, the research teams' contacts, and CDC's Division of Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Obesity (DNPAO) recommendations.

Thought leaders received an email invitation to participate in the study. Interested thought leaders were interviewed individually via Zoom. The interview protocol included questions related to the thought leaders' professional background, Hispanic or Latino communities, gentrification and displacement, law enforcement, immigration and customs enforcement, structural racism, and suggestions for practice (See Appendix B). Interviews lasted between 60 to 90 minutes. Nine thought leaders were interviewed, and each received a $100 incentive. Interviews were recorded and automatically transcribed by Zoom. A research assistant checked the transcriptions against the audio before the recordings were deleted.

Data (environmental scan of gray literature and though leaders' interview transcripts) were synthesized using a rapid data analysis technique to identify themes. This technique is used when researchers need to collect and analyze large amounts of data with a short timeline (Holdsworth et al., 2020; Vindrola-Padros & Johnson, 2020). This report includes a summary of the analysis and presents potential PSE approaches.

FINDINGS

This section includes the findings from the nine interviews with Hispanic or Latino thought leaders and the environmental scan of gray literature. It includes two major themes: *challenges affecting Hispanic or Latino communities to engage in physical activity* and *facilitators to physical activity.*

DESCRIPTIVE INFORMATION

Nine thought leaders were interviewed (see Table 2). Four thought leaders are women. The thought leaders possess different professional experiences: two are professionals in the field of transportation and land use, two are professionals in the field but also teach at local universities or colleges, and the rest are academics. Thought leaders are from suburban and urban areas, and they live in various states, including California, Colorado, Oregon, Texas, Illinois, and New York.

Table 2: Thought Leader Information

Name of Thought Leader	Description
Andrea Marpillero-Colomina, PhD	Dr. Marpillero-Colomina is the Sustainable Communities Program Director at Green Latinos. She works on issues related to infrastructure, policy and place. She also teaches at the undergraduate level.
Miguel A. Vazquez, AICP	Mr. Vazquez is a Health Equity Urban and Regional Planner at Riverside University Health System, Public Health. He has 20 years of experience.
Elva Yanez	Ms. Yanez is a Senior Advisor for Parks, Land Use, and the Built Environment in the Prevention Institute.

Table 2: Thought Leader Information Cont.

Name of Thought Leader	Description
David Rojas-Rueda, PhD	Dr. Rojas-Rueda is an Assistant Professor in the Environmental and Radiological Health Sciences Department at Colorado State University. His research involves health promotion, biking, and transport planning processes.
Marisol Becerra, PhD	Dr. Becerra is a Post-Doc Bridge to Faculty Postdoctoral Research Associate in Public Administration at the University of Illinois Chicago. Her research focuses on environmental policy on poverty, race, and health.
Rosenda Murillo, PhD	Dr. Murillo is an Associate Professor in the Department of Psychological Health and Learning Sciences at the College of Education at the University of Houston.
Gerard Sandoval, PhD	Dr. Sandoval is an Associate Professor in College of Design's School of Planning, Public Policy and Management at the University of Oregon. His research interests include community development, urban planning and migration, and neighborhood revitalization.
David X. Marquez, PhD	Dr. Marquez is a Professor in the Department of Kinesiology and Nutrition at the University of Illinois Chicago. He works on projects related to health promotion, particularly with older adults.
Jonathan Pacheco Bell	Mr. Pacheco Bell serves as an urban planner in Pasadena, CA. He has 20 years of professional experience in the fields of urban planning and architecture.

CHALLENGES AFFECTING HISPANIC OR LATINO COMMUNITIES TO ENGAGE IN PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

The environmental scan of gray literature and thought leader interviews revealed four major themes as related to the challenges affecting Hispanics or Latinos' ability to engage in physical activity: *land use policies*; *infrastructure*; *gentrification and displacement*; and *safety*.

Land Use Policies

In the environmental scan and thought leader interviews, land use policies were named as reasons why Hispanic or Latinos are living in neighborhoods with infrastructure that is not conducive to active transportation and physical activity. In an interview captured by reporter Aves (2021), Little Village Environmental Justice staff were asked about the environmental injustices affecting Latino communities. In commenting about the communities in which Hispanic or Latino individuals "live, play, and pray," the staff mentioned:

> *"The reason is structural racism: everything from how neighborhoods were created, to redlining of our communities, to predatory loan practices."* (Aves, 2021, para. 5)

During the thought leader interview with Dr. Becerra, she expressed a similar comment:

> *"It's like we're still feeling the impacts of redlining that was institutionalized. And then there's blockbusting...But yeah we're still living the effects of redlining when that's also impacting how we experience, the environment and how we feel to walk outside to go for a run to bike take public transportation. There's no easy solution to this because that harm has been done. It's embedded in how our neighborhoods have been planned."*

A report by Unidos US, defined redlining:

> *"Beginning in the 1930s, US government policy explicitly supported redlining—meaning withholding home loans to individuals living in neighborhoods with larger populations of Black and Hispanic residents. For example, the Federal Housing Administration's (FHA) home lending guidelines ranked "Negroes and Mexicans" as riskiest and least worthy of credit, while directing investment to neighborhoods with larger populations of "Anglo-Saxons and Northern Europeans," which were considered the "most desirable" and worthy of mortgage credit."* (Green & Poppe, 2021, p. 12)

Regarding the impacts of redlining on Latino communities, an article on the Salud America website reads:

> *"This racially discriminatory mortgage lending practice, which gripped the nation in the 1930s before its ban in the 1960s, created a racial wealth gap and neighborhoods that lacked health-promoting assets, like healthcare, jobs, and transportation options."* (Sukumaran, 2019, para. 3)

Further, residents' fear to racially integrate in neighborhoods is one factor contributing to racial residential separation, as seen in the case of blockbusting, which was mentioned by Dr. Becerra. Blockbusting is defined as follows:

> *"Blockbusting and panic peddling are real estate practices in which brokers encourage owners to list their homes for sale by exploiting fears of racial change within their neighborhood."* (Pearson vs. Edgar, 1997)

The fear of racially integrating is thought to be a factor contributing to White flight, where a mass exodus of White residents left urban cities to relocate in suburban neighborhoods. Redlining policies enabled the shift of resources from the inner city to suburban neighborhoods as expressed by Fernandez (2015):

> *"Redlining in the housing market also contributed to the exodus of non-Hispanic Whites to places such as the suburbs as Whites were able to acquire federal loans, while groups of color remained segregated in inner-cities… This practice often times reinforced the pattern of racial residential segregation as neighborhoods left behind remained majority-minority areas…Urban sprawl enabled White flight to occur which led to spatial segregation. The FHA was involved in constructing new homes in the suburbs… This, along with the lower loan rates and down payments necessary, propelled the exodus of Whites to the suburbs…Funding for highways, public services, retail businesses, and other infrastructure soon followed the White suburbanites, while the resources in the inner-city neighborhoods declined…"* (p. 19, 20)

Although resources were diverted to suburban neighborhoods, thought leaders mentioned how physical activity may be difficult in suburban neighborhoods given how auto-centric these communities are. Destination sites (e.g., parks and retail centers) are difficult to walk to and require the usage of vehicles.

Further, the creation of freeways and highways was implicated in the discussion of White flight and also discussed in the context of physical activity. According to Ms. Yanez,

> *"And, historically, these communities* [communities of color] *were the ones that got divided by freeways or highways to facilitate rapid mobility by people living in the suburbs, primarily middle class White people."*

Freeways and highways serve to limit activity-friendly communities in Hispanic or Latino neighborhoods in several ways, the first of which was to enable White flight as previously mentioned. This diverted the resources to car-centric suburbs while also disinvesting in urban communities, which resulted in infrastructure limitations.

Another way that freeways and highways limited physical activity was by displacing Latinos from their homes as highways were built

directly through these neighborhoods. An article on *LA Times* reads:

> *"The U.S. Interstate Highway System — built from the 1950s to the early 1990s — is one of the country's greatest public works achievements, but it came at an enormous social cost. More than 1 million people were forced from their homes, with many Black neighborhoods bulldozed and replaced with ribbons of asphalt and concrete."* (Dillon & Poston, 2021, para. 7)

This is a trend that affected Black and Hispanic or Latino communities The *LA Times* article states that the same pattern continues today. During his interview, Mr. Pacheco Bell stated:

> *"...the best route to put the freeway through, and it always cuts through a community of color. There's a reason why there's no Beverly Hills freeway. The freeways dodge that city, because they have power, and they're White and wealthy. But all of our LatinX and Black communities have freeways cutting through them. So that's a legacy that transportation planners, especially, have to bear."*

For Hispanics or Latinos not displaced, freeways and highways limit connectivity with other parts of the community. Freeways and highways further reduce mobility for people without vehicles by limiting access and availability of active forms of transportation due to lack of street connectivity to destinations and limited safe crossings. In a *USA Today* article by Tebor and Aguilar (2022), the writers provided an example:

> *"One such road Davis has researched is a stretch of University Boulevard in Prince George's, Maryland, which goes through a vibrant, largely immigrant community. The six-lane corridor is aligned with apartment buildings, restaurants, markets and local shops – yet crosswalks connecting both sides of the street are over half a mile apart, he said."* (Tebor & Aguilar, para. 33)

Safety concerns arise for Hispanic or Latino pedestrians living near highways and freeways where speed limits are high (Tebor & Aguilar). The *USA Today* article stated the following:

> *"Experts trace the problem back decades, to when the U.S. started expanding its highways to prioritize high-speed travel by car. That also meant roads were increasingly filled with hazards for pedestrians."* (Tebor & Aguilar, para. 24)

These high-speed, multi-lane roads "disproportionately cut through" communities of color, including Hispanic or Latino neighborhoods (Tebor & Aguilar, para. 28). Steve Davis, Assistant Vice President of Transportation Strategy at Smart Growth America, commented that the roads are not racists, but the policies and initiatives that installed these roads near communities of color reflect the biases of planners and decision-makers (Tebor & Aguilar).

Infrastructure

Another factor limiting Hispanic or Latinos from engaging in physical activity includes issues related to infrastructure (defined here as structures and features within the built environment). Infrastructure specific to transportation and land use and discovered during data analysis include sidewalks, protected bicycle facilities, parks, fitness centers, and tree canopy.

Dr. Marpillero-Colomina summed up the concerns with infrastructure by stating the following:

> *"Hispanic or Latino folks tend to live further away from parks; have less access to a park in walking distance; have less access to reliable transportation infrastructure, like bike lanes and bus lines, that can take them to parks at reasonable intervals and with relatively relative efficiency. I think that the biggest thing that's deterring people from engaging in those kinds of recreational activities is just the access to the space itself."*

Dr. Rojas-Rueda also added that infrastructure, such as gyms, vary by neighborhood:

> *"But it's not like there aren't fitness centers in lower income Latino neighborhoods, definitely there are as well. Maybe it's just not as prevalent. For example, a Planet Fitness where it's more inexpensive compared to like an LA Fitness-I only use those as examples, I have no affiliation with either of them-but like the monthly fee. You know if it's $10 a month versus $50 a month, depending on the neighborhood...my experience, personal and research wise, has indicated Latinos want to be physically active. Latinos know that when you are physically active good health comes from that. It's not necessarily a matter of people not wanting to do it, it's having opportunity and access that really matter."*

Infrastructure also included tree canopy. In California where the summers are hot, trees provide shade. However, Latino communities may not have the same access to these, as noted by Mr. Pacheco Bell:

> *"Much more green-the city has a deliberate expansive tree canopy, but when you go into next door [into] lower income, like the next neighborhood you can see, at the at the border of the city, the tree line stops."*

An article in *BBC News Mundo* reiterating the importance of greenspaces:

> *"...las zonas ricas en árboles y espacios verdes son notablemente más frescas que aquellas con gran densidad de viviendas, comercios o industrias. [...areas rich in trees and greenspace are notably cooler than those dense with housing, commerce, and industry.]"* (McGrath, 2021, para. 7).

The article also stated:

> *"Todo ese cemento y asfalto atrae y guarda más calor, por lo que tanto los días como las noches en grandes áreas urbanas son mucho más cálidos que las áreas circundantes. [All that cement and asphalt attracts and stores more heat, so both days and nights in large urban areas are much warmer than surrounding areas.]"* (McGrath, 2021, para. 5).

Limited greenspace and high concentrations of asphalt and cement contribute to heat islands in Hispanic or Latino communities. The author clarified that poverty alone does not explain this, but the history of racism and segregation can help explain this occurrence:

> *"Podemos rastrear muchas de estas desigualdades ambientales, socioeconómicas y de salud actuales hasta decisiones y políticas de planificación urbana en el siglo XX, como la política de demarcar con 'líneas rojas' los barrios considerados peligrosos para invertir en infraestructura o préstamos para vivienda", afirmó Jeremy Hoffman, científico jefe del Museo de Ciencias de Virginia, quien no participó en este nuevo estudio. ["We can trace many of these current environmental, socioeconomic, and health inequalities to urban planning decisions and policies in the 20th century, such as the policy of 'redlining' neighborhoods deemed dangerous for investment in infrastructure or housing loans," said Jeremy Hoffman, chief scientist at the Science Museum of Virginia, who was not involved in this new study.]"* (McGrath, para. 22)

In his account about tree canopies, Mr. Pacheco Bell also linked lack of shade to redlining:

> *"You have that problem, that lack of shade, and I can't help but mention that the lack of shade also is a legacy of redlining. Our communities were redlined and declared to be not worth investment, so when developers were developing them, they weren't putting in shade trees. This is a long legacy of redlining."*

Regarding Latino communities not worth investing in, a report on *Univision* (2022) detailed the story of a Latino community that felt that

government officials were not investing time or resources in making repairs to traffic infrastructure. In this case, the community took it upon themselves to make the repairs.

Gentrification and Displacement

During the environmental scan of literature, gentrification was mentioned as significantly affecting Hispanic or Latino communities. Accordingly, the research team ensured that the interviews consisted of questions related to gentrification. The thought leaders were asked about the definition of gentrification and the effects of gentrification on physical activity.

Definition

When asked for the definition of gentrification, thought leaders provided two parts to their definition: the change and consequence. The change referred to the transformation a neighborhood underwent, and the consequence was typically displacement. According to Dr. Marpillero-Colomina, gentrification can be defined as, "When a neighborhood transforms, and becomes economically and often also culturally unsustainable for the folks who already live there."

Mr. Vazquez shared a similar definition:

> *"An economic dynamic that happens that is going to change the opportunity for the people who live there to either stay or to be displaced. When you change the dynamic of that economic dynamic on housing values, the people who live there are going to be displaced because of that equation, whatever that is. But that has to happen, they're going to be displaced."*

In Mr. Pacheco Bell's definition, gentrification didn't always lead to displacement:

"Gentrification is the process of outside forces, oftentimes wealthy White and upwardly mobile, coming into a working-class community of color, moving in, buying up property and land, and transforming it into a no-longer working-class community of color… And some neighborhoods have fallen, and some are battlegrounds where the gentry are being pushed back through heavy militancy, oftentimes by LatinX, specifically Chicano, ChicanX folks here."

Instances of Latinos fighting against gentrification could be found in Los Angeles and Chicago (e.g., ABC 7 Chicago, 2021; Sager, 2017). Dr. Sandoval also commented that some Latino communities rich in culture were still able to hold onto some of their culture despite gentrification:

"The basic argument I'm making there is that these neighborhoods that are rich in terms of ethnic history and symbols, in terms of the art, murals and so forth actually have a better chance of…being able to withstand gentrification. Gentrification still happens, but in terms of the culture, the Latino culture is not totally decimated, something new comes out of it. It still has a flair of Latino culture."

Changes becomes conducive to physical activity

Thought leaders were asked about the effects of gentrification on physical activity. Some commented that the changes caused by gentrification were conducive to physical activity. Dr. Marquez, for example, stated the following:

"If the people coming in have more money, more resources, then I think that many times, like the city in different places, (residents think), "Oh, now these people with money are here so let's try to make the neighborhood nicer," or "Let's make the neighborhood nicer so that we can attract more people with money." And so, then that might mean more lighting, you know, maybe less crime, that kind of thing. And so it could increase physical activity in that way, especially like the daily physical activity that people do."

Dr. Murillo shared her impressions as a resident living in a city undergoing gentrification:

> *"In that neighborhood, there's been a lot of construction to make the streets less pot hole-y. We've seen it where the newer homes were built, you see the sidewalks being built with those homes. And so those changes have changed how physical activity is impacted."*

David further commented that the newcomers may also bring in a culture of healthy lifestyles:

> *"Now you see people in leggings and the sporty clothes running at night in that neighborhood…That is an interesting way to see that gentrification-education and physical activity could be good thing. Those who are arriving bring not only money, but also they bring this perception of [a] more healthy lifestyle."*

Gentrification leads to displacement and reduced physical activity among Hispanics or Latinos

All thought leaders highlighted the negative effects of gentrification on Hispanic or Latinos individuals and communities, including displacement and decreased physical activity. Dr. Becerra shared a story about attending a community meeting where Latino residents wanted bike paths but worried about the possible gentrification that may occur:

> *"With the increase in interest and demand for better bike paths and just access to public transportation, the question of like "Well, this sparked gentrification"…and so that brings the question of how green is green enough, but then also like why can't we have nice things?"*

When asked about how Latinos were impacted by gentrification, Dr. Marpillero-Colomina, for example, stated:

> *"If they're losing those gathering places, as like something like a barber shop or a beauty salon, they sort of feel disconnected from that part of the community. The other thing that can happen if a neighborhood is gentrifying in sections…that part of the neighborhood becomes perceived as being unfriendly. Particularly if folks are visibly racially not White, they may feel unwelcome, or [like] they're making people nervous."*

Dr. Marpillero-Colomina added:

> *"There's racism that often permeates in situations of gentrification because people have all kinds of racial barriers that they carry with them, and it affects the way they think on both sides. That impedes mobility, right, because you no longer feel welcome in part of your neighborhood. Then, essentially what happens is like that's not part of your neighborhood anymore. Your neighborhood starts becoming smaller."*

The loss of destinations could, thus, decrease mobility within the community. Additionally, with gentrification, Hispanics or Latinos may find themselves displaced to communities that are dependent on the automobile as explained by Dr. Sandoval:

> *"I would say that recently there's been all these issues around gentrification. A lot of those communities are being displaced to areas where the built environment is geared towards having an automobile, like suburbs or the edge of cities and so forth."*

Dr. Sandoval's comment suggests that suburbs may require Hispanics or Latinos to have an automobile. Marisol also shared a similar sentiment about suburban communities.

Finally, there is a concern that gentrifying communities are over-policed (Fayyad, 2017). Accordingly, Mr. Pacheco Bell stated:

"Gentrification makes it less comfortable for Latino folks to move through their neighborhoods. Newcomers may do this by harassing people, oftentimes bringing the police into the matter. They do this by making people feel uncomfortable about their own culture. They do this by accusing people of criminality when it's a complete lie, but they know that the police will respond to them, because they are oftentimes White and upwardly mobile and wealthy."

SAFETY

Another major barrier affecting Hispanics or Latinos' access to physical activity was safety. With safety, four major themes arose: *discrimination, crime, traffic safety,* and *police and immigration enforcement.*

Discrimination

The environmental scan of gray literature revealed several stories of Hispanics or Latinos facing discrimination while being active in their neighborhoods. One woman, for example, was harassed on her way home. She mentioned that her accent was the trigger (Noticias Telemundo, 2022). Another news story posted on YouTube discussed the case of Latino children being called racists names by a passerby while filming a movie for their after-school program (The Denver Channel, 2016).

Although thought leaders did not discuss specific incidences of discrimination, a few did mention how they changed their behavior to discourage acts of discrimination. Dr. Rojas-Rueda, for example, mentioned how he tried to imitate American culture:

"You don't dress up [when] you are doing physical activity, you put on sport clothes and headphones. I try to imitate the expectations from Americans, American culture, or White folks. If you don't do it in that way, they feel like probably you were a threat."

Marisol also shared a similar story of her experience running through a suburban neighborhood:

"I've thought about getting a running vest, like a running vest that says runner so that people are thinking "Why is there a POC [person of color] running through my neighborhood?" which is awful to think about..."

Crime

Another concern related to being physical active in Hispanic or Latino communities was that of crime. Mr. Pacheco Bell, for example, made reference to threats caused by gang violence. Accordingly, Dr. Becerra stated:

"Particularly with walking, if there's a lot of crime in the neighborhood, there's concerns about safety about gangs, or like crossing boundaries...[That's] a very legitimate valid safety issue for all ages really but mostly more focused on like teens."

In the case of the Chicago community in which Dr. Becerra lived and worked in, there were tensions created by the street gangs as stated in this dissertation excerpt:

"...the Latin Kings control the east side of Little Village, which is the most populated, while the Two-Six gang controls the west side of Little Village. Gary Elementary School marks the boundary between the rival gangs, and passage to the different parts of the community may result in harassment from the opposing gang." (Fernandez, 2015, p. 89)

Individuals mentioned that physical activity within the community was problematic especially when having to cross gang boundaries. One article on the Voice of OC website also shared a similar story about Latino residents feeling unsafe about being outdoors given the crime. A brother of a murdered teen stated:

"The community where my mom lives at, it's not the same anymore. The parents don't want to let their kids out." (Ellatar, 2022, para. 43)

Traffic Safety

Another issue affecting safety was traffic. In a study done in New Jersey, Black and Latino people's "single biggest obstacle to biking… was fear of a traffic collision" (Anderson, 2017, para. 6). During the interviews, thought leaders also expressed concern about traffic safety for bikers and walkers. Dr. Rojas-Ruedas, for example, stated:

> *"It's not like it's an easy choice to do…it's not safe because walking in many of the streets and cycling is not safe. City managers and authorities are very happy that we have bike lanes, but it's just a line drawn in the ground. This is not a bike lane; this is just a line painted in the ground. You don't see many folks using that or children's using that because they don't feel safe. This misconception of what a bike lane means makes it really difficult for many people to see them as a safe choice."*

However, some people use bikes as transportation for their jobs, including those making deliveries in an urban setting. According to Dr. Marpillero-Colomina:

> *"Folks who use the street as part of the way that they earn their income may not feeling safe there. Because they're spending more time on the street than other people, statistically, they're more likely to be hit by a car or suffer some injury that is related to the road. Even if a car is not involved, and the road is just in disrepair, and they flip over a pothole, that's more likely to happen to them."*

During his interview, Mr. Pacheco Bell also expressed concern with traffic safety:

> *"Cars running through red lights. Street takeovers, where people do a whole illegal auto show in the street. They're spinning out, and doing things that are extremely dangerous. Hit and runs are very, very common in Latino communities here. You have just a lot of people speeding through, blowing stop signs, blowing red lights."*

Policing and Immigration Enforcement

In addition to concerns with transportation and land use, the environmental scan of the gray literature unearthed multiple articles discussing police and immigration enforcement. As such, thought leaders were asked about this topic. There were two major themes that arose: *concerns with profiling* and *mixed feelings toward police.*

Concerns with profiling leads to spending time indoors

The environmental scan and interviews also revealed that Hispanics or Latinos are concerned with being profiled by police and immigration enforcement officers while being physically active outdoors. One participant termed this as racial and immigration profiling. An article on Salud America referenced previous research that discussed the following:

> *"Police are also more likely to stop and search Latinos than White people, even though White people are more likely to possess illegal material."* (McCormack, 2021, para. 16)

Regarding the fear that ICE instilled in the community, Mr. Pacheco Bell commented:

> *"ICE terrifies the neighbors. I saw it. It was a really difficult time for the communities I worked in. And when we worked in those teams, when we worked in a task force, it was even more scary, because some of them involved the police. Some of them look like they were ready for tactical war because of their gear. And we would have to explain to them, too, this is not ICE."*

Dr. Becerra also shared that she had witnessed raids in her community. Several stories about being detailed by immigration enforcement officers also came to light through the environmental scan. In one story, for example, a Defered Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) recipient (Javier Castillo Maradiaga) was detained for jaywalking in New York (Correal & Shanahan, 2021; Noticias Telemundo, 2021). Despite Castillo not having a criminal past, police turned him over to ICE despite local laws stating that the police department would not hand over individuals unless they had a

criminal or violent background (Noticias Telemundo, 2021). Castillo was detained for approximately 15 months where he "was locked up and flown between detention centers around the United States" (Correal & Shanahan, 2021, para. 2).

Thought leaders discussed that the concerns with profiling led Hispanic or Latino residents to fear for their safety, and some even remained indoors. For example, when asked how law enforcement affects safety in a community, Dr. Sandoval commented:

> *"I think it's kind of like the reverse than what it would be with White people. I don't think it increases the perception of safety; I think it really increases the perception that they're going to be targeted somehow..."*

David also mentioned the concerns with police:

> *"Some see the police and say, "Okay, this is good. There's a patrol, there's presence, and so I feel comfortable. I feel safe going out..." But others like – it's not a positive thing. It's just "Oh, they're just people who are going to harass us. You know, that are going to question me on why I'm running the neighborhood," or something like that."*

Dr. Becerra further mentioned that Hispanic or Latino residents avoided being outdoors for fear of possible deportation when raids are conducted in the community. Those who are citizens plan their outings thinking of their friends who are undocumented. The friends who are undocumented remain indoors, which potentially decreases the social supports needed to walk in the neighborhood.

Dr. Murillo also shared the story about one of her study participants where the participant commented that she "would not leave her house" when she first emigrated to the United States. The study participant "would stay in the apartment all day out of fear, right, fear being deported...And so with that, they have, you know, that fear of that even that police presence, and how that might impact physical activity."

Mixed feelings toward police

Another theme that became apparent during the interviews was that thought leaders held mixed feelings toward police. Ms. Yanez, for example, stated:

> *"Traditional law enforcement with badges and guns may not be the appropriate solution for all situations and problems that we have. But that's not to say that there is no role for law enforcement."*

Mr. Pacheco Bell further commented:

> *"It's a benefit in that, when you have clearly marked police vehicles that create lanes and escort kids to school, to and from, or to create ways for families to go to parks. You have fewer instances of speeding cars. You probably have a reduction in gang violence because there's this clear police presence. But at the same time these communities are over-policed. So having that police presence there for whatever benefits that it creates, it also can create intimidation. And you know, the sheriff's deputy that's escorting you to the park on one day, that could have been the guy that beat up your cousin the day before. So you have these tensions where it's good that the police presence is here to a certain degree, but at the same time the LatinX community has a lot of tension with the police, so they're not always wanted...I think people who have this like blind devotion and allegiance to the police function don't understand that these communities, they may not – They may not be comfortable with law enforcement. There needs to be not a kind of black and white binary way of looking at it...The police apparatus is not always a good thing."*

FACILITATORS TO PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

The environmental scan of gray literature and thought leader interviews revealed three major facilitators to physical activity for Hispanic or Latino communities: *community and national initiatives; community investments;* and *community engagement*. It is worthy to note that upon asking thought leaders about the facilitators to physical activity in Hispanic or Latino communities, many began discussing constraints to physical activity. In cases where thought leaders did mention facilitators to physical activity, contradictions and tensions were still discussed. To preserve the integrity of their responses, this section discusses the facilitators and their contradictions.

Community and National Initiatives

The environmental scan revealed several initiatives that could facilitate physical activity. Initiatives highlighted here include Complete Streets, Vision Zero, and Open Streets. Complete Streets, is an "approach to planning, designing, building, operating, and maintaining streets that enables safe access for all people who need to use them, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and transit riders of all ages and abilities" (Smart Growth America, n.d., para. 1). Vision Zero is focused on protecting the safety of all road users and recognizing that people of color, youth, older adults, and people who walk and bike are more vulnerable than their motorist counterparts (Butler, 2018). Open Streets refers to "programs that temporarily open streets to people by closing them to cars" (Open Streets Project, n.d.)

Thought leaders were asked about their impressions regarding these initiatives among others. Regarding Vision Zero, one thought leader stated:

> *"Here in Los Angeles, it's not been effective at all. In fact, rates have gotten worse. LA was built with the suburban commuter in mind, just creating infrastructure that facilitated the quickest efficient routes to downtown."*

The thought leader clarified that she believed that Vision Zero was not effective given that "there was not a great amount of understanding

amongst the folks running the program on how you do this work in low-income communities of color." Additionally, "the investment was so limited." Regarding initiatives, Dr. Sandoval also cautioned:

> *"Planners need a recipe to implement something, but it's not tackling any larger structural issues with the environment or inequality, or racism."*

Thought leaders did express more positive sentiments toward the Open Streets initiative. Mr. Pacheco Bell stated:

> *"What I'd like to see more often is a way to scale it up. We'll have to find a way to mitigate the ire of the business community that can sometimes be annoyed by it and residents if it goes to their streets. But it's a very good way to show that the public ground is something that can be enjoyed if we remove the automobile."*

Dr. Rojas-Rueda expressed that open street events in the United States should occur more often:

> *"This comes from Latin America. Unfortunately, the version of open streets in the United States is very poor. Some Latin American cities have open streets each Sunday and holidays. Here [it's] one or two Sundays per year..."*

Community Investment

During the interviews, thought leaders mentioned that investment in Hispanic or Latino communities would allow for more physical activity to occur. Dr. Murillo, for example, stated:

> *"I think just the basic built environment factors that we know, at the very minimum, are needed to help promote physical activity, such as parks, sidewalks, crosswalks. And then also safety, right?"*

Ms. Yanez's organization, for example, is a national nonprofit that focuses on the social determinants of health and the community factors that influence health outcomes, including parks and open space. They promote upstream solutions and systems and policy change at all levels. Dr. Rojas-Rueda also commented that land use

codes needed to change to "make destinations nearer to those communities or inside of those communities." He added that if he could, he would "make the whole city similar enough that everyone had the same infrastructure, the same benefits, the same accessibility."

Community investment could potentially come from different sources. For example, Ms. Yanez's agency's equity plan encourages:

> *"fiscal allocation formulas, including general funds, expenditure plans for public finance measures, competitive grant-making processes, etc."*

The equity plan also encourages the "allocation of funding and staff to conduct inclusive and relevant recreational programming and ensur[ing] maintenance of facilities." Additionally, President Biden's Build Back Better plan would use federal funds "to invest in infrastructure to fix transport routes around the country, such as bridges, highways, public transport, access to drinking water, as well as services such as high-speed internet and the electric power system" (Rayes, 2021, para. 7). Also, the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law was recently passed, which would provide funds for highways. Marisol mentioned a non-traditional source for allocating community investment. She provided the example of universities investing in infrastructure that makes the local community more walkable:

> *"Neighborhoods near universities tend to have the most resources...as a grad student at Michigan and at Ohio State, there was great public transportation. It was bike friendly; it felt safe. Drivers were not too crazy. There were also a lot of bike racks, so it also encouraged people to bike and be able to leave their bike outside of their work building or school. But again, that's like a university setting and that comes with a lot of privilege. People who can afford to attend college."*

And, in the case of Los Angeles, residents often take it upon themselves to build the infrastructure that is missing. In the community in which Mr. Pacheco Bell works, shade is a concern during the hot weather. As such, Mr. Pacheco Bell stated:

"One of the things that I've seen over the years is that, in true LatinX fashion, if you need to do it, you just do it. People would build informal shade structures, just like people would build informal housing."

Community Engagement

Finally, community engagement was discussed as being instrumental to ensuring that Hispanic or Latino communities have resources that are conducive to physical activity. A report by Salud America (2020) named community engagement as an important factor to address transportation equity. The report listed the following suggestions for those interested in engaging Hispanic or Latino communities:

- *"Partner with community organizations, leaders, activists, cultural brokers, and liaisons who understand the specific community.*
- *Seek to heal and re-build trust.*
- *Explore and empower the active transportation culture beyond street and community design by considering how to build human infrastructure and social capital.*
- *Include public health, legal, social work, environmental justice, law enforcement, hospital emergency departments, child welfare advocates, higher education, workforce development, and faith leaders.*
- *Discuss perceived safety and comfort, to include speeding drivers, dogs, shade canopy, law enforcement, harassment, and belongingness.*
- *Learn from Latinos' resilience and ingenuity.*
- *Enable and empower the Latino community to help plan, advertise, host, facilitate, and record engagement events, and to maintain ongoing conversations between community members and planners and elected officials."* (p. 12)

In Mr. Pacheco Bell's case, community members "didn't know where to go for help outside of government," so often they turned to community-based organizations for guidance. Dr. Sandoval also expressed a similar sentiment:

"A lot of it is like working with community-based organizations so they could come up with their own solutions, because they're very connected and so forth in those things."

Mr. Vazquez added:

"Yeah, definitely, there has to be organized community engagement. When neighbors know each other, communities can operate better, and when communities are organized, they can have the power to bring programs to their streets. If they know how to work with the system, you know how to go to city council meetings or board of supervisors and advocate for what their needs are. When you have community-based organizations that can help people connect and to speak up for policy change, that's a key ingredient."

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this project was to answer two questions: (1) *What are the barriers to physical activity for Hispanic or Latino communities?;* (2) *What are the facilitators of physical activity for Hispanic or Latino persons and/or communities?* The thought leader interviews and the environmental scan of the gray literature allowed for an in-depth examination on the topic and revealed a nuanced understanding of Hispanic or Latino communities. This report proposes PSE approaches related to activity-friendly routes to everyday destinations that can improve equitable and inclusive access to physical activity for Hispanic or Latino communities.

Upon asking thought leaders about the challenges affecting Hispanics or Latinos' ability to engage in physical activity, four major themes arose: *land use policies; infrastructure; gentrification and displacement;* and *safety.*

Land use policies included redlining, blockbusting, and the creation of the freeway and highway system. Redlining was a government sanctioned program that fostered residential segregation. Although the program has ended, the effects can still be felt. Contemporary research, for example, has begun to acknowledge the association of redlining with negative health outcomes. Nardone et al. (2020) found that residents who lived in historically redlined areas were approximately two times more likely to have negative health outcomes versus residents living in non-redlined areas. Lynch et al. (2020) found a similar pattern where redlining was associated with negative physical and mental health outcomes in Milwaukee. The discussion on land use policies highlights the importance of considering the historical and contemporary structural inequities affecting Hispanic or Latino communities.

Blockbusting refers to a "real estate practice in which brokers encourage owners to list their homes for sale by exploiting fears of racial change within their neighborhood" (Pearson vs. Edgar, 1997). This practice was associated with speculators typically purchasing homes from Whites for a reduced rate and inflating prices

for people of color. Community investments followed Whites into suburban neighborhoods. Although there are present-day instances of Whites moving into communities of color, such as the case of gentrification, a press release by the American Psychological Association (2021) asserted that:

> *As the population of people of color grows across the United States, White Americans are still prone to move when neighborhoods diversify, and their fears and stereotypical beliefs about other racial and ethnic groups may help maintain segregation.* (para. 1)

The press release referenced an article written by Zou and Cheryan (2022), which found that the increased "presence of Arab Americans, Latinos, and Asian Americans" posed a "foreign cultural threat" to White Americans. According to the authors, the foreign cultural threat "predicted Whites' desires to move out" from their neighborhoods. Kye (2018) found similar findings.

The topic of freeways and highways supports previous research which links their construction with the displacement of Hispanic or Latino residents (Avila, 2014). Some scholars have also posed freeway- and highway-related issues as environmental injustices (e.g., Bullard, 1993; Grineski et al., 2013) given the threats to health. Grineski et al. (2013), for example, discussed how these roads are used by many vehicles, which increase air pollution. In turn, the air pollution increases cancer risks for certain Hispanic or Latino groups. The recent Justice40 Initiative "has made it a goal that 40 percent of the overall benefits of certain Federal investments flow to disadvantaged communities that are marginalized, underserved, and overburdened by pollution (The White House, 2022, para. 1). Future research can evaluate the impacts of the Justice40 Initiative on remediating the historical and ongoing impacts of freeways and highways on Hispanic or Latino communities.

Findings from the interviews and environmental scan also support previous research that discusses the infrastructure in Hispanic or Latino communities (e.g., Fields et al., 2013; Stodolska & Shinew, 2010).

There is limited research linking infrastructure to redlining and residential segregation. However, redlined neighborhoods were by design built to have less access to resources. Although redlining has been banned, communities of color continue to experience discrimination in the housing sector (Loya, 2022; Oliveri, 2009). This may place them in neighborhoods lacking access to resources conducive to physical activity. For Hispanics or Latinos living in low-income households, economic deprivation may also contribute to whether they can move to neighborhoods with resources conducive to physical activity.

Further, the topic of gentrification offered new insights into the definition of the concept. Although some define gentrification as a renewal of the community, all thought leaders discussed displacement in their definitions. This project's findings suggest that gentrification leads to displacement and reduces physical activity among Hispanics or Latinos. Reduced physical activity occurs due to the loss of destination sites and feeling uncomfortable in one's neighborhood as newcomers migrate into the community. Such findings support previous research related to gentrification (Harris et al., 2020). In their study, Harris et al. (2020) found that tensions arose between newcomers and Puerto Rican youth in a gentrifying Chicago community. Harris et al. mentioned that White newcomers would call the police upon seeing Latinx youth in a newly-constructed public greenway. Police would often ask the youth to leave the greenway. In such cases, physical activity could decrease given that youth are asked to leave a site, and given the experience, they may not feel comfortable returning to engage in physical activity.

In addition to concerns with transportation and land use, the environmental scan and interviews highlighted the issue of policing and immigration enforcement as linked to feelings of safety. Previous research has acknowledged that Hispanic or Latino people may have distrust toward government officials, including police and immigration enforcement (Arnold, 2007; Munier et al., 2015; Mucchetti, 2005). Some of this distrust stems from the fear of being profiled (Mucchetti, 2005). This was discussed by the thought leaders. Yet, more research can examine the collaboration of police with community residents to keep Hispanic or Latino neighborhoods safe.

This is important given that thought leaders also acknowledged that crime could discourage some Hispanic or Latino residents from engaging in physical activity. This has been reported in the literature. For example, Stodolska (2011) found that children in a Chicago neighborhood had "witnessed people being assaulted and killed, gang shootings, fights, carjackings, and drug use in the area" (p. 2). Consequently, middle- and high-school students did not feel safe walking to school. Although police may play a role in keeping Hispanic or Latino communities safe, Weitzer (2013) stated that there is limited research that discusses the police-citizen relationship among Hispanics or Latinos, as most of this work focuses on White and Black communities.

Policy, Systems, and Environmental (PSE) Approaches

The public health sector plays an important role in increasing levels of physical activity in communities across the United States. This sector includes a variety of professionals—such as public health practitioners, health scientists, health policy advisors, communications specialists, program coordinators, and researchers—working in local, state, and federal government agencies and nongovernmental organizations. The findings in this project have important implications for public health workers promoting physical activity among Hispanic or Latino communities. This report provides possible community-wide PSE approaches that can be adopted to address pervasive, systemic inequities in Hispanic or Latino communities. Doing so can ensure that Hispanic or Latino residents live in communities where healthy choices are the easy "and most frequently selected" choice (Kegler et al., 2015). The PSE approaches proposed in this report will focus on the following categories: *Research; Education;* and *Building Community Partnerships and Coalitions.*

(1) Conduct research to determine barriers and facilitators of physical activity and activity-friendly communities among Hispanics or Latinos.

- **Conduct research to understand the consequences of land use policies on Hispanic or Latino people's health behaviors and outcomes.** Although more studies have begun to document the health impacts of land use policies, such as residential redlining and installment of freeways and highways near Hispanic or Latino communities, the extent of the health consequences remain unknown. More research could clearly define the health problems attributed to these historical policies and initiatives.
- **Identify specific geographic areas within Hispanic or Latino neighborhoods experiencing the most disparities in physical activity.** Data, such as most used walking paths and bike paths, will allow the community to prioritize projects to benefit the more Hispanic or Latino residents. In rural communities, this information is vital in order to increase connectivity between different destination sites. Assessing major roadways will also highlight whether crosswalks and bus stops need to be installed. Further, Grineski et al. (2013)'s study showcased on Cubans and Columbians were more at risk to "adverse health risks from traffic pollution" than their Mexican counterparts. Conducting environmental scans to identify specific geographic areas within Hispanic or Latino neighborhoods may help public health workers better understand the heterogeneity among this group and the impacts on health.
- **Implement and evaluate community initiatives designed to promote physical activity among Hispanic or Latino communities.** Thought leaders appeared to show the most support for the Open Streets initiative. Most expressed the desire to have Open Streets offered on a more continuous basis. Implementing and evaluating Open Streets programs in Hispanic or Latino communities may produce empirical findings showcasing the increased physical activity rates associated with this program. Empirical findings demonstrating the effectiveness of Open Streets may lead to increased buy-in and support from the Hispanic or Latino community.

(2) Educate people about the barriers, facilitators, and benefits of physical activity and connect Hispanic or Latino people to resources that can help them increase their activity levels.

- Educate educate transportation and land use professionals and other associated professionals about the impacts of historical land use polices and infrastructure on the health behaviors and outcomes of Hispanic or Latino people. Although more research needs to be conducted on the topic, there is a need to educate individuals on the preliminary data linking land use policies to physical activity rates. Such information may support the research discussing the effects of place on physical activity. This information is useful for transportation and land use professionals, who work to improve community designs.
- **Summarize and share findings about what community initiatives work to increase and sustain physical activity among Hispanic or Latino communities.** Although there is evidence that initiatives such as Complete Streets, Safe Routes to School, and Vision Zero are effective, thought leader interviews suggested that Hispanic or Latino residents and communities may not be aware of these findings. Media campaigns discussing the effectiveness of such initiatives may lead to increased buy-in and support from the community.
- **Disseminate information on bicycle regulations to ease fears among Hispanic or Latino people.** During the interviews, thought leaders reported that Hispanic or Latino residents hesitate to bike given that they lack awareness of bicycle laws. There is a need to raise awareness of these laws. Regulations should be made available in English and Spanish and could be distributed in spaces, such as clinics, libraries, schools, restaurants, laundromats, churches, and so forth. Signage with bicycle laws can be posted in parks and recreational sites.

(3) Promote policies, programs, and community designs that support inclusive, safe, and accessible places for Hispanic or Latino people to be physically active.

- **Collaborate with other sectors to support joint-use agreements that increase the availability of safe and accessible community locations and programs that support physical activity.** Joint-use agreements may increase the availability of destination sites when space or funds are limited. Hispanic or Latino communities with limited access to park and recreational sites, for example, may enter a joint-use agreement with local schools or churches

to use their facilities, fields, or playgrounds when classes are not in session. Joint-use agreements may need financial support to initiate and sustain the agreement. Public health workers can also help increase awareness of facilities that are available to Hispanic or Latino people.

- **Promote the availability of safe and accessible community locations and programs that support physical activity.** Similar to the Park Prescription Program, public health workers can promote safe community locations and programs that support physical activity. This is important in cases where Hispanic or Latino communities lack safe or have inaccessible public park spaces. It may be that Hispanic or Latino people may be using alternative sites that they me be using. This is also important if joint-use agreements are set in place.
- **Provide technical assistance to Hispanic or Latino communities as they put strategies in place to increase physical activity.** Hispanic or Latinos are more likely to live in previously redlined communities than any other racial group (Perry & Harshbarger, 2019). This potentially places them in communities that lack access to many resources, including a limited social network to professionals who may provide technical assistance to put strategies in place to increase physical activity. Hispanic or Latino communities may need help with grant writing, navigating municipal government offices to ask for increased community resources that are conducive to physical activity, and so forth. Public health workers may be able to provide this form of social capital to the community.

Community Engagement is Key

PSE approaches to improve health equity and justice may not be successful without community buy-in and engagement. According to Williamson (2022), "Deliberately making communities a part of the entire process from start to solution not only allows for greater connection but also for the identification of practices that are grounded, relevant, and potentially more sustainable in the long term." Following an environmental justice lens, community engagement efforts may incorporate recognition, procedural, distributive, and interactional justice as described below.

Recognition Justice

Hispanic or Latino residents play an important role in identifying and addressing constraints that have impacted physical activity among their communities, within the United States. Their presence, participation, and leadership in planning and decision-making processes is critical, but often, limited.One reason may be related to recognition justice, which refers to the need for recognition and respect. When attending planning and decision-making forums, Hispanic or Latino communities need to be understood and their "culture, values, and situations" need to be respected (Fernandez et al., 2021). Those involved in the planning and decision-making processes affecting Hispanics or Latinos must have an understanding of the groups' "historical and ongoing challenges with colonization, limited political clout, and general subordinate position in society" (Fernandez et al., 2021). While Hispanic or Latino residents may have first-hand experiences, not all transportation, land use, and public health professionals or researchers may possess such understanding. In these cases, professionals could work with experts within Hispanic or Latino communities, consulting firms known for their work in Hispanic or Latino communities, and academics, among others (Zheng, 2019). At minimum, for those working with issues related to transportation, land use, and public health, the training content that may be helpful includes:

- **General Background Information** - Hispanic or Latino people are not a homogenous group. There are many differences in nationalities, immigration and citizenship status, socioeconomic status, and ages, among others. According to Perry and Harshbarger (2019), Hispanic or Latinos are more likely to live in previously redlined communities. This potentially places them in communities that lack access to resources that are conducive to physical activity. Hispanic or Latino people have also continued to experience racism in other parts of their lives, which has impacted health outcomes.
- **Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA) Training** - There are several DEIA trainings available, which may change as more research and best practices become available. One popular training that can benefit transportation, land use, and public health professionals is implicit bias training. Implicit bias refers to "the attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions, and decisions in an unconscious manner" (Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity, 2012; para. 2). Although individuals may not consider themselves racist or prejudiced against Hispanic or Latinos, they may be exhibiting covert behavior that may reproduce inequities against the group. Such biases may manifest through attitudes and behaviors that may need to be addressed before engaging with Hispanic or Latino communities. Other trainings that are commonly used include cultural competence and cultural humility training.

Procedural Justice

To achieve procedural justice, it is important for Hispanic or Latino communities to be "given an adequate and fair say in policies and procedures directly associated with planning, integration, and trajectory" (Fernandez et al., 2021). Many of the proposed PSE approaches include Hispanic or Latino residents' input and engagement.

To ensure that Hispanic and Latino people engage in decision-making processes affecting the Routes to Destination Strategy, transportation, land use, and public health officials could engage in trust-building strategies:

- **Partnering with diverse organizations** - According to Rowel et al. (2012), mistrust in the government may lead to groups relying on their own social networks. In cases where Hispanic or Latinos show a preference for their own social networks, then the engagement process must incorporate local community leaders and/or local grassroots nonprofit organizations (Rowel et al., 2012). In the past, local leaders and organizations have been instrumental in educating the community about the process for advocating for more resources. It is important to partner with diverse organizations because a community is not homogenous, and each organization may be working with different segments of the community, which hold varied opinions, values, and attitudes.
- **Trust and long-term commitment** - Communities of color, including Hispanic or Latino communities, may have distrust toward government officials, including public health workers, law enforcement, and so forth (Arnold, 2007; Munier et al., 2015; Mucchetti, 2005; Rhodes et al., 2014). Trust building will need to

take place, and when Hispanic or Latino people begin working with governmental, planning, or public health officials, they may need reassurance that the partnership(s) be long-lasting (Moreno et al., 2009). This is important given that many challenges within Hispanic or Latino communities cannot be addressed over a short period of time.

- **Intergenerational approach** - Those working with Hispanic or Latino communities could plan to use a family-based intergenerational approach to community engagement (Fernandez & Becerra, 2020). This means that various generations within families (e.g., grandparents, parents, children) may participate in community forums. Material, activities, and discussion may engage all age levels as members within a family may experience different challenges to physical activity.
- **Balance Privilege between Dominant and non-Dominant Groups.** During community forums, it is vital for the organizers to examine how the discussions might favor dominant groups. For example, a small portion of Hispanic or Latino residents may be undocumented, and it is important for those working with these communities to be mindful of how documentation status impacts community engagement. Also, some community advisory boards may require people to prove that they are residents of the local jurisdiction. If this requires that individuals provide proof of citizenship, then there will likely be decreased participation by those who are undocumented. Another example of community discussions favoring the dominant group is discussed by Fernandez et al., (2021). The authors used storytelling to explore how Latino residents might feel unheard and invalidated while voicing their concerns at community meetings, either by being talked over or by their concerns being minimized. Finally, community forums that wish to incorporate Hispanics or Latinos into the discussion could be made accessible by having Spanish content and interpreters readily available.

Distributive Justice

Distributive justice refers to having equitable access to resources. In this project, many of the thought leaders expressed the need of economically investing in communities to develop or upgrade infrastructure that is conducive to physical activity. Recent conversations have focused on reparations in city and urban planning. According to Ramirez, reparations in planning entails the following:

- Low income and BIPOC [Black, Indigenous, and People of Color] communities have been disinvested for decades. Reparations mean prioritizing these communities specifically. It should be logical to identify the streets that have been ignored, but the reality is that these communities fall between the cracks year in and year out. If planners are serious about modernizing cities' infrastructure, then that means balancing historical wrongs first and foremost. (Jauregui, 2020, para. 6)

As previously mentioned in the findings, financial investments in Hispanic or Latino communities may come from different sources, including a city's general funds, grants, federal money, or organizations within a community. Working to ensure that Hispanic or Latino communities have equitable access to resources that are conducive to physical activity will also help to gain trust with the community and is an example of clear benefits for the community.

Interactional Justice

Interactional justice refers to ensuring individuals feel safe and welcome in a given space. This may be difficult to achieve if gentrification is occurring. In these cases, Hispanics or Latinos may begin to feel unwelcome in their own community by the newcomers, who may rely on citizen-based policing. Additionally, through the accounts, it appeared that some Hispanic or Latino individuals felt unsafe in the presence of law enforcement. This demonstrates how physical activity is impacted by multi-sector laws, policies, and practices. Extensive community engagement may facilitate trust with Hispanic or Latino residents, including those who are undocumented.

Limitations

While the findings yielded unique and nuanced insights, the project has several limitations. First, interviews with thought leaders included a small sample, which is not representative of all Hispanic or Latino experiences. For example, this project does not account for the experiences of those living and working in rural communities. Research has shown that the needs of rural communities differ from the urban context, and future research may address this unique context. Second, this work is on-going, and the findings presented in this paper are the result of a rapid identification of themes (Holdsworth et al., 2020; Vindrola-Padros & Johnson, 2020). This technique has been used to reduce time and costs. Yet, this project is ongoing and a more in-depth approach to data analysis will be conducted, which may identify additional themes and improve trustworthiness of the data.

Third, the interview data may have been impacted by the interviewer. The Latina interviewer conducts research focused on environmental park injustices affecting Latinx urban communities. During some of the interviews, it appeared that some of the interviewees may have read the interviewer's work profile, and they tailored their discussion on the interviewer's work. Fourth, although we considered inserting interview questions related to COVID-19, these were not asked because it may have greatly extended the duration of the interview. Future studies may account for the changes that occurred during the pandemic that have become permanent fixtures in Hispanic or Latino communities.

Finally, several challenges arose during the environmental scan of gray literature. During the Spanish scan of the content, it was unclear whether the internet browsers had automatically translated English content into Spanish given that the search terms were inserted into Spanish. For example, the webpage containing President Biden's Bipartisan Infrastructure Law was displayed in Spanish after using Spanish search although the content is displayed in English after using English search terms. Nevertheless, the files containing articles in English and Spanish did not contain overlapping content. Challenges also occurred with the scanning software that was used.

For example, the output file contained social media posts, but upon examining the information about the poster, it was difficult to determine whether the creators were Hispanic or Latino. Some of the content was also not directly related to the topic at hand, and it was unclear how the software selected the content. Despite the limitations, the findings illuminate implications for Hispanic or Latino communities.

Future Directions

The findings yielded unique insights that can be further explored. First, Hispanic or Latinos are a heterogenous group composed of different nationalities, socioeconomic statuses, age, gender, among other identity markers. Future projects will benefit from using an intersectional lens. Challenges affecting women, youth, and people with disabilities were briefly mentioned in this project, but future projects could examine how these identities (and their interaction) impact physical activity.

Second, in 2002, the Pew Institute reported that 90% of Hispanics or Latinos lived in urban cities. This group was also more likely to live along the southwest border. Since then, different destination sites have been noted, including rural communities. Future projects could examine the perspectives of Hispanic or Latino thought leaders living and/or working in rural communities. Destinations in such communities tend to be spread out over a larger geographical distance, making mobility difficult. Rural communities also lack needed infrastructure, such as sidewalks and bus stops, which can also negatively impact mobility.

Third, more research could examine the effects of gentrification on Hispanic or Latinos' health behaviors and possible anti-displacement strategies. Displaced families may face homelessness or need to relocate to a community where the environment is not conducive to physical activity. Although some communities have worked on preventing displacement, education on anti-displacement strategies may be beneficial.

Conclusion

The PSE approaches presented in this report contribute to the goals of *Healthy People 2030* and aim to achieve health equity and justice in Hispanic or Latino communities by addressing historical and contemporary racial inequities that have impacted physical activity. Doing so can decrease health disparities and improve the overall health of this group.

As seen in this project, physical activity is impacted by multi-sector laws, policies, and practices. It is vital to those working or living in Hispanic or Latino communities join the movement to make Hispanic or Latino communities better.

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APPENDIX A

Thought leaders and organizations:

NAME	TITLE	ORGANIZATIONS
Dr. Alex Ortega	Professor and Director	Center for Population Health and Community Impact at Drexel University in Philadelphia
Alfred Frajio, Jr.	Lawyer	Real Estate, Land Use and Natural Resources Group
Dr. Alvaro Huerta	Associate Professor	Urban & Region Planning (URP) and Ethnic & Women's Studies (EWS) at California State Polytechnic University
Dr. Amelie G. Ramirez	Professor and Director	Institute for Health Promotion Research
	Department Chair	Department of Population Health Sciences at UT Health San Antonio
	Associate Director	Cancer Outreach and Engagement at Mays Cancer Center at UT Health San Antonio
Andrea Marpillero-Colomina	PhD	Clean Transportation Advocate for GreenLatinos
Dr. Armando De Alba Rosales	Assistant Professor	Department of Health Promotion, College of Public Health @ University of Nebraska
Dr. Armando Mejia	Lecturer	Department of Sociology at California State Long Beach
Carlos Martin	Senior Fellow	Urban Institute
Dr. Clara Irazabal	Director	The Urban Studies and Planning Program
	Professor	Urban Planning in the School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation at University of Maryland, College Park, MD
Dr. Daniela Sotres-Alvarez	Associate Professor	Department of Biostatistics, Gillings School of Global Public Health @ UNC
Dr. David X. Marquez	Associate Professor	Kinesiology and Nutrition, University of Illinois Chicago
Dr. Deborah J. Chavez	Program Manager	Urban Ecosystems and Social Dynamics Program in USDA Forest Service
Dr. Deborah Parra-Medina	Professor	Mexican American and Latina/o Studies at the University of Texas
Dr. Devon Peña	Professor	American Ethnic Studies and Anthropology at University of Washington
Diana Hernández	Associate Professor	Sociomedical Sciences at Columbia University's Mailman School of Public Health
Dr. Edna Ely-Ledesma	Assistant Professor	Department of Planning and Landscape Architecture at the University of Wisconsin-Madison

NAME	TITLE	ORGANIZATIONS
Dr. Eduardo Esteban Bustamante	Assistant Professor	Kinesiology and Nutrition - University of Illinois
Elizabeth Yeampierre	Co-chair	Climate Justice Alliance and Executive Director of UPROSE
Dr. Elva M. Arredondo	Professor	Public Health at San Diego State University
	Core Investigator	Institute for Behavioral and Community Health (IBACH)
Elva Yanez	Senior Advisor	Parks, Land Use and the Built Environment at Prevention Institute
Dr. Erualdo Gonzalez	Professor	Department of Chicana and Chicano Studies at California State University, Fullerton
Dr. Francisco Soto Mas	Associate Professor	College of Population Health at UNM
Dr. Gabriel Amaro	Interdisciplinary Survey Statistician	US Census Bureau
Dr. Gerard Sandoval	Associate Professor	University of Oregon College of Design School of Planning, Public Policy, and Management
Gustavo Arellano	Reporter	Los Angeles Times
Dr. Ivis Garcia Zambrana	Assistant Professor	City of Metropolitan Planning, University of Utah
James Rojas	Urban Planner, Community Activist, Artist	N/A
Jennifer L. Hernandez	Partner	Holland & Knight
Dr. Jesus J. Lara	Professor	Knowlton School's City and Regional Planning Section at The Ohio State University
Dr. Jesus M. Barajas	Assistant Professor	Environmental Science and Policy at UC Davis
	Affiliated Faculty	UC Davis Institute of Transportation Studies
Dr. John Arroyo	Assistant Professor	Engaging Diverse Communities
	Director	Pacific Northwest Just Futures Institute for Racial and Climate Justice at the University of Oregon
Jose Gonzalez	Founder	Latino Outdoors
Dr. Juan De Lara	Associate Professor	Department of American Studies & Ethnicity at the University of Southern California
	Director	Latinx and Latin American Studies Center

NAME	TITLE	ORGANIZATIONS
Dr. Krista M. Perreira	Professor	Social Medicine at UNC School of Medicine
Dr. Leonardo Vasquez	Head of Three Centers	Rutgers University's of Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Policy
Dr. Lissette Piedra	Associate Professor	School of Social Work at UIUC
Dr. Lorena Munoz	Director	Ethnic & Race Studies
	Associate Dean	Inclusion, Equity & Engagement at California Lutheran University
Luz Colon	Executive Director	Governor's Advisory Commission on Latino Affairs
Lynda Lopez	Advocacy Manager	Active Transportation Alliance
	Co-Chair	The Transportation Equity Network
Dr. Manuel Pastor	Distinguished Professor	Sociology and American Studies & Ethnicity
	Director	USC Dornsife Equity Research Institute at USC Dornsife
Dr. Maria Argos	Interim Associate Dean	Global Health
	Professor	University of Illinois Chicago
Dr. Marisol Becerra	Assistant Professor	Public Administration and Public Policy at University of Illinois Chicago
Dr. Melissa Chinchilla	Research Scientist	AltaMed
Dr. Michael Mendez	Assistant Professor	School of Social Ecology in the Department of Urban Planning and Public Policy at University of California Irvine
Dr. Miriam Solis	Assistant Professor	Community and Regional Planning at the University of Texas at Austin
Dr. Natalicio Serrano	Postdoctoral Fellow	Cancer Education and Career Development Program at the University of Illinois at Chicago's Institute for Health Research and Policy
Dr. Norma E. Olvera	Faculty	Health and Human Performance Department at University of Houston
Dr. Pinderhughes	Chair	Urban Studies and Planning Department at San Francisco State University

NAME	TITLE	ORGANIZATIONS
Dr. Priscilla M. Vasquez	Associate Professor	Department of Kinesiology and Nutrition at University of Illinois at Chicago
Dr. Rachel Morello-Frosch	Professor Department	Environmental Science, Policy and Management at University of California - Berkeley
Dr. Ramon A. Durazo-Arvizu	Professor	Research Pediatrics at Keck School of Medicine at USC
Rey Leon	Mayor	Huron, CA
Dr. Rosenda Murillo	Associate Professor	Department of Psychological, Health & Learning Sciences at University of Houston
Dr. Ruth Enid Zambrana	Distinguished University Professor	Harriet Tubman Department of Women, Gender and Sexuality Studies
	Director	Consortium on Race, Gender and Ethnicity
	Affiliate Professor	Family Medicine at the University of Maryland, Baltimore, and School of Medicine
Samantha Maldonado	Multimedia Journalist	The City
Sarah Sieloff	Senior Planner	Maul Foster & Alongi, Inc
Sergio Garcia	Senior C-Suite Executive and Attorney	Garcia Strategic Advisors, LLC
Dr. Sheila F. Castaneda	Adjunct Associate Professor	Division of Health Promotion and Behavioral Science at San Diego State University
Dr. Susan Aguiñaga	Assistant Professor	Department of Kinesiology and Community Health at University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign
Dr. Tanya Benitez	Assistant Professor	Behavioral and Social Sciences at Brown University
Dr. Victoria Sanchez	Associate Professor	College of Population Health (COPH) at University of New Mexico

APPENDIX B

Hi, I'd like to take the time to thank you for making time for me. Your answers will help make changes in communities across the US.

As with other interviews, during this interview I will ask you questions. There are no right or wrong answers; we are interested in your unique experiences.

You can skip any questions you'd like, and you can stop at any moment. I will also record the session in Zoom, although I will not share the recording with anyone. This is just so we can make sure to capture your words accurately and go back to the recording if we need to.

We generally won't share your name or any identifying information when we write up the reports. However, given your presence in writing about and working in this area, would it be okay to use your name in the CDC report?

Do you have any questions?

Interview Protocol

Career Path
The first section will focus on you.

C1. First off, I want to make sure I get the right terminology. Although we used the terms Hispanic or Latino in the email, I want to know what term you use to identify yourself?

C1a. Which pronouns do you use?

C2. What is your job title? How long have you been working in issues related to

_____?

C3. During your career, have you noticed any changes in the way Hispanic or Latinos engage in physical activity or move through their communities, including using different transportation modes, walking, biking, and so forth?

Community/Neighborhood
The next section of the interview will focus on ___Hispanic/Latino/_____ communities.

CN1: In ___Hispanic/Latino/_____ communities, what factors make it easier for ___Hispanic/Latino/_____ residents to engage in physical activity or travel through their communities?

CN2: What are the biggest challenges in ___Hispanic/Latino/_____ communities that make physical activity or travel harder for ___Hispanic/Latino/_____ residents?

CN3: What factors should all Latinx neighborhoods have to ensure residents are physically active and/or able to move through their communities using different transportation modes?

CN4: When thinking of the city in which you work in, which neighborhoods are more likely to have resources that encourage physical activity?

- CN4b: Why do you think that is?

CN5: Are you familiar with the term gentrification?

- C6a If yes, How would you define the term?

**If displacement is discussed in the definition, proceed as follows. If displacement is not mentioned, then probe about how displacement is connected to gentrification.

- CN6b: How does gentrification impact the physical activity of residents in the communities that you work with or study?

**If displacement is discussed, proceed as follows. If displacement is not mentioned, then probe about how displacement impacts physical activity.

Probe about cultural displacement. We have heard from others that communities experience cultural displacement, which can be seen by erasing murals, have new businesses, etc. How does cultural displacement impact the community in which you work with?

- CN6c: What other factors, beside physical activity, are impacted by gentrification?

- CN6d: What strategies are being used to tackle anti-displacement associated with gentrification in the communities that you work with or study?

Routes to Destinations, Plans and Policies

As part of the project, we were wondering if participants were familiar with the following initiatives:

_____ Complete Streets
_____ Open Streets
_____ Vision Zero
_____ Comprehensive/master plans
_____ Safe Routes to School
_____ Single-family zoning
_____ Accessory dwelling units

RD1: How effective do you think the initiatives have been in improving residents' abilities to move through their communities by using transportation routes, walking, biking, and so forth.

RD2: What factors do you believe are not being considered (if any) as it relates to Latinx communities?

RD3: When thinking about the initiatives that have been used, what are different ways these strategies can be improved?

RD4: What challenges do you foresee moving forward with implementing these strategies in Latinx communities in rural areas?

- The suburbs?
- Lower-income communities?

Constraints Found in Latinx Communities

Law Enforcement

LE1: How does law enforcement impact active living in ___Hispanic/Latino/_____ neighborhoods?

LE2: How does law enforcement in a community impact Latinx residents' perception of safety and desire to be active outdoors?

LE3: What population do you believe law enforcement patrol impacts the most?

LE4:What strategies do you believe could be implemented to foster a better understanding between law enforcement and community members?

Immigration
IM: How does immigration (ICE) impact active living in __Hispanic/Latino/__ neighborhoods?

Safety

PS1: What safety concerns impact __Hispanic/Latino/__ residents' ability to engage in physical activity?

PS2: What are the challenges you see to ensuring safe movement within Latinx communities?

PS3:As more technology/modes of transportation (e.g., scooters) become integrated into urban spaces, what strategies do you believe are critical to ensure __Hispanic/Latino/__ residents' personal safety?

PS5: How Their Enforcement, Personal and Traffic Safety Concerns Differ from White
Counterparts

- When thinking about law enforcement, immigration services, and personal safety, to what extent do you think these factors also impact non-Hispanics/Latinos?

Institutional and Systemic Racism

IS1: How does historic and continued institutional and systemic racism hinder physical activity in Latinx communities?

Recommendations

R1: If you had unlimited resources, what would you do to improve the communities in which Latinx residents live?

APPENDIX C

Transcript #1

Mariela Fernandez: What is your job title?

Andrea Marpillero-Colomina: My job title is Sustainable Communities Program Director at Green Latinos.

Mariela Fernandez: How long have you been working on issues related to infrastructure, policy and place?

Andrea Marpillero-Colomina: That sounds like a familiar phrase. About a decade, so I would say at this point, like 13 years, because I got my master's in urban planning. I graduated in 2009, so since then.

Mariela Fernandez: How long have you been with your current organization?

Andrea Marpillero-Colomina: I've been with Green Latinos since July of 2020.

Mariela Fernandez: Okay, now the next question is during your career, have you noticed any changes in the way Hispanic residents move through their communities, so this involves using different transportation methods like walking, biking, driving, and so forth?

Andrea Marpillero-Colomina: Sure. Well, I've mostly worked in New York, and here the transportation modes are diverse for everybody, including for Hispanics and Latinos, and I would say the big mode change has come with that pandemic. I've seen folks that previously were using public transportation, I would say in New York, particularly the subway, have sought alternate modes. I think to feel safer.

Mariela Fernandez: Okay, and we'll revisit that idea, but the next questions relate to the Hispanic communities. When thinking about Hispanic communities, what factors make it easier for Hispanic residents to engage in physical activity?

Andrea Marpillero-Colomina: What factors make it easier? I mean, I would say there's certainly some elements of Hispanic culture that are more active life oriented. For example, in New York, you know in Hispanic and Latino neighborhoods there are often informal soccer leagues, and so you'll see a lot of people engaged in, you know, adults playing soccer, which I think is kind of an anomaly with many other communities. The other thing that I think sort of can be a catalyst for physical activity is just having access to public recreational resources. So that's an if, right, rather than a, they do because they can - They will if there's access to those resources, so I don't, you know I would say, demographically there's nothing that really sets that population apart.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah, what does the access look like for the Hispanic community where you work in?

Andrea Marpillero-Colomina: I would say access looks, can look like, having recreational facilities that meet their needs. For example, to bring back up the soccer example, having a soccer field that is available, and free for use, and is open at hours of the day that folks can be there. I would say, including at night, right, so that's a big thing, right, is that particularly in the winter in New York, the sun sets that, you know, the darkest part of the winter. The sun sets at 4:30. So if you want people to have the capacity to be out recreating, you've got to keep those fields open, and you have to light them.

Mariela Fernandez: And now, what are the biggest challenges in Hispanic communities that make physical activity or just getting around harder for Hispanic residents?

Andrea Marpillero-Colomina: I would say, statistically, Hispanic and Latino folks tend to live further away from parks; have less access to a park in walking distance; have less access to reliable transportation infrastructure, like bike lanes and bus lines, that can take them to parks at reasonable intervals and with relatively relative efficiency. I think that the biggest thing that's deterring people from engaging in those kinds of recreational activities is just the access to the space itself.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah. And when you said that during the pandemic they were trying to stop using- I think you said the subways, right, or the public ones? Are folks now walking more or they biking?

Andrea Marpillero-Colomina: I would say, yeah, people are walking and biking when possible and when the distances are too far, or it's too cold, or whatever. They're riding the bus, right, so they're making a choice to not be in those spaces, where they feel the most vulnerable. I think the bus feels safer because there's a bus driver on the bus. There's a little bit more sort of control over the environment.

Mariela Fernandez: Okay, yeah. It's funny that you bring up the weather quite a bit because we are trying to do the interviews across the US. I hadn't thought about that as a possible factor.

Andrea Marpillero-Colomina: Yeah, it's a huge factor. I'm sure it's a huge factor, of course, on the Northeastern Seaboard, but also, you know, at the opposite end, like in Arizona, for example, it's really hot so that, also, is a deterrent.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah. And now, what factors should all Hispanic neighborhoods have to ensure residents can move through the neighborhood?

Andrea Marpillero-Colomina: Yeah, Complete Streets, so having streets that incorporate, not just a road aimed at facilitating efficiency for cars, but having a wide and safe sidewalk, having bike lanes. Potentially, if you know we're really thinking into the future, having a lane for micro mobility modes like scooters, electric bikes etc. That is separate from the non-motorized bike lane, because those are different users, and they go different speeds. And then I think the other thing that motivates people to be more mobile, is to have things that they're going to, right? Like if you're just walking around your block in a circle, that's not very interesting.

But if you can get from your home to the grocery store, safely on the sidewalk, you're going to start using that mode. If you can get from your home safely to the local public pool or the park, same thing, school also you know. There's been a precipitous drop I think across the US in all demographics, of children walking to school, and it's directly tied to the fact that they can't get there safely, so all of that, I think, would help make folks feel more inspired to be mobile.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah, now, when thinking about the city in which you work in, which neighborhoods are more likely to have the residents that encourage residents to be able to move around and engage in physical activity?

Andrea Marpillero-Colomina: Which neighborhoods are more likely to have the facilities that encourage – I mean rich, generally, like upper income Whiter neighborhoods. That's my experience in New York, and that's my experience, in like, every other city that I've been to in the United States. I think it's partially an, it's a self-advocacy issue. Right, like richer people have more time to ask for things that they want, go to communities, go to community meetings, lobby their elected officials.

They also have less acute needs, right. In a more diverse or a lower income neighborhood you know, including Hispanic and Latino neighborhoods, you know, they're like, "I have much more severe things going on than like making sure there's a bike lane here." Right, I want to, you know, I want to make sure there's *** for my children, and I want to make sure that the classrooms have air conditioners, like whatever.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah, and that was my next question, why do you think this is occurring, so self-advocacy and less acute needs?

Andrea Marpillero-Colomina: Yeah.

Mariela Fernandez: Now, the issue of gentrification has come up, and we've noticed that everyone kind of has a very different definition of gentrification, so I did want to start off with asking how you define the term.

Andrea Marpillero-Colomina: Sure. So, such a good question for me, because I actually teach a class about gentrification. I defined gentrification as when a neighborhood transforms, and becomes economically, and often also culturally unsustainable for the folks that already live there. It becomes more expensive, and that can be like rent, groceries, the median price of a cup of coffee; and it also infuses into the neighborhood new institutions that seem like they are excluding the long-term residents of the neighborhood. Either by price point, or by who they're aimed at, or by what they're selling, or what they're offering as programming, that seems to not be geared at the long-term residents of the neighborhood.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah, and we were wondering if that was going to come up, the cultural displacement. I don't know if you can provide some examples of that.

Andrea Marpillero-Colomina: Of cultural displacement? Sure, I mean, I feel like the number one sort of form of cultural displacement that I see in neighborhoods probably is the replacement of, particularly, I would say in like Hispanic and Latino neighborhoods, is like the replacement of like a pretty economical, like a barber shop or hair salon that can no longer sustain its business. And then, because rents are going up or whatever, and then that being replaced with like, you know, a boogie, like a fancy coffee store, or a very hip bar. That obviously like the people that were going to that beauty salon or that barbershop, have lost a place where they're going to get their services, and that place of service is not replaced, right, it is not, you know, becomes something completely different. So that's a big example that I think we sort of see play out all over as neighborhoods gentrify.

Mariela Fernandez: And, you know, when we think about gentrification, how does that impact Hispanic residents' ability to move within their community?

Andrea Marpillero-Colomina: Well, you know, in a couple of different ways, I would say number one, if they're losing those gathering places, as like something like a barber shop or a beauty salon often is, they feel like, you know, maybe, that was a street that they walked on every day to get to, or once a week, or whatever to get to that location, and now they sort of feel disconnected from that part of the community.

The other thing that I think can happen, you know, not ubiquitously, right, but sometimes, particularly if a neighborhood is gentrifying in sections as sort of often happens, right, like the western end of the neighborhood will gentrify first because it's near a park or a subway station, or whatever. That part of the neighborhood becomes perceived as being unfriendly to, particularly if folks are visibly racially not white, they may feel like they are being, you know, they're unwelcome, or they're making people nervous, or you know, right, there's racism that sort of often permeates in situations of gentrification because people have all kinds of racial barriers that they carry with them, and it affects the way they think on both sides, it affects the way that they interact with people. And because, in the United States it's such a sort of racialized and racially stratified society, I think people are particularly sensitive to that.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Andrea Marpillero-Colomina: I mean, that impedes mobility, right, because if you no longer feel welcome in part of your neighborhood. Then, essentially what happens is like that's not part of your neighborhood anymore, right. Your neighborhood starts becoming smaller.

Mariela Fernandez: What's the name of your gentrification course?

Andrea Marpillero-Colomina: The name of my gentrification course is, *Gentrification Examining the Phenomena through Media.*

Mariela Fernandez: Oh cool.

Andrea Marpillero-Colomina: And so it's an undergrad course, and I have – it's in the Department of Urban Studies, but I have my students primarily look at media examples talking about gentrification; and sort of talk about, number one, the role of the media and like sort of shaping the narrative, and number two, sort of how the stories that are told by the media sort of shape our understanding of what gentrification is, and then shapes like the academic, you know, research and discourse around gentrification as well.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah, I bet that's interesting to see what, if they all have an understanding of gentrification to begin with, but then all the different definitions that they're all using.

Andrea Marpillero-Colomina: Yeah well, the first thing they do at the beginning of the semester is they like, you know, I assign a couple of weeks of readings. With that, I say like, okay, come up with your own definition of gentrification. And then at the end of the semester, they have to sort of redefine their definition of gentrification, and then produce a project that examines an aspect of gentrification, and it's always like a real-life project.

They have to go out and do research, and like, you know, look at the role of a restaurant in the neighborhood or, for example, or –

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Andrea Marpillero-Colomina: You know. I had a student a couple of years ago, who made like an Instagram account where she cataloged what she thought were like the dogs of gentrification, which I thought was a really interesting, really interesting sort of, right – Like what do the dogs look like in this gentrified neighborhood, I thought was really interesting.

Mariela Fernandez: I know, I hadn't even thought of that, but yeah, there's like the designer breeds that cost hundreds, if not thousands of dollars.

Andrea Marpillero-Colomina: Exactly.

Mariela Fernandez: Interesting, and so the next question is related to what strategies you've seen to kind of tackle gentrification and anti-displacement.

Andrea Marpillero-Colomina: Sure, I mean, I think the most effective strategies come from, you know, within communities that are – You know, gentrification, I think, part of why it's such an enigma is because it plays out differently in every community, right. There may be a community that has relatively high homeownership, for example, and in that community gentrification is going to play out in a different way and at a different pace than a community that is majority renter, where essentially like landlords are paying rents or selling buildings, and then, you know, the resulting rent increase causes people to be displaced because they can no longer afford the rent.

So, you know, that I think is one kind of gentrification. Then, I think in neighborhoods where like the homeownership is higher and it's really, you know, a commercial gentrification or a cultural gentrification, right, like a new cultural institution opens, or a satellite campus of a college, or whatever, right, and then sort of causes this sort of slower moving pace. You know, that has to be organized really differently. I think, you know, I think in the case of residential gentrification that comes from you know rent increases and buildings being turned over, I think housing activists have generally done a really good job, or the sort of focus has been on educating renters about their rights.

You don't have to leave as soon as somebody tells you need to leave. You don't need to take a landlord buy out, all of that, right. And then in neighborhoods where commercial gentrification or cultural institutional gentrification, and or some kind of institutional gentrification is more dominant, you know – In

those cases, I really, you know, sometimes there has to be a sort of – A community leader has to start that conversation, but in those cases, I really do think it's on the new coming institution or business to be like, “Okay, we are acknowledging that we're coming into the existing fabric of a community, how can we be good neighbors?” Right, so can we provide free, you know – Does this satellite college campus have an auditorium, can we sometimes give that auditorium, for use, for free to the community so that they can do stuff there? Right, if it's a store, can they make a commitment to hiring people who live locally?

I think those strategies, which often take place after, unfortunately, after confrontation, are effective strategies; and I think they can come from, and there always are in every community, right, leaders who are conscious of sort of the changing fabric of the community, where the pressure points are, what the needs are. And those leaders, you know, nine times out of 10 are the most effective negotiators on behalf of their community, and they are made much more effective when they're supported by their local elected officials, so whatever it be like, the City Council, the State Senate, you know, whoever.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah, and I'm also taking notes. Like a real academic, right. And I'll probably ask you later, if you don't mind, not for this pilot, but when we do this study again, we did want to separate community leaders from you know your researchers. You know if you have anyone you'd like to recommend for this study, let us know.

Andrea Marpillero-Colomina: Okay.

Mariela Fernandez: Okay, so the next section is, you know, what’s called the Routes to Destination, Plans and Policies. I'm going to read different initiatives out to you, and then you can let me know if you've heard of them.

Andrea Marpillero-Colomina: Okay, great.

Mariela Fernandez: Oh yeah, so the first one is Complete Streets, which you mentioned.

Andrea Marpillero-Colomina: Yes, I've heard of that one.

Mariela Fernandez: The second one is Open Streets.

Andrea Marpillero-Colomina: Yes.

Mariela Fernandez: Okay, Vision Zero.

Andrea Marpillero-Colomina: Yes.

Mariela Fernandez: Okay, the comprehensive master plans.

Andrea Marpillero-Colomina: Yes.

Mariela Fernandez: The Safe Routes to Schools.

Andrea Marpillero-Colomina: Yes, yeah to school, yeah.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah, single families zoning.

Andrea Marpillero-Colomina: Yes.

Mariela Fernandez: And then the accessory dwelling units.

Andrea Marpillero-Colomina: Accessory dwelling units, I feel like I have heard of that. But if you asked me to define it, I'm not sure – I've heard of it, but could I talk about it, like as an educated person, no.

Mariela Fernandez: Okay, and so then, thinking about all these different ones, complete streets, open streets, Vision Zero, how do you feel about these initiatives? Yeah, how do you feel about these initiatives?

Andrea Marpillero-Colomina: I feel like they're great, I would like to see more of them.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah, more of them implemented across the country, or more like, different initiatives that you've kind of thought of?

Andrea Marpillero-Colomina: I would like to see more of them implemented across the country. I feel like, unfortunately for now, so much of the advocacy for them, or the sort of, how I know about them is theoretical. Or like, one example, right, rather than being like, you know, this city is going to implement, you know, 20 Complete Streets at once, and really change the culture of the city on a whole.

Mariela Fernandez: That makes sense. Okay. And yeah, the next question is how effective do you think these initiatives happen? But because you're not really, it seems, aware of real-life examples, or not too many, I don't know if you can comment on the effectiveness or not.

Andrea Marpillero-Colomina: I mean, I have, I know of, yeah, I know, have some great real-life examples. I just feel like there hasn't been enough real – I would like to see more real-life examples, and I think they're incredibly effective. And I think the reason they're not more effective is because there are more of them.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah, okay. Are there some like being implemented in your local community right now?

Andrea Marpillero-Colomina: Yeah, sure.

Mariela Fernandez: Which one, can you give me an example of one?

Andrea Marpillero-Colomina: Of a Complete Street, yeah, so there's a great complete street example. Let me just think for a second, so in Downtown Brooklyn, there's a great Complete Street at, on a street called J street. And it features a wide sidewalk, there's a protected bike lane, and then there is a one way in each direction. It's a two-way street, one lane in each direction for cars, and cars are really incentivized to go at a pedestrian and bike friendly pace, because the street is so narrow.

Mariela Fernandez: Oh, okay.

Andrea Marpillero-Colomina: I feel like that's a great example. It's like a major subway station, and it's by a university, by a bunch of government offices; works really well.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah, perfect, I can look that up. And so, are there any other initiatives that you think should be implemented that aren't implemented now?

Andrea Marpillero-Colomina: No, I think those initiatives should be implemented, I mean, I think I have, you know, New York, for example, has a Vision Zero policy, theoretically, in effect. I don't see enforcement of cars going over the speed limit. I don't see daylighting in intersections that give enough visibility to pedestrians and bike riders crossing the street. I don't see enough street redesign to disincentivize people going over the speed limit. Like yeah, I mean Vision Zero is amazing, but it, you know, it – Even in a city like New York that is so pedestrian, right, is so dense and so pedestrian friendly, you don't really see it being implemented. So I can only extrapolate from that, that like, in cities that are not as pedestrian friendly and not as dense, probably, they are also struggling to implement effective Vision Zero policies.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah. I was going to ask how you thought the strategies or the initiatives could be improved, so it seems like just their needs, they need to be enforced.

Andrea Marpillero-Colomina: Yeah, totally. I mean that's the trick with most transportation policy, right? It's like, it sounds good on paper, and then you have to figure out how you're going to get it to actually happen.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah, and it's interesting because I'm starting off with you, and the first couple of interviews are in urban cities. But we do want to get a rural perspective, so I don't know if they'll have some of these initiatives, and if they do, it'll be interesting to see how different they are from the urban cities.

Andrea Marpillero-Colomina: Yeah well, I know that USDOT is funding a bunch of different-I can't remember if they're Complete Streets or what exactly, what kind of project they are but, in "X" urban and rural communities. So, you know, I know that they're trying. Like they're not, you know, they're trying to see what it would be like in a variety of neighborhoods, at least in theory.

Mariela Fernandez: Right, yeah, okay. So now the next section of the interview goes through different constraints that Hispanic communities may be impacted by. One of the first ones that I'm going to go over, law enforcement. So how does law enforcement impact Hispanic residents' ability to kind of move around in their community?

Andrea Marpillero-Colomina: Sure well, you know, in part, it depends on the kind of law enforcement; but I would say in general in Hispanic communities, I think there's a lot of fear of racial profiling and immigration profiling, right? And depending on, you know, depending on the kind of law enforcement we're talking about, I'll say like – let's just say a local police department just to sort of keep it simple. If you know that your local police department is cooperating with federal immigration officers, if you know that there is a police presence in certain parts of your neighborhood or at certain subway stations, that may make you hesitant to use those places in your neighborhood. You may be less hesitant to go to the park, you may be less hesitant to take the subway. And I think even in communities or even in cities like in New York, where the NYPD is not officially cooperating with federal immigration police, there is still that fear of, you know – I don't think that every person in their mind is able to be like, "Okay, the local police department is different from the FBI, is different from, you know, ICE enforcement officers."

To them it's all people with like a walkie talkie, a badge, and a gun. You know, maybe the FBI is the least of those three categories, but like, you know, I think that there's – The presence of law enforcement can be a deterrent to being mobile in your community. Especially if it is perceived as something that could be a real risk to you or to somebody else in your household. Because even if you, yourself, are a documented person, if there's somebody, you may even be an American citizen, if there's somebody else in your household who's vulnerable or has, you know, an arrest record, or whatever, you may feel like you don't even want to risk the possibility that something could happen, where like you know the dots could eventually lead back to that vulnerable person in your household or in your community.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah. And now I don't know if you're aware of any strategies that have been used to foster a better relationship between law enforcement and Hispanic communities.

Andrea Marpillero-Colomina: I do think it helps when you know local PD officers. For example, in Hispanic communities are also Hispanic. It can be a little bit of a false sense of security, but I think that helps people feel like the officers look like them. They may feel safer around them. I also think that if, you know, it's crucial, particularly in Hispanic communities where you've got a high percentage of folks who are Spanish-only, or Spanish as their first language, or Portuguese, or whatever, to have law enforcement officers who can communicate fluently in those languages. So that when something happens, even if it's a car accident, right, people feel like they can communicate clearly and have what they're saying be understood.

Mariela Fernandez: Now, you've kind of mentioned this – Another constraint that has come up while we're searching, people keep mentioning just general safety concerns, like biking and walking and the big city. What safety concerns do you think impacts Hispanic residents? in the community that you work?

Andrea Marpillero-Colomina: Yeah, I mean I think they're afraid of being hit by cars, right, like everybody is. And I think, you know, particularly in New York, and I would say in many other cities, there's a disproportionate percentage of Hispanic folks who work on their bicycles. Or work, as you know, they're delivering food, they're delivering laundry, they're whatever, right, and so they are using the street as part of their job.

And that's a big issue right, the fact that folks who are users of the street as part of the way that they earn their income, not feeling safe there. And being, of course, because they're spending more time on the street than other people, right; statistically, they're more likely to be hit by a car or suffer some injury that is related to the road, right? Like even – if a car is not involved, and the road is just in disrepair, and they flip over a pothole, that's more likely to happen to them.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah. In the Community that you work with, I don't know if. The ones that you're talking about, do they tend to be more male or female?

Andrea Marpillero-Colomina: Yeah, mostly, in this community, mostly men are the ones that are sort of – Their job is to be mobile, right, usually in a non-motorized or sort of semi-motorized mode like an electric scooter and our electric bicycle.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah, and I could ask you that about law enforcement, because we have heard accounts of people making a difference between how females are treated versus your males regarding law enforcement. I don't know if you've encountered that, where the communities that you work with kind of mentioned that gender plays a difference.

Andrea Marpillero-Colomina: Um yes, I would say that men tend to be more targeted or sort of more picked on, I would say, by law enforcement. But that doesn't mean that women are not targeted, right? Particularly if they're doing some kind of benign, but technically illegal activity like selling food as an unlicensed vendor right. You know, they'll seem to be sort of a prime target often.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah, that makes sense. And, and you have mentioned some technological things like the scooters. So as technology evolves, you know, what strategies do you believe are more critical to ensure resident safety on the streets?

Andrea Marpillero-Colomina: Protected lanes, like clear designation of use by mode, and I think also posted rules. There's a lot of people breaking the rules because they don't know the rules. It's not malicious, but they're biking the wrong way down a one-way street, right, just because they don't know any better and because there's no clear indication in the design of the street telling them how the street should be used.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah. And now when you kind of think about these constraints, law enforcement, immigration, safety. To what extent do you think these factors also impact non-Hispanic communities?

Andrea Marpillero-Colomina: Oh, I think they impact all communities. For sure.

Mariela Fernandez: And I don't know if we missed any major constraints that you wanted to comment on that you think really impact Hispanic residents.

Andrea Marpillero-Colomina: Yeah, I would say on a more macro level, right, beyond just the relationships with law enforcement, language access as a huge issue that I think is particularly acute in Hispanic communities, because just of the, you know, the high percentage of people in Hispanic communities who don't speak English or can't read in English. For example, if you don't have posted information in languages that they speak, then they're really going to be left out.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah. And then, the next one, and, you know, we do also want to consider the role of institutional and systemic racism. I don't know if you can comment on how that impacts Hispanic communities.

Andrea Marpillero-Colomina: For sure, systemic racism, alive and well in the United States of America, definitely impacts Hispanic community in every possible way, right? Whether it's racial and ethnic stereotyping, whether it's location of contaminating or otherwise sort of unsavory facilities, disproportionately located in Hispanic, Black and low-income communities. You know disproportionate discrimination in job hiring. Also, you know, it affects people's capacity to be mobile, you know.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Andrea Marpillero-Colomina: For sure, yeah, and much more that I haven't thought of.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah. The last question for now is the recommendation section. If you had unlimited resources, how do you think you would improve the communities in which Hispanic residents live?

Andrea Marpillero-Colomina: In general, or sort of related specifically to mobility?

Mariela Fernandez: We can do both.

Andrea Marpillero-Colomina: All right. So, you know, it's funny because as I asked you that question, I sort of was like, I'm not sure my answers would be that different. But really, I mean, I think the key to economic prosperity, strong social cohesion, access to public health and education resources, right, which are sort of like the key benchmarks of a community's success, all of that is tied to mobility, right.

Like, can you get to and from school and your job efficiently, can – Do you have access to fresh affordable food, can you easily see your friends, go to your house of worship, you know, etc. And so, I think, you know, many Hispanic communities in New York and across the US are under-resourced when it comes to having access to reliable safe transportation infrastructure. Whether that be for a bus line like, you know, where the bus stops, how often it runs, what the bus stop looks like, you know, etc. How much it costs to like are the sidewalks wide enough for a person in a wheelchair or a child on a scooter to safely, you know, use it for blocks and blocks.

You know I think those are really, crucial pieces. More broadly, I think other than dismantling systemic racism, I think there needs to be much, you know, in the bigger picture, much more focused attention in policymaking and the particulars of gentrification, rising housing costs, you know, social and economic isolation that Hispanic communities are particularly vulnerable to, right. Like making sure that those meets our needs are being met and providing the resources. Everything from language access to focused health information to everything in between.

Mariela Fernandez: What you would say are best practices in your field of study as related to this topic?

Andrea Marpillero-Colomina: I mean, I think the best practices in my field of study, which I would say is sort of like the transportation and mobility subfield of urban planning and policy, is to create robust safe transportation infrastructure for users of all modes.

Mariela Fernandez: Okay. Well, that is it for today. I don't know if you have any other comments that you wanted to make related to the topic.

Andrea Marpillero-Colomina: No, I think that's it. I was comprehensive but feel free – If you find that you want to circle back, feel free.

Transcript #2

Mariela Fernandez: Okay, well we'll go ahead and begin, so the first question is, what is your job title?

Miguel Vazquez: I am the Health Equity Urban and Regional Planner.

Mariela Fernandez: Okay. And how long have you been working in health equity and planning?

Miguel Vazquez: Well, my whole career has been 20 years. Half of that has been, I guess what you would say, traditional urban planning. In the second half, I've been working for my current employer, which is the Riverside University Health System - Public Health, which is in essence - the name actually confuses people because we're not a university, we are the County of Riverside Department of Public Health, but that name is a name for, I don't really, I think the origins go back ***but we're a health system. And I guess the university portion is because our local university, UCR has a Medical School, and students do their residency in our clinics. But, sometimes you know that people think that I'm a professor. No, no, I'm a county employee.

So that's the span of my career. Twenty years in total, but the real mixture has happened in the past 10 years because my role is to work on the integration of public health in urban planning and, you know, equity has always been a topic that we advance. Just recently I adopted this title. My previous title was Healthy Communities Planner, but because now our agency has formed a new team to work on health equity. I was placed in that and to be able to I think identify more of the type of work that I do allow me to create the style***.

Mariela Fernandez: And during your career, have you noticed any changes in the way that Hispanics engage in physical activity or move through their community, so including using different transportation like walking and biking.

Miguel Vazquez: I think so. I think, you know, the federal government, state government, county government and local governments, they have a number of different programs in a number of different priorities related to transportation and physical activity and all of that so. Because from my experience, many of the funding that is available for improving public health through physical activity and active transportation has a component on addressing the needs of disadvantaged communities and, if you look at the distribution of who lives in disadvantaged communities by enlarge are community of communities of color and by and large, are Latino Hispanic communities, so by default many…Latinx communities, Hispanic communities have benefited from that. In the work that I do has to do with non-physical intervention, non-infrastructure interventions, and also partnering with actual entities that can develop infrastructure, like improving roads, revisiting parks, through city planning. So, I would say that we have moved the needle. How much? That I don't know, I'm not at that level of research, but just knowing the investments that we've done, knowing that work that our team has done, both when it comes to encouraging people to stay physically active and to advance the value of active transportation. It has made some, some difference.

Mariela Fernandez: And when you say that you've done non infrastructure intervention, can you give me an example of that?

Miguel Vazquez: Yeah, basically I'll give you the example of our active transportation program, which was created through the Safe Routes to Schools Program. In the Safe Routes to Schools Program was mainly created to do, I would say two things. One, to create an additional safety component to or for elementary school kids to walk to school, and the second one, to encourage them to embed their physical activity by walking to school rather than, you know, having their parents drive them to school. So that was the, you know, that is the program that we implement at the county, and the program is actually a national movement. There is an organization called the Safe Routes to Schools Partnership, and the founder, I can't remember her name, she passed away a few years ago. But she's the one who coined the term, and who got these national programs established, and in many transportation agencies, adopted the program

nationally. So, for us the Department of Transportation, which is the California Department of Transportation, or Caltrans, they adopted it, and they provide funding for both non infrastructure and infrastructure. So non infrastructure really means working on what they called the five E's, let me see if I can remember what they are.

The first one is education. You know as to why it is important to walk to school, how to be safe. In learning that, you know when you don't drive, you also are helping the environment to be cleaner, reduce traffic and those kinds of things. So that's education, and encouragement is targeted both to students and to parents. To *** that mode of transportation realizing that, yeah if you know if it takes you two minute's drive to school, but it takes you 15 minutes walking. You know you should really consider walking, because you know 15 minutes is doable and then there's all you know, all these benefits. So that's education encouragement.

There is a piece on enforcement, but I think that has changed to some extent. And enforcement was to, originally, to have the presence of law enforcement. To make sure that parents who drive follow the rules of the road, because when they're driving late to school, you know, it creates hazards, and all of that, but that has changed. And I think now, they have now replaced enforcement with equity so that we again, put an emphasis on serving those communities that are integrated needs. And then there is engineering, and that where we interface with transportation planners, transportation departments, the ones who can actually build the, the improvements on the road, like adding sidewalks, or crosswalks, or stop signs, lighting, those kinds of things, you know physical improvements. And the last one is evaluation, to, to measure, to what extent or efforts, are making a difference. So that gives you a sense of, and evaluation is part of non-infrastructure, and it's a little bit of, it takes more research and ***and those kinds of things.

Mariela Fernandez: I actually had the routes to school on my list for things I'm going to ask about later.

Miguel Vazquez: That's great.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah, so the next section we will focus on Hispanic communities. So in Hispanic communities, what factors make it easier for Hispanic residents to engage in physical activity or just mobility through the community?

Miguel Vazquez: That's an easy one, and the reason why it's an easy one, I would say, goes back to planning. But not just planning, but implementation, because you know you can have great plans to improve everybody's health, but if you don't have the money to implement those plans, you know, plans are, you know, just plans, but implementing anything without a plan can also give you random outcomes. So that's why planning is really important so that you can envision what you want. What is your PhD, what's your field?

Mariela Fernandez: I'm actually in Parks and Recreation, but I look at the environmental injustices that are impacting green space and Latino communities.

Miguel Vazquez: Okay, so you probably are familiar with the idea of logic models. I don't know if you ever use them, so you know, what are the outcomes that you want right, that's the vision. And then you work backwards as to, you know, what has to happen before you do that, you know, preceding and preceding and preceding, until you see where you're at in the process. Those are two really important pieces, the planning, but planning that also has, as part of its roles, improving public health. Because if your plans do not spell that out, you assume that you know, by providing a road, things are going to be better, but a road could be just for cars.

You know just the pavement for the cars, but no sidewalks, so then you're just focusing on, you know, what's more visible, in what's more convenient, I guess, and then, you leave behind all the pieces of the infrastructure that are essential. So not just for Hispanics, but for any community. The biggest factor that can, I don't know, encourage people to stay physically active is a complete community. And, you know, a complete community that provides for meeting all your needs within walking distance. And that's it, and you know those communities exist. Obviously. And some communities do have that environment, I would

say, better structure than others. But there's communities that have nothing. I mean just, you know, I'm working on a project right now in a rural community. Are you familiar with California at all?

Mariela Fernandez: No.

Miguel Vazquez: A place called The Salton Sea. You probably heard of the Coachella music festival.

Mariela Fernandez: Oh yeah.

Miguel Vazquez: It's near that area, the desert, and farm workers live there. In, you know, they live in dilapidated mobile homes, and there's no amenities. It is just really harsh. So how do you encourage, you know people, and all of them are Hispanics, how do you improve their, you know, their living conditions, to the extent that they actually want to, they recognize that staying physically active is important. We're going to work on a project that is going to support the built environment. There is this idea in public health and in planning that has been around for about 10 years or so, and it is the idea that your zip code can determine how long you live.

That tells you everything, and you know if you look at zip codes in the-if you make a correlation between the zip code and health outcomes and Hispanics, you can see where the deficiencies are, where they could exist. Access the ones that live. The ones that lack, you know, the kinds of things that wealthier communities have.

So anyway, but you know, wealthy communities, also, they are very mobile. You know you can just jump in the car, and you can live in suburbia, and it doesn't matter where. You can go to the nicest park, if you want, you can go hiking, you can go to the beach, whatever it is, you know, depending on where you're in the nation. But you know Hispanic communities are more, what's the word? Well, obviously, disadvantaged, but they're more- they are not as mobile as wealthier communities to be able to access those opportunities, so that's my point.

Mariela Fernandez: Ok. For the rural community, what is the plan to focus on connectivity or how will you increase physical activity?

Miguel Vazquez: Yeah, so this community is called Oasis, and it is an incorporated community. It is not a city. We got a grant from Caltrans, which is the department of transportation. We got $2 million to do these interventions over a period of two years. We're going to partner with a *** different community organizations to do a tree planting program. We're going to do a pilot to provide shade structures for farm workers. We are going to include a program on public art. We were going to be doing a series of cleanup events and litter abatement.

Now what's behind that, there's going to be a number of different workshops related to active transportation, again, going back to the teams that I mentioned on Safe Route to, not Safe Routes to Schools, but Safe Routes to Destinations. There's a few destinations within the community. There's a brand new park, so we're going to figure out how to make sure that people have an efficient way to get to the park, because again, people live in mobile home parks, and it's not easy to get to the park, because the roads, they don't have sidewalks, it's super-hot so, so we are going to figure it out through, you know, identifying again, the issues but, most importantly, using that information to continue to push to bring funding to build actual infrastructure.

We're looking at it from that lens. We also have an organization that has been working on this idea of trauma-informed care, and we are going to kind of give it a little twist to that. The intervention that we're bringing is trauma-informed design, so how do we design moving forward a built environment that instead of making you sick and making you, you know, compressed? How do we, how do we think about it, so that the built environment can actually help you heal, and make you feel that you are healthy, and make you feel that you are worth living, that you are. You know that you, yes, that you're valued.

So, you know, that is one piece that sometimes we have forgotten, I think, in our profession, so in planning and landscape architecture and architecture, etc., is that human component of how the built environment makes you feel, and how the built environment can help you stay both, you know, physically active so that is safe, but also can help you mentally.

So that's kind of how we're, we're kind of inventing a little bit here with these***.

Mariela Fernandez: I'm excited to learn more about how it's going to turn out.

Miguel Vazquez: Me too. It's going to be fun.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah. Okay, so you talked about the things that make it easier, but what are the biggest challenges in Hispanic communities that make physical activity or travel harder for residents?

Miguel Vazquez: Sure, I think in general it is, I'm going to say part of it is cultural. Well, Hispanics are not monolithic. We're not all the same. You know Hispanics have different origins, we have to some extent, different cultures, different affinity for how we do things. So that's a tricky question in a sense, but if we look at, for instance, immigrant communities, I would say that many people who arrive, or arrived in this country, since I don't know the 70s and the 80s, they come from communities that are actually, and again I'm just making a guess here, and educated guess, from rural communities that are actually that work that provide for many of the things that you should have. You know, you have a school, or they have open spaces, they have markets, you know people that want to open up by market, you know, a little *tiendita*.

And they have it all within reach, but when people come here, the way that our neighborhoods are designed, does not provide for organic development of your community. There's zoning and there are different laws that prevent communities from really responding rapidly to their needs. So when people come, they have to adjust to that. The first thing that I think most immigrants have experienced, is the need to have a car, especially in California. Other places even, you know, I was talking about this rural community, everyone has to have a car, otherwise you can't get to work. There is no, there's a you know, transit agency, but you know, it doesn't really operate efficiently to respond to the needs of the workers or the students.

So that cultural shift, I think it's a big obstacle. Because, in some ways, I think people fall into, into the traps that are not to**** sustainable practices that are the most sustainable for the nation. And again, it goes back to catering to the automobile, in catering to the automobile, I mean, you see it now, we're paying almost $6 a gallon for gas. I mean that is not sustainable and I don't know. Anyway so, so that cultural shift, but then, if you combine it also with other, other factors that actually are very detrimental to your health, like advertisement in the consumption of sugary drinks. You know that, that is a big obstacle. So that is you know another piece, that is not necessarily like, okay, physical activity is going to be there, the savior, or it's going to really make you healthy, you know, that is one piece. But the other piece is connected to nutrition, and in our communities, we don't really necessarily,*** the healthiest choice, because the healthiest choice can be more expensive, or it can be out of reach from you.

And I'll give you an example, there is a woman who actually came from Mexico, also. Who, a few years ago, noticed that her son had some, I don't know, some sort of mental health issues and she took him to see the doctor. And through identifying things about his diet, they recommended, "you may want to change his diet to organic foods." She said okay that's great, so she went back to her community, and was like okay, "so where do I buy this organic food?" She couldn't find it, and when she finally did, it was, you know, she had to drive far away and it was very expensive, so she couldn't afford it. So what she did, she started a garden, she started gardening. And, somehow, I can't remember the whole story, but she created, actually, this activity became an actual community garden called "Huerta Del Valle" in Ontario California. So that is sort of, you know, part of the connection to nutrition, but also to that idea that people from Mexico or immigrants, they are also entrepreneurial, and they find ways, you know, to make things happen.

So yeah, so advertisement, it's big. Big issue on, I don't know, creating and perpetuating sedentary lifestyles. I don't know if I answered your question, or if I babbled too much.

Mariela Fernandez: No, that's okay. What factors do you think all Hispanic neighborhoods should have to ensure that residents are healthy, so that they are physically active and that they are eating well?

Miguel Vazquez: Yeah, definitely. I think there has to be organized community engagement. I think when neighbors know each other. I think that the communities can operate better and when communities are organized, they can have the power to bring programs to their streets. If they know how to work with the system, you know how to go to city council meetings or board of supervisors and advocate for what their needs are but you know typically again going back to Hispanic communities, I think, culturally. I'm going to feel a little uncomfortable saying this, but I'm just going to say we are sort of passive in we are sort of obedient and we are, I think I don't know I'm just going to use the word afraid of stepping up forward to bring the changes that are needed to make our communities healthier so community organizing I think that's what I mean when you have community based organizations that can help people connect and to speak up for policy change. I think that that's a key ingredient.

Even if you're you know if you don't have a lot of resources or, if you have known I mean again going back now to the example. The reason why we're going to be able to do it is because we're not coming in from scratch, there has been significant Community engagement and Community empowerment there.

Miguel Vazquez: Many of the people in the area that are already involved in programs that are intended to improve their own quality of life. So without that, it's a lot harder, you know when you have to start from scratch. It's more difficult so investing in Community empowerment is absolutely essential.

Mariela Fernandez: And you mentioned this before a couple questions ago so when thinking of a city-in the city that you work with which neighborhoods are more likely to have resources that do encourage that physical activity and healthy nutrition, so this is kind of a big view so when you look at all the neighborhoods in your city which neighborhoods are more likely to have resources.

Miguel Vazquez: So maybe you know, for in my case, because I work at a county level, we have 28 cities in so or counties 2.5 million people, the city where I live, which is the City of Riverside we have 300,000 people. One of the largest cities in our county. That's the Oasis community, which is an incorporated community, not a city, just to put into perspective has about 7,000 residents. It's really small. Really small community. When it comes to looking at cities, some are better prepared than others. And some are wealthier than others; some are older than others; some have retained more identity than others. And some are yeah, I guess, maybe I already said they're older than others so Riverside is probably one of the oldest cities in which it has a tradition of community engagement. Good planning is a city that functions.

There are actually two clusters of Hispanic neighborhoods that are disadvantaged communities, but by and large, all the communities have the opportunity to *** to go to school parks. The infrastructure is complete, in many respects it's a city, the values, the arts and culture there's a university, which is UC Riverside. Our county has its headquarters here. So all of those things add up, you know sort of like the *** of the cities, whereas other cities that actually also are older, but that are more in them or they're not as connected by the freeways. They struggle to the day to bring investment in most of our *** are actually newer developments are what we call urban sprawl, subdivisions. Part of the problem is that subdivisions are not planned with Complete Communities, because while your housing stock or your essential areas may be new and people aspire to live once they are there, it's a trap, because you have to drive far to the market, you have to drive far to school and church.

Mariela Fernandez: When thinking of the city and which you worked in, which neighborhoods are more likely to have resources?

Miguel Vazquez: It goes back to how long they've been in existence. Their connection to major freeways. I think the legacy of different industries Riverside is what it is today because of the turn of the century.

The citrus industry brought to Riverside a lot of wealth, but like one of the newest cities in the state of California, they rely mostly on real estate for delivering wealth. And many actually Asian immigrants have moved into the city where they are in. I think mostly Koreans moved into this area *** They are well off individuals, so they bring that investment in there. Again, the ones who know how to go to city council and how to talk to the mayor. And you know it's a different dynamic that is correlated also to the politics or different cities; some are more progressive than others-it's not just whether they're progressive or not, but also what is the makeup of the city council. I mentioned Coachella. Actually, there's a city named Coachella. All of their elected officials except for one are Hispanics. And some of them have actually run for the State Assembly, and they have been able to get prominent roles in politics, and, in turn, ensure that funding comes into their communities. That again goes back to community organizing because community organizing is an actual political activity so I can lead people to become leaders and, finally, saying "I'm going to run for a city council meeting seat," or "I want to be in the planning commission for those kinds of things," so those are really, really important.

They can enable communities to actually be healthier for all. Let me give you a good example; you're going to love this one. There's a city called the City of Paris. And a few years ago we were partnering with them. And what they did was-they created a new initiative called Live Well Paris.

And part of that was the creation of a program that did numerous things to encourage people to stay physically active. It was a very successful campaign. The thing that I remember is that it was around the time when there was a TV show called the Biggest Loser, [which] was about people taking a challenge to lose weight. They sort of adopted that; they challenge[d] their community members. And the city manager got into the challenge. I mean, you know the city manager so he's very visible in the community and he's Latino. So he took his leadership role in the sense that he said, "Okay, I'm gonna do it. I'm going to show you that we can do it if I can do it. You can do it, and he lost a ton of weight. He was so proud. He was like, "I look good. I feel good." And people really got to hear that, and they got funding to do more programming. They built parks. We collaborated with them on several schools. They've done all kinds of things. Very, very successful city. They still have significant issues, but they have moved the needle because they wanted to organize.

Mariela Fernandez: And we're going to change pace a little bit. I'm sure you're familiar with the term gentrification.

Miguel Vazquez: For sure.

Mariela Fernandez: We've noticed that everyone defines gentrification a little bit different, so I wanted to start off with how you define the term gentrification.

Miguel Vazquez: Yeah. It's perfect because I just posted something recently on Twitter, I think. I think there's two factors in gentrification but the first thing is that you have to have a community so that is sort of that-what could be a good analogy, the base, you know for the equation, you have to have a community. Then there's the two factors: one is people who live there, you know they exist there in that community. But the second factor-okay, I'm going to say there's three factors- so there's the people who live there and then there's an economic dynamic that happens that is going to change the opportunity for the people who live there to either stay or to be displaced. So when you change that economic dynamic on housing values, and the people who live there are going to be displaced because of that equation, whatever that is. But that has to happen, they're going to be displaced. *** is providing the opportunity for outsiders who have the means to actually recreate a community and move in. So there's a dynamic between affordability of a place. So when you change the economics of affordability, then that is when gentrification begins, because people can live there. Also, part of it is the ownership of property. Again, if you live in a house, if you live there for 30 years, and you paid I don't know, I'm going to say $100,000 30 years ago now that property is valued at $300,000. So that person is like, "I'm going to sell it, because now I'm really making it. I invested and now I'm going to make a profit of $200,000."

Mariela Fernandez: So the economics is-

Miguel Vazquez: Like yeah sell it, so then the new person who-and maybe this person was renting their home at $500 a month, so when this new person buys the property at $300,000 this person is going to want to make more money for the investment right. So the rent now is going to be double $1,000. The person who lives in that home may be making minimum wage, so they can't live there anymore; they have to move away so I don't necessarily have a definition, but these are the pieces that play into it. So, at the end of the day is the displacement of people by people with means to re-create the makeup of a community. I guess that would be my definition. Yeah.

Mariela Fernandez: We're also interested in the idea of cultural displacement, so when your culture gets pushed out. I don't know if you have any examples of that.

Miguel Vazquez: Definitely yeah there's another city near here in our neighboring county called Orange County. There is a city that is the oldest city in Orange County. It's called Santa Ana or Santana. That community has gone through numerous transformations since I don't know-since the time when it became part of the United States because it used to be part of Mexico. That's a community that has evolved over the years, but in recent times during the 80s, there was a significant influx of immigrants, mostly from Mexico. It was a portal into the United States for many immigrants from Mexico. There was a street I think it's called Fourth Street. It was sort of like the main street. No, Main Street is another story, but Fourth Street is where you would have all the different shops and the restaurants in you will walk through any will be you know *quinceñera* dress shops, and there will be the ***, and the Mexican restaurants. It was like being in Mexico. I mean it was like wow. If you know if you go on Saturday or a Sunday, it will be just like so lively. In recent years, no more recently in the past, I don't know 10 years now, maybe in the past 20 years this city started to make plans for redevelopment because it was also, an area that at some point was considered blighted and that's another story, but that labeling of blighted allowed cities to work on plans to transform these communities.

As a result of the transformation, they started building more homes that were really creating more for all their segments of the population. They brought in the arts and culture, but it was not just Mexican. They brought in galleries and high-end shops. They were able to successfully recreate downtown Santana. You go there today, and now you see the step of millennial shops where they sell, I don't know, hot dogs made out of snake, or you know these fancy things that are kind of crazy. Their little coffee shops, like $8 to buy a little cup of coffee so that is just a small way to illustrate that cultural displacement or cultural gentrification because now what sells is not what was making money in the 80s. I heard these from one of the owners of a bunch of blocks from downtown Santana. This is the grandson of-he inherited all these buildings when his grandfather was around. He saw the opportunity or having all these immigrants come because they weren't making money for him, you know as a property owner, but as people also moved away from Santana in you know these new generations to cover the ownership properties, they had a different vision. They're after making money. I mean that's what it is, because they couldn't sustain that culture as an anchor because he wasn't making money anymore, so they have to reinvent so those are some of those dynamics, they may not necessarily be by design in your face, but they know it's about economics.

Mariela Fernandez: And how do you think that gentrification impacts that physical activity and healthy nutrition in Hispanic community?

Miguel Vazquez: Yes, so when it comes to that cultural displacement, I think if you live in a community that has all these programs in place right, of encouraging people to use the parks or to walk to school. Santana has all of that. When you have to move to Moreno Valley, which is a city here in Riverside County there's none of that. You know people may move to a suburban home, maybe they have to rent a garage because that's the only thing they could afford. All of those sort of community benefits that they had in one Community they don't exist in you know, wherever they move, so it really depends on where people live and the priority of their leadership in your community and when I say the literature, you know it's your elected officials.

Mariela Fernandez: I don't know if there's been any anti-gentrification or anti-displacement properties that have been implemented in the community that you're working with.

Miguel Vazquez: Not as much in Riverside County. But I'll give you two examples. So, in the city of Santa Ana-Okay, so this is related. I'm a member of this group called the California planning Roundtable. We are a group of 30 last planners from throughout the state, from northern central and southern California. Our work is to think about how to solve the biggest challenges in our state-sort of like a think tank, if you will. So every year we travel throughout the state four times a year we convene in one particular year I organized a meeting in the City of Santana so that's why I know what I'm telling you. But when we went, and you know we went to see what has happened to be the city right. And usually during our events, we invite guest speakers to tell us about you know, whatever issue, we may be exploring. And because I have connections in the city I reached out to somebody who has actually worked on community organizing through a group. Okay, let me put a little parenthesis there's this foundation, called the California Endowment. The California Endowment invested 100 million dollars for Community capacity building over 10 years in 14 of the most disadvantaged communities in the State of California. Santa Ana is one of them, so I contacted the person who was managing that grant to speak in the event, so she came as part of our programming. Usually, we do walking tours to look at improvements. It looks like she alerted some people in the community that we were coming. We were just, you know walking around the city. We were encountered by protesters; you know from the community. They have signs and you know work plan. They wanted to make sure that we were hearing their concerns. They were pretty much advocates for anti-displacement because they were living and experiencing, you know that story that I just share with you about cultural displacement and the people displacement, so we heard from them. And people are organizing to do that. Here in Riverside County, we don't have a lot of that yet, because our communities are to some extent new. In most of our patterns are suburban voting cities that are older, that are more compact. That's what these things are happening now with the California planning Roundtable. We are about to engage in a project as a listening session. We are going to have opportunities for members of the American Planning Association, who are part of or California chapter to come together to hear from them how they feel about the housing crisis, which is what it is, we have a big crisis in California. So, this is one strategy for us to hear about their concerns, not just their concerns, but also what works.

Mariela Fernandez: You know I think you were asking me.

Miguel Vazquez: You know, some questions related to you know kind of what's.

Mariela Fernandez: what's kind of working.

Miguel Vazquez: Right now, not just the obstacles so we want to hear both you're actually giving me an idea to incorporate some of those questions related to quality of life and quality of life can be measured by how healthy, you are and health can be measured by how physically, you can stay in, you know the type of food that you eat and obviously there's many other factors, but those two are really, really important in their correlated. So those sort of things in which I'm involved in we're going to talk about gentrification obviously affordable housing I'm interested, also in learning a little bit about luxury housing because that is where the big investment is going and that's what's causing a lot of homelessness. We were-nearly last week at that California planning Roundtable, and we visited Korea town-experiencing all of that. Both huge investments from Koreans, you know from. People in Korea because they've-Korea has done really well, so they're investing in real estate in LA. And they buy little homes for cheap and then they'd build a high rise, but they don't build just low rent or affordable housing. They're building for investors from overseas, too. And some rents can be as much as $10,000 a month in people from Korea, who can afford that so. I can't even describe it, but there is, you know when I think about housing. I think that the two extremes. On one in luxury housing and homelessness and then there's everything in between in all of that, you know housing actually is a proxy for your opportunities to stay physically active, I mean if you live in one of these, you know high rises, you have a pool, you have a fitness center you don't actually have to go down the street to interface. To walk and interface with homeless. You can just get in your luxury car, and you can drive down *** I'm sorry I'm getting into a soapbox now.

Mariela Fernandez: Your work sounds very interesting. I'm going to change gears again, so the next I'm just going to read you a list and you're just going to tell me if you've heard of these. The first one, I think you have mentioned that Complete Streets.

Miguel Vasquez: Yes.

Mariela Fernandez: So I'll put yes. How about Open Streets?

Miguel Vasquez: Yes.

Mariela Fernandez: Vision Zero.

Miguel Vasquez: Yes.

Mariela Fernandez: The comprehensive plan.

Miguel Vasquez: Yes.

Mariela Fernandez: And then the next one is safe routes to school, which you talked about some point,

Miguel Vasquez: Yes.

Mariela Fernandez: single families zoning.

Miguel Vasquez: Yes.

Mariela Fernandez: And the last one is the accessory dwelling unit?

Miguel Vasquez: yes

Mariela Fernandez: And when thinking about these initiatives, how effective, do you think they've been?

Miguel Vazquez: I'm sorry what was that again?

Mariela Fernandez: When thinking about the initiative how effective, do you think they've been?

Miguel Vazquez: Which initiative.

Mariela Fernandez: And you can either comment on the list for like the Complete Streets, Open Streets, Vision Zero, Safe Routes, or single family zoning or, if you want to focus on one initiative you're more than welcome to.

Miguel Vazquez: And you want to know how.

Mariela Fernandez: Successful I think it has an effect this okay.

Miguel Vazquez: um well it depends on how you qualify effective in that is so I'm thinking single families zoning. If you look at it from the standpoint of urban planning a failure, but people want to live in single family homes, there is a high demand for that. So, it's difficult to kind of see you know the depends on what lens you want to answer the question. But from the work-okay so maybe, from my point of view as a professional so single families zoning, failure. Vision Zero, aspirational. I think we it's still new not everyone knows about it, not every jurisdiction is implementing it, safe routes, I think has been effective. Maybe I'm going give it a score. How's that? What if I score it? Accessory dwelling unit? Now I think I'm not going to score it. Accessible dwelling units, I think they're effective. There's more legislation in California to allow people to develop these types of places for people to live I think they have a lot of potential for being very effective. Complete streets, there's actually legislation in the state of California so

cities have to work on complete three complete suite plans is part of the lingo of transportation planners in planners, in general, so I would say that it has also the potential to be very effective, but it still kind of new you know.

Mariela Fernandez: Maybe it's been around for about.

Miguel Vazquez: 15 years these things take decades to come to fruition. Which one was another one, safe routes to school. Safe routes to schools, I think has been effective, especially because it's a national movement in in California, there has been funding attached to it from the state of California it's a competitive grant process but still program that is effective, should have funding for implementation.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah, which makes complete sense. And I did go over the hour, so you definitely tell me when you have to go. I just have a couple questions on some constraints so I'm going to ask about law enforcement and then I was going to ask for any recommendations that you have so I want to be mindful of your time on a Friday.

Miguel Vazquez: Thank you, yeah.

Mariela Fernandez: I guess this is no surprise to anyone, but you know the law enforcement and immigration have been a concern for Hispanic communities So how do you think law enforcement and immigration have impacted physical activity and healthy eating and Hispanic neighborhood?

Miguel Vazquez: I think it depends. Well, I think there's political dynamics to answer that question. Some cities are more in- some states are more welcoming to immigrants than others. And I think in the full spectrum of those politics. You have one end sanctuary cities. On the other end, you have ultra-right conservative cities and everything between. So what that means, I think the dynamic of how immigrant communities within this structures can be measured is actually in terms of fear.

Mariela Fernandez: You know I don't think -

Miguel Vazquez: …anybody has ever done a study on fear measuring fear you know people have done happiness-you know their score. But, if you are able to measure fear-What is it that people are fear of when it comes to going outside of your home. It can be the built environment; it can be maybe there are gangs or there's graffiti or trash or not enough lighting. That you know those kinds of factors in the built environment are related to law enforcement. Because when you have more of these issues, there is, I think a correlation with. How much. I guess the response for law enforcement is -Maybe you don't have the response that you need on time, or if you get hit, you may actually be the one who suffers, dies from calling law enforcement, or from ending up in jail. So, that kind of fear so for immigrant communities the fear is not just police but it's also immigration, ICE. And I think that-yeah that idea will be my answer in terms of you know how law enforcement plays into that whether you're going to risk going outside or not. But again, the relationship of law enforcement is not just whether law enforcement is present or not, but what's going to happen with you when you face an officer, whether law, the police department or immigration. So there is fear *** actually that's a good one. I've never heard about that one before, so thank you for that one.

Mariela Fernandez: I'm giving you a whole lot of ideas. I'll have to send you the questions because there's more on here then I'm going to ask because I'm being mindful of your time, so feel free to borrow whatever you want.

Miguel Vazquez: Thank you.

Mariela Fernandez: When thinking about Hispanic communities like if you had unlimited resources, what would you start, improving?

Miguel Vazquez: Unlimited wow. That would be super cool. I think the first thing would be to institute a series of academies. And when I think about academies, it would be for not just for community members, but also for public servants and also for the private sector.

So that the academies for the community would be so that they can learn how to engage with the government, how to be part of comprehensive plan updates, how to be involved writing grant applications for active transportation improvements. Know those kinds of things that are really practical, that are not too difficult to do, but nobody knows about them.

They can also learn about geography and urban planning-geographies because sometimes people don't even know much about their own communities. Or about the history of their communities, or why is it that sometimes you may see an empty lot and you may be thinking, “Gee, we could do something with that lot but that lot may not be developable because maybe it gets flooded when it rains or it may be contaminated.” So those sorts of things are important, I think, for people to know, for the public servants in the private sector. I think the academies would be more *** able to learn about having empathy for communities that are at a disadvantage. These are specifically again going back to you know the population that we're describing here.

Because I think in some communities, people do know how to engage, you know, in wealthy communities-the ones who always show up; they know how to play the game. *** Maybe we could include walking tours. Maybe exchanges with the community. Maybe people can be hosted in you know with a family to kind of experience how they live on a daily basis. That could change some of the dynamics, so that you know the powers that be, can have a sense of why people are fearful, why they feel that they're suffering, why they feel that the government is failing. I think that I could do that with a few million dollars.

Mariela Fernandez: Is there anything that you want to put on the record for the interview?

Miguel Vazquez: Anything for the record okay so good, I think, since we're talking about this, as I mentioned I've been working on the intersection of planning and public health for some time and one of the things that I like to do when-maybe you can help me or the people who will read these findings-I'm actually going to start in May. Getting this idea on the ground, actually, this will be an amazing thing if the CDC could help me with this one. It’s not rocket science, basically, what I want to do is to declare May as Healthy Communities Month. I would love that. There's Earth Day in April. We're celebrating Public Health Month in October. But I want May to be acknowledged as Healthy Communities Month. During that month anybody who is engaged in this kind of work, would say, “Hey, this is Healthy Communities Month- what are we doing, how are we celebrating, who are we highlighting.” Because that's how we can continue to change the narrative in moving towards making it more part of the culture. I want to put that on the record of what I want to do, and I would love to get the support from other champions.

Transcript #3

Mariela Fernandez: Alright, so we'll start off with what your job title is.

Gerard Sandoval: I'm an Associate Professor at the University of Oregon, and it's in the School of Planning, Public Policy, and Management.

Mariela Fernandez: We did notice that you do community development and urban planning, and how long have you been doing this type of work?

Gerard Sandoval: So, in terms of being faculty or in terms of my community development work?

Mariela Fernandez: Your community development and urban planning.

Gerard Sandoval: Well, I'd say as a faculty I've been doing it for I think 14 years now and then, in terms of just general community development issues, I would say, maybe 25 years. Yeah, about 25 years.

Mariela Fernandez: During your career, so the past 25 years, I don't know if you've noticed any changes in the way that residents engaged in mobility within the community, whether that's for physical activity or whether that is transportation to get to work?

Gerard Sandoval: So, I guess, I would say that. – I mean it kind of depends on the context, right, but generally speaking, I've seen it also depends on the economic background of folks. I've seen a shift from using more public transportation to being more dependent on the automobile. But I think in lower socioeconomic neighborhoods – Well there's two things that are happening, I guess, one would be that people are still dependent on public transit and a lot of Latino neighborhoods are somewhat dense, and they have density, they have – They're somewhat, I think the built environment is conducive to walking and being more active.

But I would say that recently there's been all these issues around gentrification, so I think a lot of those communities are being displaced to areas where the built environment is geared towards having an automobile, like suburbs or the edge of cities and so forth. The downtowns are becoming a lot more lucrative, and the kind of neighborhoods that people want to live in now are, you know, walkable bikeable kinds of communities and stuff.

Yeah, so it's kind of like two tiered. I mean the big shift is just more dependency on the automobile, but then also I think these neighborhoods, when they grew like organically, they were more geared towards – geared towards walking and being active.

You know, forms of having active, forms of mobility, and then now there's folks that are being displaced moving into environments that are not, so of course, active mobility.

Mariela Fernandez: I was going to ask you that in a couple of questions, but we can start with a discussion of gentrification. We've noticed that people define gentrification differently based on who they are, so we did want to ask, how do you define the term gentrification?

Gerard Sandoval: I mean at its most basic terms, it's just market-based displacement around housing and commercial corridors and neighborhoods, right. That is the most basic one, but I think there's also an element of – I just edited a book called *Aesthetics of Gentrification*, so there is an element of aesthetics to it, and I think that is more like, kind of, how I would say. – It's geared towards environments that are seen as edgy, or kind of hip, and they're going through some fast transformations. There's also – And then you have like your coffee shops, you have a certain kind of aesthetic to it, but there's also a racialized element to it, right.

If your theme is in Oregon, it's mostly a black and white story, so you have black communities that have been displaced by whites. And then, research I've done in California, it's a racial element too, where you have Latino neighborhoods that are being displaced by mostly white folks, but we'll probably get into this a little bit later, but I think it's a little more nuanced than that. That's kind of what my research looks at.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah. Is the book you're editing, is that out or is it still processing?

Gerard Sandoval: No, it's out, it's out, and it's open-source. We paid for open-source space, so it's through the University of Amsterdam Press. If you just like google, *Aesthetics of Gentrification* and my last name, it should come up and it's free, right. It's Open Source, so it – You know, you can download it, and I'm more eloquent in it.

Mariela Fernandez: And actually, I'm wondering if that's kind of what we were getting at. One of the things that has come up in our work is the cultural displacement, but now I'm wondering if we were really talking about aesthetics. In some neighborhoods we've noticed that like the Mexican murals, like they're being washed away, they're being painted over. There's new businesses, so there's like these cultural symbols that are, that go away. I don't know if you have any more examples of that sort of thing.

Gerard Sandoval: Well, I would say that aesthetics is related to culture, different aspects of it. But if you're talking about ethnic culture, I think it's the ethnic cultures that are being, the aesthetics of those cultures are being displaced towards a more, kind of a universal typology that represents what gentrification is.

But as an example, so in my research I studied gentrification that was happening in Oakland and East LA with Boyle Heights, and in San Diego, in Chicano Park. I have an article on that, so you can reference that article more, and the basic argument I'm making there is that these neighborhoods that have – That are kind of rich in terms of ethnic history and symbols, in terms of the art, murals and so forth.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Gerard Sandoval: They actually have a better chance of. – not necessarily like not being, they have a better chance of being able to withstand gentrification. Gentrification still happens, but in terms of – The culture, the Latino culture is kind of – Is not totally disseminated, something new comes out of it. It still has a flair of Latino culture.

Mariela Fernandez: Okay. That's interesting. Okay.

Gerard Sandoval: Oh, and I should add, I don't know if we'll get into this later, but there is definitely a mobility aspect to gentrification. And I think it's more of a – Necessarily a ratio element to it, but it's more of an environmental ethic that's associated with it. For example, in urban planning, that's what I study.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Gerard Sandoval: The environmental ethic there is through the built environment, right. What you're doing, you're creating neighborhoods that are going to lower gas emissions, and so the way – automobile gas emissions. The way you do that is by creating denser neighborhoods that are linked to different forms of transportation, not automobile transportation, right. Just like more walking and all that kind of stuff, so I think there's a big element, at least within the planning field, I think that's what it's about.

People who have this environmental ethic, they want to live near the central cities. They want to have access to alternate forms of transportation. The problem is that these neighborhoods – The Latino neighborhoods grow that way organically, and so the characteristics that exist in those neighborhoods that are organic are the ones that are seen as lucrative, you know, for different socioeconomic backgrounds.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah. Now I don't know if in your work you talk about strategies used to tackle gentrification and anti-displacement.

Gerard Sandoval: I know a lot of that. Not just in my research, but I serve on some important state governing boards here in Oregon.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Gerard Sandoval: Oregon is one of the few states that have planning at the state level. Okay, so the agency that does that here is called the Land Conservation and Development Commission.

And I serve on that Commission, and basically we control the city's growth boundaries, and we tell, we – Any bills are passed in the state legislature, we write the rules for those bills. And so cities basically have to do what we tell them. And I also send them the housing, therefore – Basically it's an affordable housing council for the state, so we are in control of the state's money for affordable housing. From that perspective, yeah there's a lot you can do.

One of the things – Well obviously, the key thing is providing affordable housing, but in affordable housing, the devils in the details. This affordable housing has to be at more of like a 30% to 40% area median income, not like the 60 to 80% area median income. And I think it has to be like that, very kind of targeted. And affordable housing needs to be targeted in areas that are identified as going through gentrification.

The State of Oregon has developed a quantitative way of assessing that, like different neighborhoods going through gentrification. The goal is to – This is what I'm pushing. The goal is to invest in affordable housing in those areas. Okay, so that's one thing, but there are also other ways that you can do it. In terms of land use, like you can – When it comes to gentrification, there's a lot of change in terms of the permits and so forth to build things. And one thing is slowing down that permit process. It's just to give people a little more time right. The other element is, you could do like, rent control. I grew up in an apartment in Los Angeles under rent control. Most people are against it, but I see the benefits of it. And in Oregon, we passed rent control at the state level. Although, you can change and landlords can still raise rents the maximum of 7% per year, which is still kind of a lot.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Gerard Sandoval: But anyways, that's another thing. I mean other ones that are not like physical interventions could be like supporting small businesses, like Latino ethnic kinds of businesses. A lot of it is like working with community-based organizations so they could come up with their own solutions, because they're very connected and so forth in those things.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Gerard Sandoval: Public spaces that are – That have like an ethnic element to them. For example in Latino spaces, you mentioned the murals, could be a part of it. Like a public square or a plaza, which is culturally important to us, going back from religious days to the Spanish and other.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Gerard Sandoval: And I mean there's different elements that you can do. The most important I would say is, I think, affordable housing, but like I said, the devils in the details in affordable housing.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah, that makes sense.

Gerard Sandoval: What do you do with the park? Did you study Parks and Recreation? Is that right?

Mariela Fernandez: I do. Yeah.

Gerard Sandoval: From that perspective, I would think that both the physical aspects and the social cultural aspects of the spaces are important, right. So, especially the social cultural ones, like providing access for people to have cultural celebrations, like Latino celebrations. Making sure that the spaces are – I did a study here in Eugene in creating more inclusive parks for the Latino community. I should share that with you, I don't think that's on the web. I'll share that with you.

So there one of the big recommendations is that, the city shouldn't be so – Parks shouldn't be so regulated. For example, in Eugene you have to make a reservation to hold the party at the park, and that creates a lot of tension between White people and Latinos. The Latinos just want to show up and have their party. And then the White people are there like reserving a week in advance, things like that. And your informal – I think the issue of informality is important from a social perspective for the Latino community.

Another example is like soccer, right. The White people here, they like to be in soccer leagues, and everything has to be really formal and stuff. Whereas Latinos, they just want to play soccer and they are going to play, and that creates problems too in terms of who uses the space.

It's little things like that, I think, that make a difference. But it's also the location of parks that make a difference, right. If they're kind of like out in places that are not very accessible through public transit or even biking, that's going to exclude folks, right.

Like I live in a neighborhood, I mean, there are a lot of White folks here, and we have a beautiful park that's full of trees. It feels like you're out in the forest, but it's not a very active space, right. It's more for people to walk their dogs and look at nature. Whereas I think that with the Latino community, the space is a lot more active, so you have to kind of like design it that way. Now that I think about it, they probably did create these kinds of spaces to keep people out.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah, well, of course. And the transportation piece is interesting, because I've been working on a different project – Like how to decide where to build a park if you're really interested in racial equity. And some of the people on the team talked about transportation, and they're feelings were that it doesn't matter if there's transportation, because you can easily put it in there, afterwards. But I like your point, I mean, sometimes it just doesn't happen.

Gerard Sandoval: Yeah, and the thing is that – There is this issue of being organic***aspects of mobility are more organic. They kind of grew with the city, they're in denser places. If you build a park somewhere around the boonies, everybody must drive to it, you know.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Gerard Sandoval: It's a ration of access, for sure.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah, okay. Now I'm going to go back to a couple of questions, so the next ones are about Latino communities. In Latino communities, what factors make it easier for Latino residents to engage in physical activity or mobility within their neighborhood?

Gerard Sandoval: I think it's like this issue of ownership of space. In my articles, I talked about territory. I grew up in a neighborhood that is low income, in a Central American neighborhood, and gangs control the parks, basically. So that was an issue of accessibility there from a different perspective, like you're afraid to use the things. Yeah, that's an element to it but things have changed since the 1990s, so I don't know if that's so prevalent now. But I think in terms of feeling included, right, I think it depends. Okay, let me backup. It depends on the context, right, everything always does. Let's say you're in a new destination state like the one you're in, Latinos, or the one I'm in, well mine isn't new, re-emerging or whatever.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Gerard Sandoval: The parks there are going to be ones that are not designed for Latinos. In a way you have to kind of design them so they're more inclusive, right, so you could provide all these things, different signage or you provide cultural events specifically for the Latino community, so they feel comfortable there. All these different things, right.

Whereas if they are parks that have historically been part of a strong ethnic community, like the Latino community, issues there are different, right. So there, it's more like – Probably, the things you're looking for already exist there. You know, and people – The networks that are already established, right, of people going and socializing in those spaces, yeah.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Gerard Sandoval: You know, like some important cultural events there, like in Chicano Park in San Diego, you have Chicano Park Day that brings in people from all over the Southwest. Yeah, you should actually look at Chicano Park. Part of the research I did is on that, but there's a bunch of material on Chicano Park. Are you familiar with it?

Mariela Fernandez: No, I'm not, so.

Gerard Sandoval: Yeah, so Chicano Park, just real quick – During the 1970's, you had a neighborhood there; it's called Logan Heights, and it was basically cut off by half, cut up by half by interstate 5, the interstate. And then it was cut off into fourths by the construction of another freeway. And then the Sheriff wanted to build underneath the freeway some sort of facility, and so, then people basically were fed up and they said no. They took over the place by force, and then the city basically rents that space to a community-based organization, the Chicano's Park Steering Committee, for like $1 a year.

And the space is really managed, not by the city, but it's managed by this nonprofit. And Chicano Park is like – If you look at the murals, those are like where some of the most famous murals are around Latino culture in the United States. The murals are under the freeway, and they depict the history of the Mexican American kind of struggles in the United States. It's a very important cultural space. In that neighborhood – Oh, did you freeze. Oh. Hello. Okay, I'm going to log back in.

Mariela Fernandez: I apologize, I think we're having storms. It's cloudy and this is the second time that my Internet has gone out here on campus.

Gerard Sandoval: Yeah, I forgot about those; we don't have those here. I lived in Iowa for two years. That's what my first academic year was, Iowa State, and there we had tornadoes. Here, we don't really have any natural disasters, and we'll have a big tsunami sometime in the next 10 years, but other than that, it's safe.

Mariela Fernandez: I guess when you kind of mentioned, well, the example of Chicano Park Days, the importance of having events for us, right, cultural events and having those strong social networks.

Gerard Sandoval: I think that plays a key role in this, right, because if it's a new destination, let's just call it new destination parks.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Gerard Sandoval: They don't have that history of social movement, and Chicano Park has a long history of social movement, and all that kind of stuff, right. And it's a symbolic kind of space that goes beyond San Diego, goes throughout the entire Southwest and so yeah. Now, the problem is you can't really recreate that, right, I mean that just happens, but you can kind of like copy elements of it and see what happens.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah, that's true.

Gerard Sandoval: Add a mural or something.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah, and what would you say are the biggest challenges in Latino communities that make physical activity or mobility harder for Latino residents?

Gerard Sandoval: I think that's more socioeconomic issues, so like the fact that, I mean I'm generalizing, but mostly you're talking about people that must work long hours, and some pretty physically demanding jobs.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Gerard Sandoval: After work, they probably don't feel like taking a nice stroll down the street because they're already tired, plus they must take care of the kids. They got a whole bunch of socioeconomic pressures upon them, right.

This – maybe you will disagree with me on this, but it would seem like those are the kind of people that need to go on walks, and to experience nature, and to have some fun at the park, right. But I think, it's not that. So, I think that's one big barrier, is their labor, basically.

The other one is I think just access to nice parks. I just started thinking about right now, when we were talking about earlier is that – Yeah, I think some regional destination parks that are like the most, which are the ones that cities put more money into, are not accessible to poor people or Latinos or whatever. So, it's – I think that's a big issue.

I think there are no cultural –there are cultural barriers, but they're not created by the Latino community, they are created by the White community to keep that space theirs, like culturally. I'll give you an example; I live in Eugene, Oregon, and it's similar to where you live. It's a lot of trees and nature and beautiful and all that stuff, and so there's this one park that's like a regional destination and people usually go there to go hiking. They go hiking; basically, we go hiking or you walk your dog, you know.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Gerard Sandoval: So, I brought – I went with – My wife's Mexican American and her family came up from California, and we wanted to find a place to go have a picnic. We went to that park thinking it's beautiful here, we can find a table. There are no picnic tables there.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Gerard Sandoval: The park is not designed for people that just want to hang out, and have some carne asada or whatever. It's designed for people that want to go and hike or walk their dog, and that's mostly white people that kind of do that, at least in this context. Not that Latinos don't enjoy doing that stuff, I mean, we do. You're seeing, I'm seeing – I've been here 12 years, and I'm seeing more Latinos in public spaces. There's also this other element too, especially in a state like mine, maybe yours too, but this issue of legality.

Like a lot of – That was a key issue when we try to create more inclusive parks with the Latinos here, is that those that were undocumented are fearful of being out in public, especially where they like hyper visualized. Like if they're like – Oh, I grew up in a famous park, by a famous park in Los Angeles, called the MacArthur Park. I don't know if you've heard of that one, but I wrote a book about this one. That was my first – That was my dissertation. And I looked at the redevelopment of that neighborhood, that Central American neighborhood. But that park, initially, was set up as one of these regional parks for higher income folks. It was one of the original parks of the city of Los Angeles.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Gerard Sandoval: And so, but that got transformed as more Central American movies into that neighborhood. So now it has some soccer fields, it has a bunch of like children's playground areas, it has a little area for a festival, it has – The lake was always there, but there's like activities you could do in the lake, like go paddleboarding.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Gerard Sandoval: I think that's the cultural – If you talk about any cultural area, they are not necessarily coming from the Latino side.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah, and when the Latino residents in the communities that you work with, like when they're trying to go to the grocery stores and the schools, I mean, are they driving there or are they walking or biking?

Gerard Sandoval: Yeah, it's an interesting question. Hmm. It does depend on the context too, so let's say in larger cities, well okay, let's generalize, but I'll generalize. But mostly, I think walking, taking public transit, and biking, I'm not sure. I mean, that's a tricky one. I have another edited book, I don't know if you saw this one, it's called – What's it called? Biking? Anyway, it's about biking justice issues and it's a – I forget what it's called, but whatever, it's about biking. So just look up my name, and look up biking.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Gerard Sandoval: Biking justice or mobility or something like that.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Gerard Sandoval: And so I think biking is a lot more complicated. But, in general, I would say, mainly we walk or we take public transit.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah, what was I going to say? Oh yeah, you mentioned that people work long hours, I was going to ask, so like in Chicago and Houston and those cities, usually the Hispanic men, especially from low-income households, they tend to work outside of the city. Either on the outskirts or in the suburbs. I don't know what the pattern is there were you, in the communities that you work in.

Gerard Sandoval: Yeah, that's a great question because it depends on, totally depends, it's a regional thing. When I worked in Iowa, it was all like meat packing. You know?

Mariela Fernandez: Oh, yeah.

Gerard Sandoval: I lived in rural meatpacking community. And it was so interesting, the issues that I uncovered there were fascinating. In Oregon, if you're talking about rural areas, you're talking mainly agriculture and also forestry. There's a lot of Latinos here that – We have a big forestry timber industry here, and most of those workers are now Latinos. And so, so yeah. That's so – It's regional based and is based on the kind of low wage labor that's in that region, I will say.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah, that makes sense. I hadn't heard about the forestry thing. That's interesting.

Gerard Sandoval: Well, that's the research I'm doing right now, and I think it's going to be *** Yeah, like not a lot of people have heard of that.

Mariela Fernandez: No.

Gerard Sandoval: I mean Latinos are basically sustaining the forestry industry here in Oregon. And Oregon is known for trees, so.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Gerard Sandoval: Yeah, but people don't think about it. They are invisible. They are literally invisible.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah. Yes, that happens a lot in a lot of the industries.

Gerard Sandoval: Oh yeah, for sure. What's going on over there at your place? What is going on with the Latinos and labor?

Mariela Fernandez: It's a little bit of agriculture, and there is some factory work, I think. I want to say, yeah, like livestock and things like that.

Gerard Sandoval: Oh, okay.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah, we are growing, but they seem, you know, slower than some other states.

Gerard Sandoval: Mm hmm.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah, so when you think about the factors and characteristics that Latino neighborhoods should have to encourage, just mobility in general, what factors do you think those are?

Gerard Sandoval: I think it's about options. I think the more diverse that kind of a built environment, the more diverse mobility there is in a space, like the better. Because some Latinos are still going to drive, I mean, that's just a fact. But I think there – Particularly with that ethnic group, I think there's a lot of opportunities to build on alternative forms of transportation.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah, okay. And something that you talked about a while ago, you talked about immigration. But I was going to ask about law enforcement, so not immigration, but police and how you think that impacts our communities?

Gerard Sandoval: I think it does quite a bit, because of the tie between immigration, the tie between ICE and the police. Sometimes it's not very cut and dry. In Oregon, it's supposed to be a state where the police do any – It's like a sanctuary state, so the police are not involved in regulating immigration. But there are some counties where the Sheriff teams up with ICE to do some sort of – So it's like, oh, if I have a hard time keeping up with it, and I stay with this stuff –
The perception is that the police do regulate immigration, and so that's a big issue here when it comes to putting yourself out there in the public sphere.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Gerard Sandoval: And then, of course, just good old-fashioned racism and stuff. You get cops – There's a lot of racism in Oregon, blunt, much more than I felt when I was in the Midwest. And there's a third element where it's like, it's maybe not the police that are racist but, they're forced to regulate those structural laws that are racist, like regulating who gets to play soccer. So then, the perception there is that cops are racists, but in a way, they're only kind of following the rules that have been set up.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah, enforcing them.

Gerard Sandoval: Yeah, enforcing them. Yeah, yeah, exactly. Yeah, it's about right.

Mariela Fernandez: And yeah, and the next question is how do you think law enforcement impacts Latino residents' perceptions of safety and the desire to be outdoors?

Gerard Sandoval: Yeah, I think it's kind of like the reverse then what it would be with white people. Yeah, I don't think it increases the perception of safety, I think it really increases the perception that they're going to be targeted somehow. I feel comfortable saying that, at least in Oregon. And then, I mean when I grew

up, in the neighborhood I grew up in, the police were the ones doing all the harassing and killing people and stuff, way before Black Lives Matter.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Gerard Sandoval: It wasn't it – You never looked at a police officer as someone that could be useful or helpful. I mean, now I do now that my social class has changed. I do look at my policemen as – Help me, help my kids, keep my kids safe, and all that kind of stuff.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah, okay. Now the next couple questions are about initiatives that have been implemented across the US. So, I'm going to ask you if you've heard of any of these. The first one is complete streets.

Gerard Sandoval: Oh yeah. One of my colleagues is all behind that stuff.

Mariela Fernandez: Oh yeah. How about Open Streets?

Gerard Sandoval: Open streets? I haven't heard of open streets.

Mariela Fernandez: Vision Zero.

Gerard Sandoval: Yeah, definitely. I've heard about that. These are all gimmicky planning things, but yeah.

Mariela Fernandez: Well, I was going to ask for your impressions, so we can do that after. So, Safe Routes to School?

Gerard Sandoval: Oh yeah.

Mariela Fernandez: Comprehensive plans?

Gerard Sandoval: Oh yeah, definitely. I teach that stuff.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah, single family zoning.

Gerard Sandoval: Oh yeah.

Mariela Fernandez: And accessory dwelling units?

Gerard Sandoval: Yes.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah, so I mean that was my next question of, you know, your perception of how effective these are?

Gerard Sandoval: Well. Okay, from a planning perspective, you got a separate them, like – I would say Complete, the Routes to School and Vision Zero. Whatever

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Gerard Sandoval: That's different than, what did you say? Zoning or Comprehensive Planning?

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Gerard Sandoval: That’s different. I think one of them, the program stuff is very superficial. Planners need a recipe to implement something, but it's not tackling any larger structural issues with the environment or inequality, or racism.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Gerard Sandoval: Whereas, comprehensive planning, those are just tools that planners have used 150 years to – And they can be used in a way to create segregation or ways to desegregate. They do very different things.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah. Are any of those, like the program ones Complete Streets, Open Streets, Vision Zero, have they been implemented in the communities where you work in?

Gerard Sandoval: Oh yeah, all over Oregon. They're into this stuff.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Gerard Sandoval: I wouldn't be surprised if those concepts originated in Oregon or in Portland.

Mariela Fernandez: Oh yeah.

Gerard Sandoval: Well, when it comes to planning, Oregon is way ahead of the rest of the states.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah, I visited Portland when I was younger. So yeah, even then, I saw it as very progressive and the transportation, and walking thing, walkability. I mean, are there any initiatives or recent initiatives that you've encountered that have tackled the root causes and do work?

Gerard Sandoval: No. No, no, that I'm aware of.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah. Yeah, there haven't been much, initiatives that folks have been able to identify within the US.

Gerard Sandoval: Right, I mean there's a lot of critiques. Like in that book that I co-authored, there's a lot of suggestions and critiques of like the mainstream bike movement. But not necessarily like alternatives – There's little stuff like giving bikes to African American folks and letting them start businesses around like fixing bikes, stuff like that.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Gerard Sandoval: Nothing like this is the comprehensive plan that can change the world, or at least change the city or something.

Mariela Fernandez: And the next question might relate toward your biking. So, one of the things that we've heard, and we've read online, when Hispanic or Latino residents move throughout their community, they feel safety concerns. So, this sometimes applies to people who bike, so they just don't feel safe. So, I don't know to what extent that has come out in your research.

Gerard Sandoval: Yeah. My colleague that I co-authored that bike book, she has an interesting perspective on that. She says that the reason why the bike movement has resonated with whites, particularly white middle class male, is that white males are usually in control of their environment like most of the time.

But when they're on a bike, they kind of lose that control. And they're the ones that can become minoritized, because they put – They're at higher risk, and the cars are like – So I think she has a point there. I think that from that element – The other thing is if you're undocumented, if you're on a bike, and there's a chapter on this in the book, it was written by one of my students about undocumented folks. If you're undocumented and if you are on a bike, you have a higher risk of getting detained, because there's all these laws.

Mariela Fernandez: Oh yeah.

Gerard Sandoval: I got to wear a helmet in some places. You can't be biking on the sidewalk. Even in parts of the city you're not allowed to bike.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Gerard Sandoval: You break those rules – It could be like a traffic stop in a way. A lot of those Black Lives Matter incidents around protests have been around black people getting pulled over in the car, but potentially happens on a bike too.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Gerard Sandoval: In fact, you're more exposed on a bike because they can see you.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Gerard Sandoval: They know you're Black or Latino right away.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah, and I don't know – Well with biking, I don't know if e-bikes have come up in your work.

Gerard Sandoval: Not in my work specifically, but – But I would say that's part of the aesthetics of gentrification, because what you have is the e-bikes and the bike share, you know, the bike share? Because, oh in Chicano Park, the city wanted to create a bike share there. And the people protested it and said forget it. Because they equate bike share with like, just like they equate bike lanes as elements of gentrification.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah. Good.

Gerard Sandoval: e-bikes? I wanted to get one, and the prices are like five grand. I said it's ridiculous. I'm not going to get one.

Mariela Fernandez: Oh, I didn't realize they were that expensive.

Gerard Sandoval: Oh yeah, if you get a good quality one, yeah, they're expensive.

Mariela Fernandez: Might as well buy a motorcycle.

Gerard Sandoval: Yeah. Yeah, or a beat down car. What was the whole purpose?

Mariela Fernandez: Or that too. Okay, well let's see, yeah, down to the last two questions. I mean, you kind of did, not mentioned but alluded to kind of the institution or systemic racism. I did want to ask about that, so how does systemic racism and institutional racism continue to impact mobility in Latino communities?

Gerard Sandoval: Yeah, let me think about that one. Maybe the best way to answer that is through that specific example. If you, so the work we were doing here in Oregon, in Eugene to create more inclusive parks, it was because folks that were undocumented really felt excluded from those parks and felt unsafe.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Gerard Sandoval: And so – And the reasons why were overt racism, you know, folks will tell them something. Other ones were the regulations that were set up. They weren't necessarily like – I would say they're structurally racist regulations, but they weren't like.

Mariela Fernandez: Oh yeah.

Gerard Sandoval: They weren't like regulations that said Latinos cannot stay in the park after dark, you know what I mean?

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Gerard Sandoval: And I think that good old-fashioned racism, whether it's like direct or whether it's more like kind of institutionalized, you can see it in the regulations of the spaces. If you study the regulations, you're going to raise a red flag with certain pieces of it. So yeah, I think – I mean it's a big question, right, so I think maybe answer it with examples.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah, yeah. And I'll have to remind you to send me that article on the parks.

Gerard Sandoval: Yes, yes, I will do that. If I forget, send me an email, because I forget everything.

Mariela Fernandez: It's okay, I'm reminding everyone what I remember. Yeah, and I mean the last question is just if you had unlimited resources, what would you do to improve the communities in which Latino residents live in?

Gerard Sandoval: Unlimited resources? Okay, let me think about that one. I'm not good at thinking on my feet when it comes to these kinds of questions, so let me see.

Mariela Fernandez: I'm the same way, so I completely understand.

Gerard Sandoval: It would be more about understanding what creates these exclusions, so whether it's the regulations or whether it's the location of the parks, and then using the resources to try to break down those regulations and those barriers, you know.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Gerard Sandoval: And I think instead of me saying, "Oh, I would invest in something," that's more like, "Well I would take away a lot of these regulations."

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Gerard Sandoval: Oh, did you say improving communities or did you say improving parks, access to parks?

Mariela Fernandez: No, improving communities.

Gerard Sandoval: Oh okay, well that's a little different. Okay, so let me see. So that one is – Let me see, I would – Hell, I'll keep it simple, I'll build a lot of affordable housing.

Mariela Fernandez: Oh yeah.

Gerard Sandoval: That's what I would do. And provide different forms of housing and access to ownership of those houses so the Latinos could build their wealth around homeownership. So, it doesn't have to be single family base housing, it could be like condos or it can even be like co-op. Like in England and stuff, in Europe, they do a lot more of that. Here there's different forms of co-op ownership, so where people like – The co-op owns the land, but the people own the structures and that kind of stuff.

Mariela Fernandez: Oh okay.

Gerard Sandoval: This gives people – It helps them build their wealth.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Gerard Sandoval: I think that is the biggest issue facing a lot of people of color in general is that we don't have a lot of wealth.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah. Yeah, that has been coming up quite a bit in the interviews. Just like the system of wealth in the US.

Gerard Sandoval: Yeah, yeah. Now that I'm saying that's the solution, I think the solution is getting rid of capitalism. It kind of goes against what I just said. I mean, you got to create some sort of – something different.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Gerard Sandoval: With communism and capitalism and socialism, something different. I'm not sure what that is.

Mariela Fernandez: We have the future generation, right, like your daughter, who can –

Gerard Sandoval: Yeah, she's smart so maybe she'll come up with it.

Transcript #4

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah, so you know, the first question is what is your job title?

Elva Yanez: Senior Advisor - Parks, Land Use, and the Built Environment.

Mariela Fernandez: Okay, and how long have you been working in issues related to parks and land use? I did see that you're, online, you are kind of related to health equity as well.

Elva Yanez: Yeah, I go back to parks and open spaces to 2004.

Mariela Fernandez: Okay, alright. And during your career, have you noticed any changes in the way Latinos engage in physical activity or move through their community, including using different transportation modes like walking and biking and so forth.

Elva Yanez: I haven't really seen much difference. Here in LA, you have such a wide variety. But, you know, Latinos do a lot of walking, they do a lot of bicycling not because, you know – It's out of necessity. It's not necessarily because they want to, and that's because of, you know, socioeconomic status.

People also take the bus. Most bus riders are Latino in LA, African Americans, but there's so many more Latinos that they dominate. And of course, everybody has cars here, and I think that's consistent in many urban communities, right?

Mariela Fernandez: Are you in downtown LA or in the suburbs of LA?

Elva Yanez: I am five miles from downtown.

Mariela Fernandez: Okay.

Elva Yanez: I live in Northeast Los Angeles in the community called El Sereno. And it's much more suburban than say Boyle Heights.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Elva Yanez: Some parts of Highland Park, but it's just five miles. So, you know, we're close to the urban core.

Mariela Fernandez: One of the questions that we've been interested in, when you said biking, is that regular biking or does that include the e-bikes?

Elva Yanez: E-bikes are starting to become pretty common, but most of those folks seem- like they are recreational, not utilitarian or modes of transportation to go to work and stuff like that.

Mariela Fernandez: Now you also kind of mentioned the bus riders, do you know if that changed by chance during COVID?

Elva Yanez: Yeah, I think everything changed during Covid. A decrease in bus riding because of the transmission. At one point, some of our allies were working on getting the bus service free, which did happen here, and that changed things too. But transportation is not an issue I pay super close attention to, so.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah, okay. I guess when thinking about Latino communities, what factors make it easier for Latino residents to engage in physical activity?

Elva Yanez: I don't know if that – I would phrase it that it's easier.

Mariela Fernandez: Um Humm.

Elva Yanez: There's some necessity to, you know, in relationship to mobility, right? If a woman doesn't have a car, and she has to take her kids to the doctor, to the store, she's on the bus.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Elva Yanez: And one of our allies – The name is Investment in Place; they have done – They're creating a plan for moms and mobility here in the City of LA, and that might be something you'd be interested in looking at. The executive director there is Jessica. What's Jessica's last name? I'll find it for you and send it to you.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Elva Yanez: But yes, I think necessity is really when you're talking about Latinos and bicycling, you can't – it's not just recreation, and in fact, I would say it's more about necessity.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Elva Yanez: You know a lot of our work looks at the social determinants of health, right. And the connection between transportation and income is kind of the cornerstone of that. I rarely get asked these kinds of questions, but I would say that when you're talking about people who have low incomes, and they have two to three jobs, and their kids are home alone, you know, the thought of recreational mobility becomes very, very secondary to necessity.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Elva Yanez: But there are a lot of young Latinos who use, you know, bicycles.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Elva Yanez: Lately and you do see them around, for sure. I would say more males and females.

Mariela Fernandez: Okay. And, and I was going to say – So, I've heard like in other large cities, Chicago, Houston, a lot of the – Especially men, end up having to drive to the suburbs for jobs. I don't know what it is in LA, whether the jobs that Latinos have are in the city, or if they do have to travel outside?

Elva Yanez: Yeah, LA is huge, you know, geographic wise, as well as population. You can go 35 miles very easily and still be in LA.

Mariela Fernandez: Mm hmm.

Elva Yanez: From my house, I live on the border of two little cities, two smaller cities, South Pasadena and Alhambra, and to get to the airport, which is on the other side of town, it's about 25 miles. And then, if you go to the Valley, which is like the Northern corner of the city, again, and then there's just one little strip that goes from downtown all the way down to the port that they acquired, you know, specifically for that purpose to have control over the port, again, at least 35 miles.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah

Elva Yanez: So, you know, it's sort of a – It's not your typical geography I would say compared to, especially Eastern cities, right. That we're here to sprawl and – So yeah, you know, you see Latino men riding bicycles to work, you know, they're going to work. They're wearing their baseball caps, oftentimes not wearing helmets. They have a backpack, and they're older bicycles, and they are not wearing spandex.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah, I can tell.

Elva Yanez: There's some obvious clues as to the purpose of their use of bicycles.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah, okay. The next one is the opposite. So, what are the biggest challenges in Latino communities that make physical activity or travel harder for Latino residents?

Elva Yanez: Physical activity?

Mariela Fernandez: Um hmm.

Elva Yanez: I mean, I go back to poverty. It's such a fundamental determinant of health, that either you don't have time because you're working all the time, or you're, you know, you don't have the resources to do that. But I also think that, you know, depending upon your class – There are plenty of middle-class Latinos and Latinas who bicycle recreationally, you know. Back in the day I used to be that, not so much anymore. With a group of women, mostly Latinas, most who worked in the field of Parks and Open Space.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Elva Yanez: And, you know, it's – I think there's, what am I trying to say here. It's very much dependent upon your income, how you use – How you are physically, how you're physically active, and how that interfaces, you know, getting prioritization.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah, we appreciate that perspective. When we were doing a study, that's one of the comments I was, you know, I wanted to use physical activity, but I was hoping that people didn't assume that we were talking about leisure time physical activity. And we did want to make room for you know families who use biking and walking to get to work and make room in conversation for those who do that but recreationally.

Elva Yanez: Yeah, I mean, you see a lot of Latino children walk with their mothers or somebody else's mothers to school. They don't have cars like you see in more affluent neighborhoods, where moms are dropping off or they carpool, right. Much more use of walking, buses, for physical activity – For transportation, for getting from one place to another than other communities, affluent communities. Where you're at geographically, it also determines that, you know, this intersection of income, geography, and mobility modes of transportation.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah. And so, when we think about Latino neighborhoods, what factors or characteristics do you think all Latino neighborhoods should have to ensure that you know that residents are able to engage in physical activity and be healthy?

Elva Yanez: Sure, equitable, you know, equitable access to parks is our big thing, right. Equitable park and recreation facilities, similar qualities. Equity is at the core of the answer to that question. Do you have safe streets to walk or – There's weird feedback. Are you getting that?

Mariela Fernandez: No, but I can hear it on your end.

Elva Yanez: Yeah, and I don't know what's going on. Should I call back in? Should we try?

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Elva Yanez: Okay, let me do that.

Mariela Fernandez: Mm hmm.

Elva Yanez: Okay bye. Okay. I think that's better.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Elva Yanez: What was your question? Did I answer?

Mariela Fernandez: I said what factors or characteristics should all Latino neighborhoods have to – ?

Elva Yanez: Yeah., so they should have the same quality infrastructure, you know, safe streets, sidewalks, shade, bus, shelters, good infrastructure. There was a study here in Los Angeles that looked at, you know – was it called the People – God, I can't remember the initiative, Vision Zero, right. And the basis of that was a study of the routes, you know, transportation routes. And the highest level of fatalities and injuries were on those streets and highways in poor, low-income communities of color.

And, historically, these communities were the ones that got divided in half by freeways or highways to facilitate rapid mobility by people living in the suburbs, primarily white middle class people. And they lack the kinds of infrastructure that defines more affluent communities, hence the accidents, hence the crashes, and the fatalities and injuries. And the rates of return fatalities and injuries are disproportionately higher in these communities. So, I mean that's the underlying root cause, not only of injury, traffic injuries, but also – Traffic safety, traffic injuries – But also creating environments that are conducive to physical activity use the mobility routes.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Elva Yanez: So, that's your root cause and that's your root solution, your primary solution, from a policy and systems change, right? It's not about, so much about getting people to understand that physical activity is important. I think there's been enough education over the last two decades to – You know, that people understand that, broadly, including the Latino community, but how do you recreate if you don't have that infrastructure? How do you recreate if it's not safe? Yeah.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah. So, as far as tackling that root cause at the center of all this. Are there any initiatives or action items that you can think of, or that you've seen implemented?

Elva Yanez: I think here in Los Angeles there's recognition about the disparities and infrastructure. Those experienced by predominantly Latino communities, which usually, you know, are low income, because as people move up the economic ladder, they have more choices about where to live, and therefore will move into more middle-class communities further away from the urban core. But now you know with gentrification, you see people moving back, right.

So, you know, the primary solutions are policy solutions or structural solutions, right, and investing in infrastructure is one of the key solutions that we recommend. Most of our work focuses on infrastructure investments, equitable infrastructure investments in parks and open space, but also transportation.

And I think that when you start having, not just equitably funding, but all the systems related to transportation infrastructures have to be looked at through the lens of distributional equity, procedural equity, and structural equity. And we've written quite a lot about that in our relationship to parks and open space, but I think the same holds true for transportation. That if you don't include Latino voices, especially those of low income, marginalized communities in planning for transportation infrastructure improvements or decision making, then you're missing the procedural equity boat. If you don't include low income or marginalized Latino Community voices in the creation of that infrastructure, where is it going to go, what's it going to look like, what's it going to feature, you know, you're missing out on that distributional equity piece and similarly structural. If you do not have Latino representation in the agency that's doing that work, then it's very unlikely that you're going to have the same level of awareness and consciousness about those inequities and how to resolve them than if you did. Really having at the highest levels, a clear understanding of equity and equity solutions is sort of a first step. You know, you can't just – it's such a holistic, you know, approach that, you know – Just coming in and saying, "Okay, we're going to fix this

street to be more hospitable to physical activity," but all the other background systems have not changed, it's very unlikely that you're going to hit your mark. So, we talked a lot about operationalizing equity from that, you know, more global perspective. And it's complicated, it takes time, and it's expensive.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Elva Yanez: So undoing equity is the name of the game, and how you do it is really sort of critical to your success.

Mariela Fernandez: And I appreciate that. Looking through, you know, how people talk about equity online, it seems like everyone might have different definitions or different ways of operationalizing it. So, you'll have to send me your items so I can see how your agency defines them.

Elva Yanez: Yeah, we spent a lot of time on that, and Dr. Manuel Pastor – After we did the park measure here in LA county, and there were problems, and Measure M, yeah. Yeah, Measure A, no Measure M in 2016, there were immediate problems with implementation. And that's when we started our four-part series on operationalizing equity. They didn't have those conversations; are people saying, "Oh well, there's no common definition" or "oh, no we nobody knows what that means."

We were bringing in, you know, government officials to say, "No, no, no, there is – there are metrics, there are ways of thinking about equity that, you know, you don't have to scratch your head and say, throw your hands up and say we don't know what to do." Manuel Pastor's shop over at USC's Equity Research Institute, I believe, developed a report on both of those measures, and they called it Measures Matter. And they talked about how you do, you know, definitions, common definitions of what equity means in relationship to infrastructure. We developed some papers that went deep on sort of the different types of equity, and some other contextual factors, you know, that were really geared to eliminating that sort of lack of consciousness.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Elva Yanez: And more – It's more of a cop out than anything because equity and infrastructure, or equity and public services is not a new idea. It's just that people have not spent the time or energy to really wrap their heads around it. Yeah, there's already some solid approaches that can be used, and they've been very helpful in implementing these measures. Two years after Measures A and M went into effect, voters passed a storm water measure, and even more work was done on these ideas of how do you implement equitable infrastructure investments. That's the name of the game.

Mariela Fernandez: Mm hmm.

Elva Yanez: And I can certainly send those to you.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah. I'm going to have –

Elva Yanez: You can talk to Jessica, because I mean she's not Latina but, you know, she definitely has a very deep understanding of – She worked on Safe Routes to School and very sensitive to all this stuff. I strongly recommend you look at her website, and if you can't talk to her.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Elva Yanez: Jessica Meanie, Investing in Place.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah, and I'm going to. So, my primary research looks at, environmental injustices impacting park spaces in Latino communities, so I'm going to have to touch base with you and look at your resources. I'm trying to plan a study on the racial equity park plans that are coming out, which are not common across the US. But I'm not going to talk about it right now, because I'm going to – Not talk about, you know, this interview, but I'll have to touch base with you afterwards.

Elva Yanez: Yeah, and we have a new funding initiative on behalf of Robert Wood Johnson Foundation on Parks, Power and – People, Parks, and Power, which really is promoting upstream solutions. Through *** And power building in parks and green spaces, led by low income, led by people who work in low-income communities of color.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah, I'll have to touch base with you about that too, because I had noticed that they were interested in that structural and policy and organizations.

Elva Yanez: Yeah, and we have a report called Change – I'll send you all this stuff.

Mariela Fernandez: I'm so happy you agree to do this.

Elva Yanez: Sure.

Mariela Fernandez: So, another thing that we have been asking about and you mentioned a moment ago is gentrification, and that's also a term that seems to be defined differently, based on who the person is defining it. So, I did want to ask for just your definition or your agency's definition of gentrification.

Elva Yanez: I mean, just off the top, but I don't have it. But really, it's, you know, changing demographics in a community, usually low-income community, that has not had a lot of – a disinvestment community, where market forces and social forces collide, and make those communities sort of desirable for new residents, because they're affordable. And, as a result, you see displacement of long-term residents, usually low-income people of color and small businesses that service their needs.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Elva Yanez: We have a report on – What do we call it, Healthy Development without Displacement.

Mariela Fernandez: Oh good.

Elva Yanez: Look at the issue of displacement related to, you know, healthy development. That could be parks, that could be, you know, things like that. And we really look at it from a public health perspective. It's not definitive, you know, that we're not you know planners, but we do have planners on staff. We're public health people, so what we tried to do was create a framework that sort of takes a public health approach to the issue of displacement and justification.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah. Yeah, one of my questions was going to be what strategies are being used for the anti-displacement, but yeah if that's in your report – I would appreciate it if you sent that my way, unless it's on your website, I'm more than happy to look for it.

Elva Yanez: I'm starting to make a list of the things that I'm going to send you.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah, and we're particularly interested in cultural displacement, and examples of cultural displacement. I'm not sure if you have any right off the top of your head.

Elva Yanez: Yeah, I mean you can look at here in LA, Highland Park and Boyle Heights and the African American community Limerick Park, where a very rapid influx of younger, White professionals have changed the landscape pretty quickly. And there's a lot of tension that results from that, right. Because, you know, even if people are not well educated, or don't have higher levels of education, it doesn't mean they understand what's happening to them. And there's tremendous tension that results from that, and you know, sometimes those tensions get acted out upon, so it's not a great situation.

I know my community in El Sereno has also been gentrifying. And now, my children can't afford to live in this neighborhood, you know. While it's great for my – Here we go again – While it's great for my values, that's a false – It's a false benefit, if you don't have the means to sustain that kind of, or to be participating

in that kind of market, right. So yeah, it's such a complex and difficult issue that, you know, I don't think anybody has really – I mean the real, if you go to the root causes, the real problem is capitalism.

Mariela Fernandez: Mm Hmm.

Elva Yanez: Right, and that's a tough one to get your hands around.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Elva Yanez: Okay.

Mariela Fernandez: Now, I'm going to jump a little bit. The issue of law enforcement has come up quite a bit in some Latino neighborhoods across the US. We wanted to ask how law enforcement impacts, you know, healthy living; the physical activity, the healthy nutrition, so how does law enforcement impact the Latino neighborhoods?

Elva Yanez: Well, I mean, you know, Vision Zero, are you familiar with that? Yeah, the whole piece on law enforcement I think has been well described in that work. You know, where – When you try to use enforcement as a tool for addressing traffic injuries and fatalities, it's, you know, can be problematic in communities that have been historically profiled, and where police brutality is kind of like an important part of that legacy, right.

So, I would say that the approach to law enforcement for improving recreational or yeah, recreational or physical activity related to getting to destinations, is that you have to be very, very careful in sort of if you prioritize that versus other solutions.

In my mind, going back to what we first started talking about, you know, disinvestment. Disinvestment is not solved by law enforcement. Disinvestment is solved by intentional and prioritized investment. So, we don't talk a lot about law enforcement in our work, but it does come up in the ecosystem of park equity, because what you have right now, especially, is homeless, you know, the unhoused issues of –You know, it's all related, right. The lack of affordable housing and the unaffordability crisis here in LA has just created a tremendous amount of unhouse people, and parks become sanctuaries, or safe places for them to pitch their tents.

But then you create tension with those people who want to use the park, especially families with children, who have very little tolerance for that because they feel like that population is taking away their place, their safe place to recreate. And it – that's when law enforcement gets back involved, right? We've got tensions here in LA where, you know, people will call for defunding the police, but if you just do that across the board, then you create situations where park managers feel like they are losing an essential element of their ability to maintain that space.

Mariela Fernandez: Mm Hmm.

Elva Yanez: Right? It gets super complicated. And what we need is more investment in parks, where you have more eyes in the park in the form of staffing and programming that encourage appropriate uses of parks, and have the wherewithal to manage those other social problems that kind of spill in, you know, similarly to libraries, right?

Like the unhoused use libraries as a resource and a safe place, right, from the elements. And I think parks, it's a similar issue. I think libraries may have had a bit more time to address those issues, right. And you see more progress, but we've seen – I think Denver has some innovative programs. And, you know, the traditional law enforcement with badges and guns may not be the appropriate solution to some of the social problems that we have. But that's not to say that you don't need the presence of law enforcement in a – In my community, the reason I got involved in Parks and Open Spaces is that we had a very poorly planned development for a hill behind my house, in front of my house actually, a hundred and 10 acres of undeveloped open space. The reason it was undeveloped is that nobody wanted to build

around El Sereno. Because, you know, you had a bunch of cholos, low income, it was, you know, not seen as – But it was one of the last open spaces in the region. And so, this guy wanted to develop there, but he was just going to clear cut the hillside, put fill, and then these million-dollar houses. And it was like, there's water under the hills. Anyway, to make a long story short, we were able to get additional environmental route review required, and there was a lawsuit; the city acquired those 20 acres.

And once they were acquired, five of those acres were purchased by a local conservation organization, and they had plans for a trail, then Covid hit. And all these off-roaders started coming on the hillside, and we did not protect that hillside for off-roaders to come and use it. And these are people from all over LA; social media has gotten involved, and promoted this place because it's free. – And anyway, we had a challenge to get the conservation agency to really take the off-roading seriously, and now we're trying to get the LAPD involved, because these guys are not nice people. And how do we – The only way we can get control of that situation is to have what I call people in trucks, right, with law enforcement badges who can cite them, and say, “Here's a $500 ticket, don't come back here,” put gates up, etc.

I mean there's a whole long conversation about that. But we can’t sort of assume that you can just get rid of law enforcement. And we've seen that, you know, you get tremendous backlash from regular residents, who recognize that there is a vital role that they play. What people don't want is law enforcement killing people, or profiling people, or harassing people who are riding their bicycles, right. And I think that is the – it's sort of the lane in the law enforcement realm that needs to be addressed.

Mariela Fernandez: Mm Hmm.

Elva Yanez: We still need people issuing traffic citations, right. You can't, you can't – I mean people went nuts during Covid, on reckless driving. How do you get that under control without law enforcement? So, I don't want to say I'm a big proponent of heavy duty in law enforcement, but there is a role that they play. You know, defunding the police completely it's just not going to work.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Elva Yanez: Or Rangers, for that matter.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah, no and I think that's come up in all the interviews so far, right? Everyone talks about needing police, but then, at the same time, feeling uncomfortable when the racial profiling comes up. We've been trying to tease that out a little bit more, so I do appreciate that because I think you were able to do that in your answer.

Elva Yanez: Vision Zero, have you looked at the Vision Zero literature on that, because I think.

Mariela Fernandez: Complete, I know what it is. But yeah –

Elva Yanez: Yeah, I would definitely look at that, because they have had to deal with that issue. And it's tough, I mean it's as tough as gentrification.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Elva Yanez: Right and we're still just cusp of figuring some of the stuff out.

Mariela Fernandez: Now another, I guess hot topic issue would be immigration. So I mean in LA – I don't know if LA is a sanctuary city or not.

Elva Yanez: I believe it is.

Mariela Fernandez: Okay. I mean. – What is the role of immigration and impacting Latino communities?

Elva Yanez: Well, I think that, you know – Yes, it's the county and city of LA, adopted sanctuary policies. And then I think the state of California has something. Anyway, immigration forces people underground, right? Immigration, you know, if you don't have the right immigration status, it forces people underground. And that plays out in I think a number of ways for people trying to keep a low profile. And that may mean reluctance to voice their opinions in planning processes that are encouraging – Listening to voices of non-traditional, you know, planning partners. People who have traditionally not participated in planning processes.

I mean to me it's kind of like what we found in our work here in LA county, with both Measure A and Measure W is that rather than having government agencies be the face of community engagement processes, contracting with trusted community-based organizations that have a long history, working in and with low income, predominantly immigrant populations is the way to go. And we've seen tremendous results, as a result of that. Investments in those organizations to basically organize and build power among those folks, right, is another solution.

But your traditional approach to having government be that the face, government entities, government agencies be the face of trying to engage immigrant populations, is not necessarily going to be the most effective. Unless there's been a tremendous amount of work to build trust, right. And we've seen that, you know, LA is sort of a little bubble in it of itself. It's not little, but definitely, you know, like a few other major cities in the U, where this work has a long history – you know, LA used to be Mexico. There's just a very strong understanding of those issues. It does eliminate the income inequality that, you know, immigrants have to deal with. And are, you know, part of a system that's quite unfair, right, because people take advantage of the low wages and lack of power that these communities often are dealing with.

So I would say, absolutely, immigrant status is kind of a sister issue to poverty, and very closely intertwined. But we have, I mean, unlike the, unlike the other issues, if you're not on the border, you know, the solutions are much more I think understood and implementable. You know, not from the root causes, those are global forces, right. So, but dealing with the media issues related to activity friendly routes to school, absolutely, I think that's – that's doable.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah. You have mentioned initiatives, so I want to ask about them. I'm going to read you a list of initiatives, and you tell me if you have heard of them or not. I am going to mark off Vision Zero, as you heard about that, I believe you mentioned Safe Routes to School?

Elva Yanez: Yeah.

Mariela Fernandez: You've heard of that. How about Complete Streets?

Elva Yanez: Yes.

Mariela Fernandez: Open Streets.

Elva Yanez: Yes.

Mariela Fernandez: Comprehensive Master Plans?

Elva Yanez: Say that again.

Mariela Fernandez: Comprehensive and Master Plans?

Elva Yanez: Yes.

Mariela Fernandez: Single Families Zoning?

Elva Yanez: I know what that is. Residential zoning, yeah.

Mariela Fernandez: Accessory Dwelling Units?

Elva Yanez: Yes.

Mariela Fernandez: You've mentioned Vision Zero quite a bit, so I'm going to focus in on that one. I mean, I just wanted to know what your impressions have been about how effective it has been.

Elva Yanez: Here in Los Angeles, it's not been effective at all. In fact, rates have gotten worse. I just, you know – I think structurally, the way LA was built, you know, with the suburban commuter in mind, just creating infrastructure that facilitated the quickest efficient routes to downtown. Such a pervasive reality that – And the mindset, the mindset of people in Los Angeles about, you know, it's a culture, it's a culture.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Elva Yanez: And you can compare that to say Portland or other places that, you know, really focus on non-vehicle modes of transportation. I mean the idea that people would come up in my neighborhood and off-road, it just boggles my mind.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Elva Yanez: Yeah, so culturally, we have a situation here. Infrastructure – we have a situation here that's made it very difficult. And I think that, you know, what – And this is my own personal observation, I don't think there may be data on this, is the effectiveness of the messaging. It's sort of non-visible. It's not, it hasn't been very upfront and noticeable. I worked at the tobacco, Tobacco Control for 10 years and, you know, there was so much investment in the issue. From public foundation – from public resources government money, you know, there are all these agencies and government entities that worked on the issue. You had the voluntary associations working on it. You had philanthropic organizations, I worked on two Robert Johnson initiatives. Huge investments, huge investments sustained over a period, that's what it takes to change the culture.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Elva Yanez: And because they had such a rigorous Public Health orientation, where people were really studying what worked and what didn't work, evaluating interventions to see what worked. Overtime, even in that 10-year period that I was involved, the interventions narrowed down to where ultimately it landed on three: Smoke-free Public Places, tobacco taxes, and hard-hitting media campaigns, where people were showing people with lung cancer, people, you know, all these gory pictures, right, on cigarette labels in other countries mostly, not here. And those things worked. And unless you have that level of investment and intention, intentional focus on upstream strategies, you're going to have mixed results. So, Vision Zero, I don't know if it had that intention on policy and systems change per se, right.

I remember when we did an equity evaluation of the Vision Zero program in LA, in the City of LA, and it was just getting started, right. The mayor just announced, you know, the goals, no deaths by 2025 or something like that, 2023. And, you know, there was a lot of – There was not a great amount of understanding amongst the folks running the program on how you do this work in low-income communities of color, but the investment was so limited.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Elva Yanez: How do you make change that way? And if people aren't invested at the top, you know, I mean, it becomes – You have the systems like Department of Transportation in LA versus Metro in the County versus *** at the State, you know, all those four forces need to be sort of on the same page. And I think that's another contributing factor to why Vision Zero has not been successful here, I think, the other communities have shown that, you know, to have a homogenous community like (***), right? This is where it came out of, right?

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Elva Yanez: That, you know, we don't have that. We're one of the most diverse cities in the country, so that's complicated.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Elva Yanez: Again, you know, I think talking to Jessica Meanie would be very valuable for you. She came from Safe Routes to School and started her own nonprofit. Very smart, very – Right in the midst of all these issues.

Mariela Fernandez: Oh good.

Elva Yanez: Married to a Latino.

Mariela Fernandez: Oh really.

Elva Yanez: Yeah.

Mariela Fernandez: So, I mean if you had unlimited resources, like where would you start? What would you improve in Latino communities?

Elva Yanez: In terms, just general?

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah. Like to, you know, to make them healthier.

Elva Yanez: I think that's a loaded question, boy. I mean, magic wand level, I think would be to bring the economic status up of everybody, right? People don't have to work two or three jobs, they can pay attention to their children, education, their physical activity, and their health. You know that to me is sort of like – Without that, you're just putting band aids on the situation, right. So, economic status would be, probably my first thing. Improve the schools. And I think you know, even though I work on infrastructure issues, I think, at that point, then I would – You know, once you get some of those cores, make sure everybody has health insurance. All of those are related to income and time. Time to do the things that you need to do to stay healthy because staying healthy takes work. It's not so apparent when you're young, when you're – oops.

Mariela Fernandez: Hello

Elva Yanez: Hey there.

Mariela Fernandez: Sorry, it froze for a moment, then I got kicked out.

Elva Yanez: Yeah, So I was at the magic wand stage. Yes, I think changing people's economic status, you know, giving them the resources they need to be able to attend to their, you know, health and education, and family well-being. And then move into, you know, fixing disinvested communities, right, fixing the road, fixing the parks, fixing the stormwater infrastructure, all that stuff that also – You know, planting a ton of trees, all those things that sort of contribute to healthy equitable livable communities as we refer to them.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Elva Yanez: Because if you move out – I think there's been studies on this. If you move out a family from a community that we've been talking about into a more affluent area, with mixed income, you know, people do better.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Elva Yanez: Right, so you can't just fix the infrastructure. And I think that's the limitation of the work that we do actually is. If you don't look at those other social determinants of health and see how they all work together we – Our impact is influenced by that.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Elva Yanez: I never get asked about the magic wand.

Mariela Fernandez: Well, I want to be mindful of your time. I don't know if there's anything else that you want, you know, what to say or ask?

Elva Yanez: No, I think it's you know. I think that's it.

Transcript #5

Mariela Fernandez: Okay. So, the first question is what is your job title?

David Rojas-Rueda: I am assistant professor at Colorado State University.

Mariela Fernandez: And how long have you been working on issues related to health equity and sustainability?

David Rojas-Rueda: 13 years. 13, 14 years.

Mariela Fernandez: Okay. All right. And I'll take notes just in case.

David Rojas-Rueda: Yep.

Mariela Fernandez: And the next question is, during your career have you noticed any changes in the way that Hispanics engage in physical activity or mobility? So, things like using different transportation modes like walking, biking and so forth.

David Rojas-Rueda: So, I would say not significant changes. No, not really.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

David Rojas-Rueda: Yeah.

Mariela Fernandez: And the next question is related to Hispanic communities. In Hispanic communities, what factors facilitates Hispanic residents being able to engage in physical activity or just travel through their community?

David Rojas-Rueda: I don't know dependent of the age group, but I will say if they have enough time to do physical activity, leisure type of physical activity, I think for the adult population. I mean, probably they do not have often leisure time for do physical activity and the time dedicated for leisure activities is probably more watching TV or sharing with family in food-related activities. As a Hispanic, I don't think we have the culture that let's go and do physical activity together besides to do a specific sport like soccer or something like that.

And we are a very male-oriented sport driving culture. So, if we are gathering with family and friends, probably it's more for eat more than for do physical activity. So, in terms of adult woman, I will say that probably they spend a lot of time, in addition to working, do activities at home. So, if they can be described as a physical activity, the home activities, but not certainly having often in mind that I need to do physical activity or will be nice to do physical activity. So physical activity is not embedded in that kind of daily activities or a priority.

And for children, at least in the US, it is hard to shift from that family culture and country culture to do physical activity and, yes, an easy way because probably is not safe, easy to walk or bike to school. So, my sense is that probably everything is against to do physical activity and the daily activities for Hispanic individuals. Probably this is more my individual experience, but if you are a Hispanic person that you want to go and run around neighborhoods, probably you are concerned that if you are alone, you are male, color running in the streets, probably you feel like you are visualized like a risk for the neighbors, for the neighborhood neighbors, et cetera, in terms of safety.

You feel like you are more a threat, that you are seen more as a threat than someone doing physical activity. So, if you don't dress up as if you are doing physical activity, you put a sport clothes and headphones. I try to imitate the expectations from American culture or white folks. If you don't it in that

way, they feel like probably you were a threat. So, that is not very encouraging for younger folks and I will say that plus any additional other racial stigmatization, yeah.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah. Yeah, and I was going to ask you what you meant by not safe and easy. Thanks for mentioning the stigma associated just with the body.

David Rojas-Rueda: Yeah. And I will say that probably safe and easy depends who you are, the experience of willing to do physical activity outside change. My perception is that for younger males this stigmatization of you are a threat for the rest, for woman, girls probably that you don't feel safe.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

David Rojas-Rueda: You feel like there are many threats around you, so the experience is different. So, I'm a cyclist, well, I'm use my bicycle to ride to work and home often. So, here you say that you are a cyclist, because we often walk, you are not saying, "I'm a pedestrian." So, everyone is a pedestrian. So, this thing that you need to label someone that use a bicycle as a cyclist, I think is a stereo perception that if you use a bicycle, you need to dress up as a cyclist, buy a bicycle for a mountain, hybrid or race kind of bicycles. It is very hard to find in a market a normal bicycle. And I feel a normal bicycle is a commute type of bicycle, like a Dutch type of bicycle. So, the market is either made you to normalize bicycles as something, not as a game, toy or sport, if not something utilitarian like go to work or go to do chores. And that makes everything complicated too.

So, if you want to move around through a physical activity, or you are pedestrian or you are a cyclist and you need to invest a lot of money to be that kind of person in this society, or you use pool transportation, and then you are arriving to the *** pool transportation as a mode of transport to access to many destinations and the stigma associated with use pool transportation. So, that came from it's not easy and safe. So, it's not easy because you don't have the tools or the culture doesn't exist to be active, so it's not easy. It's not like it's a easy choice to do, to take and it's not safe because walking in many of the streets and cycling, worst, is not safe. And city managers and authorities are very happy that we have bike lanes and it's just a line draw in the ground. So, this is not a bike lane, this is just a line painted in the ground.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

David Rojas-Rueda: So, it's not a bike lane. So, what the concept of bike lane is totally different, and you don't see many folks using that or children's using that because they don't feel safe. So, this misconception of what a bike lane means...

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

David Rojas-Rueda: …makes it really difficult for many people to see as a safe choice. Plus if you're Hispanic, so you are a threat for the community, so less encouraging. So, and if your culture is just associated with food and *** , so that makes everything more complicated.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah. We can't just be outside.

David Rojas-Rueda: Yeah.

Mariela Fernandez: And so, in the communities that you work with are Hispanic families using more cars to get around? Or are they using buses and bikes? What's your experience?

David Rojas-Rueda: So, I would say that the most common mode of transportation for the community, the Hispanic communities I work with is cars, trucks. Unfortunately, and this is based on the culture that we were raised, so cars are an important tool to show social status, that are doing well in society.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

David Rojas-Rueda: So, you have some kind of important and relevant position. And those concepts are perpetrated here in the US. And you see a lot of commercials of cars selling in each TV show and they sell the idea that it is attractive, cool, fast, better to even... And their TV commercials that say that, "When you are tired and stressed from family and work, you just jump to the Lincoln navigator and then relax and push a button and then there's like a *** sort of car."

Mariela Fernandez: Oh yeah.

David Rojas-Rueda: So, this is way many tools they're using for keep us to attach to that kind of status, pleasant experience of using a car. And the Hispanic communities, I will say, are very vulnerable to those messages. Not only because we were raised in that culture and we are still living in that kind of social tiers in our communities and social status is really important, but also because many of the Hispanics that migrate to the US come from communities that probably have...There are more rural communities that have less access to education, that have less access to many opportunities at the community level. So, when they arrive here, they see those messagings and the opportunity to access cars, it's so important and the environment even if you don't want. I will tell you that at the first year that I moved here, I tried to avoid to buy a car. And I live without a car for one year, but after that I was not able to participate in this society and take advantage of the things that happened...

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

David Rojas-Rueda: ... Around here. So, I felt obligated to buy a car. And I'm an educated person and then know the topic and was hard. So, I cannot imagine what happens with one that is not so educated, at least in this topic that have children that need to move and in the neighborhood, they don't have sidewalks, the intersection is not safe. They at the ***. When I arrive here in the US, I took classes about how to ride a bicycle because I was afraid that I don't want to have conflicts with the police because I did something wrong.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

David Rojas-Rueda: So, learning all the new laws for cyclists is another barrier. So, it's not something easy. It's not just get a bicycle. So, if you don't have a light there, or if you don't sign the direction of your turns and all this stuff. So, there are few things that make it complicated. So, and I'm going back, sorry, threw you back.

Mariela Fernandez: No, you're fine.

David Rojas-Rueda: A big round to right to the point. So, most of the people have a car, a few of those even have a car, just pool transportation, and the most common concern about pool transportation is safety and safety because the most common users of pool transportation are moms and children and they don't feel safe. Because in pool transportation, they also identify or experience people, users that experience homelessness. So, on some mental and drug issues. So, even though they have not experienced daily those risks or well, bad moments...

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

David Rojas-Rueda: ... If it just happen once they're concerned. So, they do not forget that when you take a bus there's a possibility that someone with substance abuse, or mental health, or social issues use the same pool transportation. They report various screams, their verbal allegations. They don't feel safe. There is not clean. So, even that they use pool transportation, they report that they don't feel the more encouraged to use those. And they do not encourage children to go alone in the pool transportation. So

after all, if you think their push for many reasons to use the car, and in addition that pool transportation, at least do not have very frequent routes or the buses they're not going to come in very frequently and the routes are very limited to a right to multiple destinations.

Mariela Fernandez: Okay. Something that I did want to ask you a little bit more about, you were talking about the concept of cars and how that could potentially increase your status in society, but is that within our own Hispanic group? Or is that within the general population?

David Rojas-Rueda: I think this is a general population. This is an idea that we were sell. And this is not a Hispanic thing, this is something that the Americans created, sell it to the Americans and then export to different countries. And as a tobacco industry now move from the developed countries to developing countries to support more presence and the sell of their products, cars are doing the same. They started here, they move it to the developing countries. And they still found that we support and desire a lot of their products.

And when we move here, we see that happening here. And if you ask and to comments here is that one of the community members, when teenagers that have interviewed here in my community that is Hispanic, told me that one of the reasons that their friends do not use pool transportation, other teenagers, is because they felt that only poor people use pool transportation. So, and they prefer to be with adults in a car. So, they don't want to be seen in a pool transportation. That means that cars is for the rich, pool transportation is for the poor. So, this is the social concern.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

David Rojas-Rueda: And those children were raised here in the US, their Hispanic raised here. So, but even that the culture is still of the message for a car as a social status tool is still very present in the US, the American context and Hispanic teenagers are observing that message very easily, very effectively.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah. So, what factors or characteristics should all Hispanic neighborhoods have in order for residents to move around or get physically active?

David Rojas-Rueda: So, I will say that change the land use codes. So, if you have codes at the city level that allows mixed use developments and have corner stores and prioritize fruits and vegetables for mini markets, not specifically at 7/11, where you find old products or beer or sugar drinks, beverages or high processed food. Because when you think, and you ask, and I have asked moms here, Hispanic community moms say, "Where are the more common destinations?" So, they go to Walmart, they go to the mall, and they go to bring kids to the school and all their extracurricular activities.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

David Rojas-Rueda: So, these are the most common destinations, and they need to take car because Walmart have not a good connectivity with pool transportation or the mall is not and of course, schools and extracurricular activities either. That means that if we make destinations nearer to those communities or inside of those communities, will be fantastic. And the only thing is that allowing the code to promote those kind of destinations

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

David Rojas-Rueda: Parks, schools, mini markets. And I will say that we don't need a Walmart in each corner, but we need a place that you can buy an affordable way. Many of the food, healthy food that you will go and try to find in a Walmart, in a supermarket, that here is very hard to actually go and find a variety of milks or fruits and vegetables in a corner store. So, land use code need to change.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

David Rojas-Rueda: And after that change, then you need to create safe sidewalks, safe intersections, bike lanes that they're not a line drawn in the ground, that is really infrastructure that divide. Avoid parking in surface parking or parking on the streets, so you can wide bake lanes and you can wide sidewalks and reduce speed limit. So, if you make it hard for the cars, the only options will be to use another transportation, mode of transport. But of course, first you need to have the other mode of transport set it there to actually start to make difficult, to arrive by car.

And I think one of the best ways is to changes of the land use, increase density and mixed use developments in the Hispanic communities. Adding more greening spaces and parks and I will say that you don't need huge parks, but green corridors. So, if you ask them, "where do you go to walk or do physical activity?" They often tell you, well, if you have leisure time and you want to go out, they often choose to go to the mall because it's a safe place to walk and it's a nice place to be, at least you are watching the stores.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

David Rojas-Rueda: If you have the same in my main commercial corridor inside of the Hispanic communities that is with shade, with bathrooms, pleasant and with destinations, they don't need to take a car to go to a mall, they can enjoy their own neighborhood. This can be more vibrant, this can be greener and this can incentivize the physical activities.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah. Something that the group has kind of discussed at great length is when you invest in communities, sometimes it can lead to gentrification. So, we have noticed also that everyone has slightly different definition of gentrification. So, I definitely wanted to start off with how do you define gentrification?

David Rojas-Rueda: So, I'm more often think the gentrification as the displacement of communities that happens in the long term after regeneration of the community of renewal, or redevelopment of a community, or announce over infrastructure change. So, and I will say that, and I understand what the problem with gentrification and I is think this is very complex and there is not a clear solution. There are multiple solutions, but I have two visions about gentrification as an issue and assess what is the solution. I think the problem is not, if we improve them, the place, the prices go high. And this is a larger problem, it's not a problem of physical activity of real environment or urban planning, this is a problem of how the market and the economy is based in the US. That if they tell you that to be rich, you need to buy a house and have a lot of real estate to actually create equity.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

David Rojas-Rueda: And for some reason, the house increased the value very fast. So, the problem is ***. The problem is not in planning, the problem is not make it pretty or plant a tree, the problem is that the market, the economy is the issue. So, if we are trying to solve the gentrification issue through make it pretty, but not very pretty, create 10% of affordable housing when you create a new trade development or new development, housing development in a certain neighborhood. These are band-aids of the problem.

Mariela Fernandez: Right.

David Rojas-Rueda: And because the real problem is when we move away that housing is a luxury thing, is a way to make everyone rich.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

David Rojas-Rueda: That will never solve the problem. Any solution that will provide will first go against that concept that wealth is created through real estate. And this is the basic concept of *** economies that you cannot touch real estate because that is the keystone of the US economy. And let's say, when you

create that paradigm, so everything related with housing and improvements will suffer the consequences of that concept of idea. So, unless US economy is move away from real estate as a way to be wealthier and create equity. So, we will be facing the gentrification always.

So, saying that, so what are the alternatives? So, don't change the economy, but try to solve with the band-aids. So, I think there is a very good list of policies that will help. And I will say that when I have these discussions with stakeholders, city authorities and say, "Well, the problem is not create one single neighborhood better than the other. If all the neighborhoods will be good, then you don't have that displacement because you don't have a worst place to move away. So, any place that you move will be a good place." So, that will be the second general concept that say, if the whole city will be good, so there will not be this kind of pushing out or pushing in process.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

David Rojas-Rueda: So, then the third concept will be, well, in the real life what we can do. We stimulate those improvements in specific streets, neighborhoods or blocks.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

David Rojas-Rueda: So, it is improvements in the build environment and transport infrastructure cannot come in alone. So, if you're thinking that I need to make a pretty intersection here, or and improve the bike lane, or either promote mixed use development, that attracting a Starbucks or something that is very fancy or chic or...

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

David Rojas-Rueda: ... Attractive for this other type of wealthier communities. This need to be think that policies cannot be created in silos inside of the city authorities and this need to be added with affordable housing at the same time, need to be added with policies in terms of taxes or incentives that favor different type of communities or prioritize the local communities.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

David Rojas-Rueda: And renting and all this stuff. So unfortunately, what we are thinking is we create a park. We never think about land use around the park.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

David Rojas-Rueda: Home renter, housing, new development, and regulation in terms of affordable housing. So, all this stuff need to be taken to account. So, policies cannot be single individual silo policies and need to be as a package and they need to think as a package to prevent gentrification, oh, reduce gentrification. So, without that green gentrification, economic gentrification, housing gentrification will happen all the time. So, unless the authorities are starting to make policy packages for gentrification, gentrification will always happen with individual policies. So, and this should be always considered. And their reviews, al least what are the recommendations, their experiences that Berlin is doing, Barcelona is doing. So, other cities are already implemented policies and have information. An example is, in Hong Kong who is managing land? So, Hong Kong is one of those cities that is very dense, but have also very high levels of pool transportation use. And what a good example in Hong Kong is that to be able to provide affordable housing and a place that is very limited of land.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

David Rojas-Rueda: So, what they're doing is that the transport authority is also a real estate authority.

Mariela Fernandez: Wow.

David Rojas-Rueda: So, What they do is that the transport authority not only owns or manage transport, pool transportation routes, they also manage a lot of land. So, where they create the stations, they also are owner of the lands around the stations. So, they're able to create and incentivize affordable housing and mixed use development in those areas to make the pool transportation more successful.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

David Rojas-Rueda: Less for poor than for rich, so for everyone. So, when we think that transport authority, it just manage transport and transport oriented development exists is not sensed why transport and urban plannings are not working together, or why real estate authorities and agents are not part of that puzzle together.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

David Rojas-Rueda: So, that I think is impossible to incentivize physical activity if you have individual policies in silos, again. And what Barcelona is doing is putting a website that you can go and see the prices per square meter in each individual neighborhood, so that you don't pay more than the price should be. So, that controls a little bit this kind of overpricing neighborhoods or areas. So, that helps to control ***, but try to control price and say, "Well, if someone is selling that or renting that at that price, the average price in this neighborhood is this." So, you then try to move away from that high prices.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

David Rojas-Rueda: And Berlin is doing other things, et cetera. There are many examples. So, and the *** was still in silos and authorities. Again, real estate is very hard to fight against that ***.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah. And we're also interested in the idea of cultural displacement. So, we've heard a couple of examples. For example, people talk about sometimes when cultural displacement happens, you see Hispanic murals get erased or there's new businesses and the work that you do, I don't know if you've come across any examples of cultural displacement?

David Rojas-Rueda: So, in the city that I live and work, the north part of the city have a high presence of Hispanic communities. And now it's facing a plan for the development. So, and they're a lot of mobile home parks in that part of the city too. So, now that I'm helping the city to understand the processes and the vision of the Hispanic community, the new developments in that area and one of the things that they mention a lot is that we don't want to change the culture and the vibe of the neighborhood.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

David Rojas-Rueda: So, that means that the... And probably it's not only in terms of housing, but also the type of businesses that exist. So, and the highest concentration of Hispanic businesses exist in that part of the city. So, one of the recommendations from Hispanic community members were if you didn't create a new development here, what one thing that you could consider is to create a international, Hispanic kind of market or mall. So, a place where they can centralize or keep that vibe because if you renew the area, you don't know what individual landlords will do with the prices of those businesses.

Mariela Fernandez: Right.

David Rojas-Rueda: So, and that will push out those businesses and then when you move out the businesses, then you lose a lot of the culture and the vibe there. So, it's not only the people and the people will move away from the houses or just travel far to arrive to those places where they can access

our own cultural products. So, the cultural concept, I'm feeling that it's very related with the businesses that exist in this specific place and anchors for those business businesses they're very important ways, mechanism or regulations that help to make those businesses to stay in that neighborhood will help the culture to stay there. Is not only people living there, but also the businesses that need to create that kind of thrive sense of Hispanic perception and culture. So, I will say that is one of my sense, businesses need to have a place and regulations that help that culture of life need to be thinking is not only creating nice places, and I understand that cities cannot control who landlord strength to.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

David Rojas-Rueda: But creating that kind of infrastructure if you invest and land that anchor those businesses. Under the umbrella of the city authority will be an easy way to maintain the vibe for the culture. With that I will say that will be one of my suggestion. And the other thing that the city's doing here is regulating that those pieces of land that their now mobile home parks cannot be changed to another use in the future.

Mariela Fernandez: Okay.

David Rojas-Rueda: So, should be always be mobile home parks.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

David Rojas-Rueda: That means that if the new development happened there, is not at the owner of the land of the mobile home park sell the land to a new developer to create houses or buildings that they're very expensive. Now the city have created a new regulation that say, "All the current mobile home parks areas cannot be nothing more than mobile home parks in the future." So, they're preventing those kind of displacement...

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

David Rojas-Rueda: ...For those communities. And many of the Hispanic communities not only live there, but you many are contractors and they don't have an office and the business address are the mobile home parks too. So, that's safe housing and businesses at the same time.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah. My question I had kind of skipped over, I have forgotten. How does gentrification impact physical activity?

David Rojas-Rueda: Great question. So, I have never *** that part. Well, depends on the type of gentrification that we are talking about, but I will...I'm trying to think of the different pathways and say, well, I have seen downtowns in many North American cities that move from office only to residential, type of luxurious residential apartment buildings. And many of the downtowns or old towns is where homelessness is visualized. Probably the quality of many of those apartments are not very good. So, probably cheap trends also happen, but with that movement in North American cities to make, and this is exacerbated with COVID that many of the landlord or the real estate companies are moving from offices to something more permanent than to luxurious apartments. So, what I have seen many of those downtowns that already seen that kind of change. That is only one variant of gentrification, is that actually rich people live in those apartments are running and doing a lot of physical activity at night in those neighborhoods. When often years before you don't see anyone there, it's just totally empty and now you see people in leggings and the sporty clothes running at night in that neighborhood that before you don't have anyone. So, that is an interesting way to see that gentrification and physical activity could be good thing for those that are arriving, the new ones in those neighborhoods. They bring not only money, but also they bring this perception of more healthy lifestyle. So, they make physical activity more common and that could be a good thing because if you see more runners or joggers on the streets at different times of the day, that tell you that you can do that and probably you can join that kind of activity. So, in a

positive move, I would say that could be a good thing. If the negative move is this green gentrification, that means that you have a park and now everything is more expensive. So, the potential, I would say the parks should be poorly associated with physical activity, but the potential that parks have for physical activity are just bringing to those that now are rich and those that probably needed the parts the most will not be able to access those facilities. So, I will say that gentrification could will be good or bad, depends which sector of the society or which community you are talking about, but probably not good for physical activity in Hispanic and low income communities.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah. Okay. All right. I had a question about what strategies are being used for anti-displacement and gentrification that you gave me a good number of examples from Berlin, Barcelona, Hong Kong, you mentioned keeping businesses in the community.

David Rojas-Rueda: Yeah. I would say the four columns example of changing the land use for the mobile home parks to make it permanent mobile home parks, try to plan in cultural and I will say more commercial areas owned by the city that are only... Or prioritize local businesses, in this case, Hispanic businesses, is one of the other solutions to keep the cultural vibe there.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah. Okay. So, now I'm going to read you a couple of names out loud, there're examples of initiatives that have taken place. I'm going to ask you if you've heard of them or not. The first one is complete streets.

David Rojas-Rueda: Yes.

Mariela Fernandez: Okay. The next one is open streets.

David Rojas-Rueda: Yes.

Mariela Fernandez: Vision Zero.

David Rojas-Rueda: Yes.

Mariela Fernandez: Okay. The comprehensive master plans.

David Rojas-Rueda: Yes.

Mariela Fernandez: Safe routes to school.

David Rojas-Rueda: Yes.

Mariela Fernandez: Single family zoning.

David Rojas-Rueda: Yes.

Mariela Fernandez: Accessory dwelling units.

David Rojas-Rueda: Yes.

Mariela Fernandez: Okay. So, how do you feel about these initiatives and how they've been implemented in Hispanic communities?

David Rojas-Rueda: So, I will say that probably completely streets, I'm not aware. Are probably in LA, are related with Hispanic communities, but I'm not aware any specific, complete district project on Hispanic

communities, to be honest. So, I don't know. I don't have a complete, better sense of what that *** means. So, open streets, yes. Well, this come from Latin America. So, probably if you have someone that comes from those cities, that cops on the streets are very common, so you have that opportunity. Unfortunately, the version of open streets in the US is very poor. Some Latin American cities is each Sunday and holidays happening.

Mariela Fernandez: Okay.

David Rojas-Rueda: Here is that one or two Sundays per year is happening. So, it's just if you ask someone about what is open street in a US context, probably no one will know what an opening street is because it happened in their city, you need to be lucky enough to be a Sunday in that street.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

David Rojas-Rueda: And probably will be very few Sundays that will happen in your city. So for some reason, I will say that cities do a lot of things in summer. I know where you were located, but at least here and in many cities, everything is happening in summer and nothing is happening winter.

Mariela Fernandez: Right.

David Rojas-Rueda: So, and it's not a usual stop to do physical activity in winter.

Mariela Fernandez: Right.

David Rojas-Rueda: And you can do and enjoy and you can go and shop and it depends on the clothes that you have. And unfortunately in Colorado, most of the days are very sunny. So, if you have good clothes, you can enjoy a lot of the outers.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

David Rojas-Rueda: And it's something that probably, I don't want to forget to mention, is that trails and openness space are important, but when I go to trails and open space here, you mostly see white people. I have probably never seen a Hispanic using trails and openness spaces.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

David Rojas-Rueda: When I arrived here, I was not sure if I was allowed to go there, if that is a private or public space. So, this is something that we need more attention and yeah. So sorry, I'm deviating from that. But just to say that open the streets are definitely not well managed in the US and they should happen even if it's cold, even in snow. So, people is in the trails, but not in the streets. So, even in winter, you open a trail, then open the streets should be open to. So, it does not make sense for me to close one and keep the other open. So, and especially because open the streets are asphalt and trails are dirt. So, there is less reasons for keeping that closed. So for me, that is very poorly managed at open the streets. Then the third one from your list was...

Mariela Fernandez: Oh yeah. Vision Zero.

David Rojas-Rueda: Vision Zero. I think it is fantastic to hear that authorities want to bring vision zero. I think it is realistic and it's a topic in some ways, but I think it's needed. If we don't put those very ambitious goals, we will not make real progress. So, vision zero it is good, but visions zero is reduced traffic by putting bike lanes, drawing a line in the ground.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

David Rojas-Rueda: That is a huge mistake.

Mariela Fernandez: Right.

David Rojas-Rueda: And if you compare modal transportation in terms of safety, traffic safety, pool transportation is the safest mode transport. And vision zero is not saying that everyone or the majority of us, that means more than 50% of the trips should be happening in pool transportation. That is my sense, one of the fastest way to arrive to vision zero. If we say vision zero means put more penalties on drivers, create more policing or adding more signs in the corners of the intersections, I think this is a very mistake or put press buttons in the traffic lights for pedestrians to be safe to cross, it definitely is the wrong direction to go. And in addition to be very poor effective for increasing safety, I think if most of the injuries have been with motorized vehicles, we need to reduce those.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

David Rojas-Rueda: So, pushing everyone and the safer mode of transport, pool transportation, vision zero should have a huge component of promoting pool transportation, investing in pool transportation, investing in mixed use development and density, and less about the colors of the signing and policing and traffic lights or helmets. So, by helmets... And I was shocked when I arrived to the US. So, thank you for listening to me to this kind debrief. Cyclists in some cities could be penalized if they don't have bike helmets and even bike sharing systems, these public bike systems are even being criticized because they don't offer bike helmets. I think bike helmets are very important and it helps, but the problem is not that the cyclist fell and hit their head, the problem is that the design of the streets are not safe. So, then the helmet is helpful when you already are falling and hitting something, if you can prevent the fault and the hit or the crash, that is the best way to do. So, if you're penalizing the cyclist because they need to use helmet and you're sending the message that ride a bicycle is not safe without a helmet.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

David Rojas-Rueda: Then they say, "Probably I should not ride a bicycle now because I don't have a helmet." Or you don't bring a helmet every place. I do have a helmet at a house, at home, at the store and supermarket. So, that is probably not the best way to promote traffic safety this vision zero. And the most concerning part of this process that motor cyclists do not require to have a helmet and they go faster and they're louder, they're polluter and they don't do physical activity.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

David Rojas-Rueda: Cyclists are punished because they don't use helmet. But no one is punishing motor cyclists to do the same and no one is discouraging the sales and motorcycles, the use of motorcycles, the noise of motorcycles. The dangers associated with motorcycles or the pollution related to motorcycles. It's just you are living in the flip down world that everything is ***. So, they not make sense at all. So, they should start with motorcycles and then when they achieve those start to go to the cyclist. But Vision Zero is just wrong and when you think of transparent health in the US is traffic safety all the time.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

David Rojas-Rueda: And it's so poorly conceptualized. And vision zero should move a way that helmets, airbags, I will say this should be part of the package and they're important but they should move land use, connectivity, accessibility, infrastructure, and that should be the priority by far. So, sorry, I took too long for that.

Mariela Fernandez: No, you're totally fine. Yeah. Okay. Are there any other initiatives or any initiatives that you know of that have been successful or are successful?

David Rojas-Rueda: To promote physical activity among Hispanics?

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah. Just transportation in general.

David Rojas-Rueda: In the US?

Mariela Fernandez: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

David Rojas-Rueda: No. I don't think anything have been really working here. And as I mentioned before, I have seen many programs to educate Hispanics, give free classes on how to ride a bicycle, free bicycles to them. I have interviewed those people and say, "Yeah, I have taken that classes. I have a free bicycle at home, but I don't use it because lack on continuity, no one follow up, the infrastructure never improves, the real destination they need to arrive they don't have accessibility or safe bike lines to those places. They're scared about helmet. They're scared about policing, but yeah, it's just not a way. So, parks and infrastructures that could help, if they really encourage physical activity that could help. But unfortunately, in the Hispanic culture probably would say that, go to the park to sit and eat something nice and share it with family.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

David Rojas-Rueda: And probably when I say eat something nice is not a healthy food type of menu. So, I have heard from other colleagues in Mexico that there is doing physical activity in parks and healthy behaviors really do parks, that in Mexico actually what they're finding is that people behave worse in parks in terms of healthy diet and less physical activity. People and families go to parks to eat junk food, not to do physical activity. So, this kind of social interaction that happens in parks in Mexico is more on the unhealthy type of behavior that you wish.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

David Rojas-Rueda: And it's because you can buy most of the unhealthy products and food in the parks.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

David Rojas-Rueda: So, do you relate that kind of behavior with parks? And probably that is something that we bring here too. So, it's we are more... Well, I say we as a Hispanic are very social type of persons more than normally Euro Americans ***.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

David Rojas-Rueda: So, and we spend more time outside gathering more than individually jogging or something like that. So, I'm not aware of any real successful story unless includes that access to pool transportation and mixed-use developments. I don't know any pre-post evaluation of those on Hispanic physical activity levels, unfortunately.

Mariela Fernandez: No. actually that's come up with a lot of the initiatives that I read as well, open streets, complete streets. Some folks would like to see more evidence-based evidence that it works. So, okay.

David Rojas-Rueda: But we have done a study and we expect to *** that in coming months on open street in Latin America and we include 15 cities in Latin America, and we model the physical activity benefits of open streets in Latin America and quantify those in parameter debts and *** and health economic impacts. And we found that from those users that they're shaped from sedentary behaviors to physical activity in those open streets, there is benefits, but we have not done that in the US as I mentioned. I'm

not very encouraged to do a lot of things in the open streets in the US because as I said, I have been twice in my life in that open street view in America, because if you know what an opening street is, so the impact of your physical activity levels will very minimal poor that probably you need to use to take advantage of their resources, to do a better type of study than analyze open the streets in the US being so poorly designed or implemented.

Mariela Fernandez: And you did briefly mention law enforcement. I mean, how does law enforcement impact physical activity and just an active lifestyle in Hispanic neighborhoods?

David Rojas-Rueda: Bad. So, we don't need more police officers in my sense. So, we need more civil staff on the streets. Either a civil or civic staff. So, the staff from the city that helped to give orientation, advice, guide information, or support to the community members that do not require violence, intimidation, change, difficulty between power between that person and you. So, police officers work with the premise of they have more power than you, and they are more trust than you. So, the power balance is uneven. So, you don't need more of those in the streets. You need to feel more welcome and treated equally, at least equally in the streets.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

David Rojas-Rueda: And policing is moving the balance to the other way and you don't smile when you see a police officer in the streets. You feel like something is happening, ***, don't behave bad, take care of this. So, it is a source of distress and I know removing all the uniforms, put it in a normal clothes with a identifier or best let's say, civic staff, you are welcome to ask any questions. I can help. So, as you go to apple store, someone there is we I'm here to help you to make it friendly, to make it welcoming, to ask questions, they're not a uniform. Try to make it feel like you need to feel fear of their power. So, if we know that when you go to a store, the staff need to be friendly and welcoming, why city staff and policing cannot be that way? Policing definitely is not a... How it's used now here is not probably the best. I would say that police need to exist, but we need more presence of other type of professionals on the streets.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

David Rojas-Rueda: And not rely a lot of on police for everything that happens in the streets.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah. And how about immigration?

David Rojas-Rueda: And the question is how about immigration?

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah. How does immigration impact physical activity and active living in Hispanic neighborhoods?

David Rojas-Rueda: How Hispanic immigrants impact Hispanics in terms of physical activity?

Mariela Fernandez: Sorry, no. ICE, so the immigration... Yeah.

David Rojas-Rueda: Authority.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

David Rojas-Rueda: Well, it's another layer of policing, but probably more scary policing, more scary authority is this is another layer of the police officer can stop you and say, "Well, while you're behaving that, you were you walking or something like that."

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

David Rojas-Rueda: But this just for looking at you can tell you, "Show me your papers." And that is bad, terrible, bad. So, you don't want someone that will tell you and even if you have papers, I will say that ask you anything and because of your color of your looks so that is terrible. I will say, I know that this type of authority need to exist, but probably this is... To be honest, I don't know how it will be the best way to do that job, but for physical activity and safety and enjoyment of streets and communities, you don't want them to be around if you're Hispanic, so yeah.

Mariela Fernandez: Okay. I don't know if your work by chance has tackled the issue of institutional or systemic racism.

David Rojas-Rueda: Not as a specific topic, but yes, around, I will say, everything. Redlining, and yea I will say that investments and opportunities and something that I see nice more and more is that at least in some cities, they want to be more open and make an overarching goal. Equity and race is part of that kind of process. So, now they're reporting more data in their surveys or CD data classify or organized by race or ethnicity, so that is good. That definitely is exist and I was listening yesterday the news and Tedros, the head of the World Health Organization, make a comment about that there is certainly racial biases, very dominant in our society because the cover of the Ukrainian war is so important on the news. And Tedros is Ethiopian. And Ethiopia started at war, I don't know, six months ago and no one knows about of the news. There are very few news outlets that actually post something about the Ethiopian war.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

David Rojas-Rueda: And it's just that's that imbalance in reality or how Europeans or even... Well, how Europeans, I'll start with Europeans, how they opened the borders to Ukrainians, but close the borders to Syrians that are in war, Africans that are war or *** that are in war. So, this is that race is because religious, because they feel that they're more peers, et cetera. Or the US now they say now they're open to 100,000 refugees for Ukraine and then going through Mexico. So, Ukrainians are arriving through Tijuana and they're crossing the border and in a very fluent way. So, they stopped three days in average in Mexico and then jumped to the US.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

David Rojas-Rueda: And this is a war. This is violence related type of refugees. When Hispanics from Mexico, Central America and South America have been for moons waiting to enter the border in the same city because there is violence and crime and war. Many of those drive through cartels that sell drugs that are consumed here in the US.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

David Rojas-Rueda: So, let's say this is definitely systemic racism. And this is only two examples of we say that the system is not racist, but this system is, it is racist. So, and media outlets perpetrate that, authorities with different policies perpetrate that, and we don't need to see it in people of color is not allowed to walk in this street more. Everyone is allowed now, but systemic racism is embedded in this structure. And this are two good example that how this is embedded in the structure. And even though they say that they're... And the Biden administration is more open and welcome to equity issues and they still have this policy, so yeah.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah. That makes sense. Last question. And it might be the hard question is if you had unlimited resource, what would you do in the communities in which Hispanic residents live?

David Rojas-Rueda: I would say that two ways. One way, if you are just focusing on the stats *** is that cities are segregated. So, Hispanics, people of color, Asians, et cetera, are not really mixed with the whites.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

David Rojas-Rueda: So, the Euro Americans. So, in that status quo probably the easiest thing to do is if your policy aim is to promote physical activity in more Hispanics, you need to go to that silo part of the city and then improve that part of the city. And if I have limited resources to say, I improve housing, change land use code, add grocery storage, more grocery store in each corner, remove parking from the surface, increase pool transportation, and make a note of pool transportation there that connects with each part of the city. So, prioritize the node happening there, know the node happening in downtown place where no one leaves. In all their routes arrives and ends in that community. So, they have the possibility to use and they're free car community. So, I will make it all happen that way with a lot of green spaces, with a lot of things. So, I make everyone to want to go and visit that community. So, with policies and regulations, that housing is affordable, investment for affordable housing and mixed use development in that place, secure that the land cannot change to another places and do not make that the wealth comes from real estate, if now the wealth comes from different pathways.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

David Rojas-Rueda: So, we are not dependent of that pressure in that neighborhood. That will be a very bias, unlimited way to do it in the current place, but in the more realistic way, if you tell me that I have unlimited resources and we are, again, focusing one single city, I will make the whole city similar enough with everyone have the same...

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

David Rojas-Rueda: Same infrastructure, the same benefits, the same accessibility. And I first will invest in huge improvements in pool transportation, clean pool transport, connected area place.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

David Rojas-Rueda: Then huge network bike lanes, then pedestrian corridors with linear parks. And then when the land is left, put a spot for you can arrive by car in the leftover land that is there. So, and change the land use. So, destinations that's this 10, 15-minute city concept applies to those places. So, you don't need to walk, ride a bicycle, or jump in a pool transportation for more than 50 minutes to arrive to any destination that you want to go. So, I will make that happen to the whole city and avoid and regulations that promote that wealth comes from real estate.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

David Rojas-Rueda: And they do everything that wealth come from other places and try to disincentivize wealth from real estate.

Transcript #6

Mariela Fernandez: Okay alright, so the first question is, what is your job title?

Rosie Murillo: I'm an Associate Professor in the Department of Psychological Health and Learning Sciences at the College of Education at the University of Houston.

Mariela Fernandez: Okay, and how long have you been in your field?

Rosie Murillo: Well, I counted, since my post-doc, which started in 2012.

Mariela Fernandez: Okay. So, the next question is during your career, I'm not sure if you've noticed any changes in the way that Latinos engage in physical activity or move through their community, including you, using different transportation modes like walking or biking and so forth.

Rosie Murillo: You know, I, in my experience, have noticed this is city specific geographic location specific. I've had the opportunity to live in various places and have noticed just how much of an impact the built environment has on walking and physical activity outcomes. So, for example, I lived in Chicago for some time and there everyone, at least, in a lot of those areas, right, people use public transportation. They walk to get to that public transportation, or they just walk everywhere.

And now, since living in Houston, it's a whole different story. Everyone drives everywhere, and I know that that was an adjustment for me. And I think that at that level, at a broader level, city specific, but also neighborhood specific. So, you know, there are some neighborhoods, for example here in Houston, where it's very walkable, and you're able to walk everywhere, and you have a park close by to walk to. And then there are other underserved Latino communities, for example that I partner with, that don't have the sidewalks, don't have the crosswalks, are in unsafe neighborhoods, a variety of things that I have learned impact their physical activity outcomes.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah, I'm originally from Texas, so –

Rosie Murillo: Oh, really? What part?

Mariela Fernandez: Born in Houston

Rosie Murillo: Oh, wow!

Mariela Fernandez: Well, born in Houston, raised in the valley, South Texas. But my aunt lives in Houston, so I'm always there.

Rosie Murillo: Oh, great!

Mariela Fernandez: I definitely understand your sharp contrast.

Rosie Murillo: It's certainly sharp, let me tell you, okay.

Mariela Fernandez: So the next question will be about Latino communities. So in Latino communities, what factors make it easier for Latino residents to engage in physical activity or just move throughout their community.

Rosie Murillo: So one of the things that I've learned through my experience, again partnering with Latino communities, is social support as a big aspect of motivating Latino individuals to be more active in their neighborhoods. So they, for example, walking groups have helped – That way people feel safer walking.

Especially, in my experience, talking to Latina women, they feel more comfortable partnered with a family member or friend.

In a recent study I did a couple of years ago, especially with younger Latina women with children, their children had a significant impact on whether they were physically active. So they talked about in qualitative interviews how they really may have not been motivated to exercise, but then kids saying, “hey, let's go to the park, let's go walk, let's go play at the park,” that's what motivated them.

And also, in addition to that, how their kids motivated them was just wanting to be healthy for their kids. So, I thought that was interesting and I think that that's something that I've seen a lot.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah and when you said, like feel safer, I guess, what are some of the safety concerns that exist?

Rosie Murillo: Well, I think, is just – They weren't specific, but I think one of the things that comes to mind potentially, crime, or again, the fact that there's a lack of sidewalks, and a lack of crosswalks. Maybe just feeling safer being with someone when you're crossing those busy streets and things like that.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah. So, in your work, I don't know what some of the biggest challenges have been in Latino communities that make physical activity harder.

Rosie Murillo: So, challenges as a researcher and challenges for the community?

Mariela Fernandez: For the community, although I'm wondering what your research challenges are.

Rosie Murillo: There are some there too. Challenges for the community, lack of time. So with the communities that I've worked with, often I hear, “I don't have time.” You have individuals, some that work more than one job. Also, family responsibilities. So again, those qualitative interviews I did with Latina women recently, they talked about just having a lack of time because of responsibilities at home getting the kids ready, doing household related things, in addition to some of them working on top of that. And so they talked about how, at the end of the day, they just had no energy. They just couldn't even think about themselves, in that sense.

And then the other thing that I've heard, again from Latina women, is sometimes a lack of support from their spouses. So, for their spouses, them being physically active is not a priority. So, they see other responsibilities, family related responsibilities as a priority, so that makes it even harder for them to prioritize their own physical activity.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah. And I was going to ask, so when I used to live in Texas, the trend was that the folks living in Houston, especially the men, they would kind of leave the community to go work in the suburbs, in the factories. I don't know if that's still a trend.

Rosie Murillo: It is, it is. I think we're still seeing some of that. You know they usually work outside of their neighborhoods. And so yeah, so you definitely – we're talking about Latina women, they're carrying more of the family's household load in terms of what needs to get done there. So yeah, so we definitely hear a lot of that.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah, what type of jobs do the women have when you speak to them?

Rosie Murillo: You know, I don't think. I know, some of them babysit kids. They don't – They haven't really said, you know, it hasn't been a question that we have asked. But, they've more so talked about just how working in general, without giving specifics, has impacted their physical activity.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah and what factors do you think that all Latino neighborhoods should have to ensure that residents are physically active and move throughout their community?

Rosie Murillo: So, I think just the basic built environment factors that we know, at the very minimum, are needed to help promote physical activity, such as parks, sidewalks, crosswalks. And then also safety, right? Ensuring that the residents within the neighborhood are safe, programs that promote social support, social cohesion, such as walking groups. I think – I think that would be a start to help promote physical activity in Latino neighborhoods.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah, and now you've kind of mentioned, you know, alluded to resources like the side, or infrastructure really, like the sidewalks and safety. So, when you think about the city, like Houston as a whole, which neighborhoods are more likely to have resources that encourage physical activity?

Rosie Murillo: High income neighborhoods. So, high income neighborhoods is where you see the sidewalks, the park close by. Is just – They have all the things that we want to ideally see in a neighborhood that promotes physical activity. That's where we see it, in high income neighborhoods.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah and why do you think that happens?

Rosie Murillo: I think it's policy related. You know, there's just policies that prioritize those type of built environment factors in those neighborhoods.

Mariela Fernandez: And I don't know to what extent you talked about gentrification in your work. But if you're familiar with it, I was going to ask for your definition since we're noticing that different folks define it a little bit differently. I'll start off with, if you're familiar with gentrification, how do you define that?

Rosie Murillo: I don't know the official definition, I should preface that with that. But my perception is that – The way I define gentrification is when individuals from a community, usually a lower income community, are displaced. When new structures are built, old structures are torn down, and so those individuals for those communities are often displaced to find somewhere else to live, unfortunately.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah. And I don't know if any of your work talks about how gentrification might impact physical activity.

Rosie Murillo: You know I have not, but that is certainly something that I am interested in. And I think in any large major city, you see that; like here, we certainly see that, and it's happening fast.

Like in the short time I've been in Houston, there are some neighborhoods that are – I remember I was looking for a house in, and we would drive by them, and they would look one way; and then several years later, we drove by them again, and they look completely different.

And so it's sad. Like, there's an area called here, it's called the Heights. I don't know if you're familiar with it.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Rosie Murillo: But it's undergone a lot of gentrification. And the downside, other than their residents being – The residents that were there before the gentrification started to happen, they were displaced, obviously. But also, you know, there's that loss of culture. It was a predominantly Latino community, and so you do lose that culture as part of that community.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah and can you provide examples of that? We're actually very interested in the topic of cultural displacement, and how one knows that cultural displacement is happening.

Rosie Murillo: Yeah so, for example, there was this large farmers market that was there, and you know I'm not from Houston, so I probably don't remember exactly how many years it was there. But my husband is and he said it was there for decades, like him and his family grew up going there. And they recently replaced that and made a new farmers market, and it has all these nice trendy restaurants now, and all that, but, you know, that was a major source of food, right? Where people within that community used to go buy their food. And so now, I mean I haven't gone, but just based on what I've seen driving by, and what I've heard from others that have visited, that it's just, it's just different, it's different. It just attracts, also, a different crowd, and it caters to a different crowd.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah. And then you had said that you have seen how gentrification impacts physical activities, so I was going to ask what examples you could provide on that.

Rosie Murillo: Just based on my observations, and again, this is not part of my research, but part of just my daily living observations. In that neighborhood, for example, there's been a lot of construction to make the streets less pot hole-y. So there's been a lot of construction with that, I mean, we've seen it where the newer homes were built, you see the sidewalks being built with those homes.

And so those changes have changed, you know, how physical activity is impacted.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah, okay. So I don't know if you're aware of any strategies Houston might be taking to tackle anti-displacement caused by gentrification.

Rosie Murillo: I don't know, I don't know. But again, it's a topic I'm interested in, and on my to-do list. And, hopefully, one day, I can learn more about it. As we're talking, I'm like I should write a grant about that. It's needed.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah, yes, yes it. Okay, so now the next section is about some initiatives that have been done to kind of promote physical activity. I'm going to ask if you have heard of them, so the first one is complete streets.

Rosie Murillo: I have not heard of it.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah, Open streets.

Rosie Murillo: Have not heard of it.

Mariela Fernandez: Vision Zero.

Rosie Murillo: Have not heard of it.

Mariela Fernandez: Your Comprehensive Master Plans.

Rosie Murillo: I have not heard of it.

Mariela Fernandez: Safe Routes to School.

Rosie Murillo: Have not heard of it.

Mariela Fernandez: Single Families Zoning.

Rosie Murillo: Have not heard of it.

Mariela Fernandez: And accessory dwelling unit.

Rosie Murillo: Have not heard of it.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah, I was going to ask how effective they've been so – One of the things that has come up in some of the other research interviews is that they're not widely implemented. I'm not surprised that you haven't heard of them.

Rosie Murillo: Mm hmm.

Mariela Fernandez: We wanted to know, you know, if you are aware, you know, Houston using them. But I will ask what initiatives are you aware of that have been used to promote physical activity among Latinos?

Rosie Murillo: You know, there was a good friend of mine that worked at a nonprofit here in Houston, that is specifically focused on creating more green spaces throughout Houston. And they solicit funding from outsiders to try to create more green spaces throughout neighborhoods. So, I know that there is that initiative, and that's probably the main one that I'm aware of. I'm trying to think –. that's the main one that I'm aware of.

Mariela Fernandez: How effective do you think it's been?

Rosie Murillo: You know, just based on my conversations with her, it has helped, but it just – I know that from their perspective, it's a big undertaking just because there's so much work to be done.

But they do try to partner with major organizations. Within Houston, so for example, they – I know at some point we're trying to partner with the Houston airport system. Yeah, so they are trying to get just some of the major players, I guess you want to say here in Houston, to get more support for the work that they're doing.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah, I'm going to have to look that up.

Rosie Murillo: Yeah, I wish I could remember the name. Well yeah, she's still doing that work there.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah. So like green space, usually, so airport zones are usually off – You're not allowed to build green space.

Rosie Murillo: Mm Hmm.

Mariela Fernandez: You know, is it just like getting donations to build it elsewhere or to include more green space within the airport?

Rosie Murillo: I think it's elsewhere. Yeah I don't, I don't believe – I know the airport, it has their own thing that they do. But no, I don't believe that it was at the airport themselves, it was just to partner up with them because they're a part of the city of Houston. So I think maybe it was just within their partnerships, with the city of Houston, just getting more support through them.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah. Now the next set of questions are related to other constraints that might be specific to the Latino community. And this is based off, you know, the – So my team was charged with looking at what's been put out on the Internet, so the gray literature. So anything from social media, to blogs, to reports by institute's like Salud America. So the constraints I'm going to ask you about were

identified during that stage. So the next one, for example, is law enforcement. So how does law enforcement impact physical activity in Latino neighborhoods?

Rosie Murillo: So, I think something that comes to mind with some recent research, a couple of years ago when – Through qualitative interviews or asking participants, you know, what are some of the barriers that they – These were specifically immigrant, recent immigrant Latinos, and so we were talking about the barriers to physical activity that they experience. And so some of them talked about how when they first came to this country and relocated here at Houston, that like, for example, one of them described how she would not leave her house. That her husband would go to work, and she would stay in the apartment all day out of fear, right, fear being deported.

And so, also just the fear out of – You know, just being in a new country, new place, not knowing anyone, not knowing the neighborhood, but also that fear of deportation. And so with that, they have, you know, that fear of that even that police presence, and how that might impact that.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah and how does law enforcement impact perceptions of safety?

Rosie Murillo: Umm, you're talking about city specific?

Mariela Fernandez: In the Latino communities.

Rosie Murillo: Latino community. I think that, unfortunately, there's mixed messages. You know, I think that within some communities where they develop strong community ties to the Latino community, they are able to build that trust.

And so they do feel safe reporting crimes, therefore, may feel more safe engaging in physical activity within their neighborhoods. But unfortunately, we know that that's not always the case. If members from a Latino community don't feel safe with their neighborhood, and don't feel safe reporting crime, for example, then you know they're just going to stay indoors.
They are not going to feel as comfortable leaving their home to exercise outside.

Mariela Fernandez: So when you had said, whether I was asking about the community in general, I mean what is the perception at the community level there in Houston?

Rosie Murillo: About?

Mariela Fernandez: Like the law enforcement.

Rosie Murillo: You know, I think it's mixed. I think that in certain communities they have had some success building those community ties, but in others that mistrust is still there. I think it just varies. I don't think it's consistent across the city as a whole.

Mariela Fernandez: Okay yeah. And then the next question was about ICE, but you've kind of mentioned, you know, immigration and kind of the Border Patrol in your answer with law enforcement. So, I don't know if you wanted to include any other statements.

Rosie Murillo: Umm, no. I mean, I think that time and time again, that's what we hear, that's what we see that – That for recent immigrants, especially undocumented recent immigrants, that there are those barriers to physical activity through that fear of deportation via discrimination, and that that is going to keep people inside.

So, you know, I just kind of think about even stories my dad used to tell me, right? And how, when he first came to this country he was an undocumented immigrant, and they would just stay indoors. They

wouldn't go outside, except for work, and that was it. And when they were home, they would close the curtains and, you know, that fear of deportation just paralyzes them in a sense, right? And so they're not going to feel free to go outside to walk in their neighborhood. And even – they could, they could live in a neighborhood with sidewalks and parks and such, but if you have that fear of being deported, then that's gonna, that's going to keep you from even utilizing those resources.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah. You know, when you first start you're talking about law enforcement, I kind of pictured the same thing; for some weird reason, the curtains. I'm like, dark apartments, curtains, and they may or may not open the door just a little bit.

Rosie Murillo: Right right.

Mariela Fernandez: So, yeah I remember, being a small child, and, you know, I don't know what I thought.

Rosie Murillo: Yeah, I know, you know, these things you reflect on later when you're an adult, you're like, "oh, that's why they did that."

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah. So the other thing that – Well, you've kind of mentioned this already, safety. So one of the things that we come across is traffic safety, like actually feeling safe whether it's biking, so whether they feel safe biking on the road to get their physical activity or you know travel to work. So I don't know if that has come up at all in your experience or your research.

Rosie Murillo: Not in my research but, in my experience, just living in Houston, is not the safest place to bike to work or bike anywhere, really. It's, I would say pretty unsafe; I would not do it. But I know they're trying to do that and, again, it's like the higher income neighborhoods, but we are starting to see them build these bike lanes.

But in lower income neighborhoods, you know, that – We're not seeing that yet. But yeah, I think just the nature of Houston, how everyone drives, we are behind on making it bike friendly. Yeah, they're trying to catch up, but again, unfortunately, it's in the high income neighborhoods for now.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah and when you live in Chicago, was there a lot more biking?

Rosie Murillo: Oh yeah. Yeah. I – yeah, a lot more biking, a lot more walking, it's just, it's just bike friendly walking friendly. I do miss that, I definitely miss that.

Mariela Fernandez: What neighborhood were you in?

Rosie Murillo: I actually live downtown, because I didn't have a car. So I was, so I – The place where I did my post-doc was in downtown, so it was easy for me to walk there. And I did part of my part of my postdoc up there at Northwestern, the Feinberg School of Medicine, and then, one to two days a week I went to UIC, so.

Mariela Fernandez: Oh, okay.

Rosie Murillo: Um hmm.

Mariela Fernandez: So, you dealt with those really cold winters.

Rosie Murillo: Yeah, yeah I was – I lived in Indiana right before then, and I was like, "Okay, I think I can handle winter, that's not bad," and then I get to Chicago and I'm like, "this is terrible."

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah, that lake really makes a difference.

Rosie Murillo: Yeah, it was terrible.

Mariela Fernandez: And now you're in humid Houston.

Rosie Murillo: Yeah, which is the polar opposite, but equally terrible in a different way.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah, I agree with that.

Rosie Murillo: Yeah.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah, so the next question is how does historic and continued institutional and systemic racism hinder physical activity in Latino communities?

Rosie Murillo: So, I think, like for example – The neighborhood, the individuals from the communities that I work with, underserved Latino communities, you know, it's – I usually partner up with community centers within the actual community, and recruit and talk to participants there. And so often, you know, I hear others at my institution, or I even at other institutions, talking about wanting to do research with Latino communities.

And they create these studies that require these individuals to go to campus, and, you know, and they don't want to go out in the community and do that work. And, you know, I think it's – Depending on the population that may be feasible, but when I share my experience, I'm like you have to go to them, like you have to go to them for multiple reasons. There's issues, barriers with transportation, barriers related to child care, there's also that mistrust.

You know, it's going to be hard for them to come up to the university when they just don't feel comfortable coming here to participate in a research study, right? And so, I feel like trying to pigeonhole Latino communities, especially underserved Latino communities, low-income Latino communities, that do experience more barriers, I think – Just trying to treat them like another group, and and not making it easy for us to learn more about what's impacting their health or physical activity. I think, in itself, it doesn't doesn't help us move forward.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah. And now the last one is just if you've had unlimited resources, what would you do to improve the communities in which Latinos live?

Rosie Murillo: There is so much I would do. I think just creating for – Well, first of all, investing in the community resources that are already there. So, for example, some of the community centers that I'm partner with, they lack funding sometimes, right, to provide some of the resources that they want to provide to the community that are needed. So, for example, a few years ago, I did a study in one of the underserved Latino communities here, and as part of it, we tested their blood sugar.

And so, for a lot of them, and their A1C levels, as well – And for a lot of them, they didn't know they had an exceptionally high level of, an A1C level or blood sugar level. And so, then they were left with, "I don't know anything about this, what I do next, what am I supposed to do next?" Right, and so we provided them with some information, of course, on next steps and referred them to a federally qualified clinic. But, you know, there was that, there was – There was that from the Community Center, that they expressed interest in wishing that they had more resources to provide those that have diabetes, for example, or being able to provide more screenings, and things like that. So just even just something as basic as that, just providing more resources so that there's able to be more health screenings, so that those that are at risk, or already have a chronic disease, can get more information on how to prevent or manage those diseases through health behaviors, such as physical activity.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah, okay. Well that's it as far as the interview, I don't know if you have any other comments you wanted to include that I didn't touch on. You know, related to improving communities and the rest to destinations.

Rosie Murillo: Yeah, I think and I'm sure you've all you know a lot of us have noticed, which is a good thing, but can also require some thought – But given the pandemic and Covid, we've seen an increase in interest in doing research with Latino communities, and I think it's just so important for anyone doing that research to not not forget the uniqueness of this of this population when studying health and health behaviors such as physical activity, and not lose sight of the barriers that are present in that community. And also you know, just how much culture impacts, and their daily life experiences impact their health and their physical activity. And, I think just keeping that in mind, when working with Latino communities is important, for those, especially those that are just now engaging in that work with them.

Transcript #7

Mariela Fernandez: We'll start off with what is your job title?

David Marquez: Okay, it's Professor in the Department – Do you want that information as well, or just the job title department? Department of Kinesiology and Nutrition at the University of Illinois Chicago.

Mariela Fernandez: Okay, and how long have you been working on issues related to health promotion with health in general?

David Marquez: So, I'm going to include since I started graduate school, because right off the bat that's the work I was doing. So since 1998, so 24 years.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah, okay. Now, during your career have you noticed any changes in the way that Latinos engage in physical activity or move throughout their community? So that includes using different transportation modes, including walking, biking and so forth.

David Marquez: Yes, in a direct way to answer it, yes; however, I will say we know that transportation, physical activity has been a mode that many Latinos have been using for a while, right? So, I don't know that it has increased because it's always been pretty high. And when I say transportation, physical activity, I mean getting to and from the job.

Those active transportations were often – Maybe not necessarily with health benefits as the primary reason, probably more economic but. – So, I do feel like transportation, physical activity is still a primary form. I do find that because the field has advanced in terms of the health benefits with different modes of physical activity, leisure time physical activity that has – Latinos are not excluded from that. So, some of my own work is with Latin dancing, and it's just – From qualitative work through randomized control trials with midlife and older Latinos, I mean, it's just real enjoyment in doing that kind of activity.

And I think because of the research that's been done, we see the health benefits and more opportunity to do physical activity. And even like Zumba, right, which is not dancing but it's group fitness classes to Latin music, and that kind of thing – You know, 30 years ago, that wasn't around, at least not as widespread. Probably wasn't around, if it was it was not nearly as widespread.

So now there are more opportunities to be physically active where Latinos – Like activities that Latinos want to do, so I think that's different than in the past.

Mariela Fernandez: Right. And then in Latino communities, what factors make it easier for Latino residents to engage in physical activity?

David Marquez: I would say education and income levels. Not necessarily education on what – Why it's good to exercise, but, you know, the education levels and income levels right. So all of the things that come with that, including more access to opportunities in terms of fitness centers or the commercial gyms being available in the neighborhood, those types of things. And it was – Can you remind me of the question again? Was it like the facilitators or?

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah, for making it easier for Latino residents to engage in physical activity.

David Marquez: Yes. And then I think of these opportunities that – So, education and income usually, you know, the more education and income then the more opportunity there is.

But it's not like there aren't fitness centers in lower income Latino neighborhoods, you know, definitely there as well. Maybe it's just not as prevalent, so the presence of like, for example, a Planet Fitness where it's more inexpensive compared to like an LA Fitness or something like that. I only use those as examples, I have no affiliation with either of them, but those are examples, right, like the monthly fee.

You know if it's $10 a month versus $50 a month, depending on the neighborhood that it's, you know, like LA Fitness probably wouldn't open in certain neighborhoods. Some of them happened to be Latino, right. So I think that matters and my experience, personal and research wise, has indicated there's a, you know, Latinos want to be physically active. Latinos know that when you are physically active good health comes from that, right. So it's not necessarily a matter of people not wanting to do it, it's having opportunity and access that really matter.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah. Now, what are the biggest challenges in Latino communities that make physical activity harder for residents?

David Marquez: I would say on a personal level, it might be a language issue. So if somebody is monolingual Spanish or prefers Spanish, you know, a gym that they might want to go to, maybe there aren't people, Spanish speaking staff or maybe there aren't instructions on machines in Spanish. And so, somebody. – It might be, I don't know what to do when I get there. It could also be a feeling of comfort or discomfort in being in that type of environment.

I would also say depending on somebody documentation status, right. If people are not documented, then they might not want to be out as much just going for a walk, going for a run, or you have to provide information to a gym or something like that. People might not feel comfortable.

I would say, at a slightly higher level, like Community level, the things that I've touched upon a little bit, but – That many Latinos are living in neighborhoods that have decently high crime rates, right. Or people might not feel as safe to like, as some of my colleagues say, “Well it's easy. You just go in your neighborhood for a walk or you just go for a run.”

Some will, some won’t feel comfortable doing that, right. It might depend on the time of the day, where if it's dark, people might not feel as comfortable. So, it just might limit your options, and if different – If your options keep being limited, limited, limited because of different reasons, well then, you have many limited options. So you know, people's – The safety of a neighborhood and people's perceptions of how safe it is can play into it, as well. And sometimes it's the environment in terms of what's the status of like sidewalks and are there curb cuts and those types of things where – A lot of my work is with midlife and older Latinos, and so if you feel like you there's a risk of you tripping and falling then people might be less likely to do it. So not feeling safe and that way, I think plays a pretty prominent role as well.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah. For safety, I don't know if you've worked in any communities that have implemented successful strategies to tackle safety.

David Marquez: Yes, so I hesitate because I would say things are done, but so like – You know, like in Chicago there might be like the blue, I don't even, like the blue lights that are like up on some street signs or street light posts, and stuff like that, which is like surveillance, you know, police surveillance kind of thing like the police would probably say that's something that's done that can help people feel safer, and I say, “Oh kind of, I guess.” But like is that stopping crime, is that preventing crime? I don't know, and if not, then it's not going to do a whole lot. Let's see, when sidewalks or streets have been – When there's better upkeep of sidewalks and streets, I think that genuinely can help with physical activity, increasing physical activity.

So I kind of think more on the – Overtime, I've taught more of like the environmental level and – The person obviously matters, but if somebody really has these major barriers at different levels, then it's going to take like a superhuman to overcome these things. And so, I like to think in terms of like public health and like Latino health in general, and like, you know, are we making it so difficult for an individual to be physically active? Then that's not going to work in a public health sort of way.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah. And thinking about the city in which you work in, which neighborhoods are the ones that are more likely to have resources that encourage physical activity?

David Marquez: I mean it's the neighborhoods that have people with higher levels of income and education. Like a lot of times, the way I hear it and learn it is the taxes, right. And so you know, the tax money will go towards a specific neighborhood and, you know, like – I don't know if it's just anecdotal, it is anecdotal from my point of view. You know, like certain neighborhoods, which tend to be the neighborhoods of color, in general, with a lot of African Americans or Black Americans and Latinos, it's just the status of the streets and sidewalks and the lighting for outdoor physical activity. Parks are not places that many people will go to be physically active because of other activities going on there, right. You know, but then you go to other parts of the city, it's all within the city. It's all Chicago, and you'll have like, you know, really nice parks and really nice streets, and sidewalks, and things are well lit, and those kinds of things. And it just kind of makes me – It's all supposed to be one city, right, so like these inequities in. – And it's not even in terms of programming, this is like the natural environment, the built environment that's so different that – It is inequitable.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah. Now I mean, what do you think is behind the inequities in the communities?

David Marquez: Personally, I believe racism is at a root of a lot of it. I think, also, a focus on individualism that people don't realize or believe that there's like different starting points, right. And so, you know, the idea of equality versus equity and like, well if we give – I don't even think this happens, but if everybody, if all the areas are giving the same, well then that's equal. That's the way it should be. But you know, when a neighborhood is starting at a deficit in many areas, then more is needed, and I think that's at the root of a lot of it as well. One is racism and people, whether it's implicit or explicit. A lot of the implicit that we know from research that people don't even realize, all of us, how we think about people in groups, that is negative maybe towards certain groups, and I think that's there with Latinos. And racism, specifically dealing with language, right, and people's beliefs of, "Oh well, if you're in the United States, you speak English," right. And so all of these are kind of underlying, you know. It's like somebody might say to me, what's the connection to physical activity? It's all underlying in like resources that are available, but people think people that are deserving, or what they would think of as not deserving of certain things, I think all of that plays into it.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah. Now, I don't know to what extent your work talks about gentrification or how familiar you are with gentrification. We are noticing, for example, a lot of people have different definitions depending on who they are. So if you were familiar with the term, we were asking how you define the term, before going into the other questions.

David Marquez: Yes, I am. I'm familiar with the term. The way I think of it now, I guess I would define it is the pushing out of current and historical residents for new residents. And so – Why does that happen? Or like, you know, and then money being at, I think of money being at the source of that, right. So if people can – Property owners can make more money by charging a higher rent and by doing these things, then people who were originally there are unable to afford that kind of rent or the housing prices, and so they have to go somewhere else and people move in that can afford it. That's the way I think of gentrification.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah, and how do you think that gentrification impacts physical activity?

David Marquez: Well, if the people coming in have more money, more resources then I think that many times, like the city in different places are, "Oh, now these people with money are here so let's try to make the neighborhood nicer," or "Let's make the neighborhood nicer so that we can attract more people with money." And so, then that might mean more lighting, you know, maybe less crime, that kind of thing. And it could increase physical activity in that way, especially like the daily physical activity that people do.

So, I mean it might positively impact the physical activity of the people moving in, but people that are moved out or have to move, now they might be in a neighborhood, community that they don't really know as well, right. They don't know what are the options in terms of places for physical activity, they might not know as well.

They might not feel as comfortable walking or jogging in their neighborhood, they just don't know people as much, right. So that lack of familiarity and comfort might have people stay in more, or not have their

like – Geographical area, “I don't want to go that far,” or like, “Oh, that place is only a mile away to get there, but I don't know what it's like getting there. I don't know people along the way, so I'm not comfortable. So I'm not going to walk there.” Or, you know what I mean, things like that, I think it can impact physical activity.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah. I don't know – We're also interested in the notion of cultural displacement that happens with gentrification. So when your culture is displaced, kind of you mentioned historic residents, and I don't know if you would have any examples of that.

David Marquez: Yeah, I mean a lot of what I've been thinking about as I think about this issue is in Humble Park in Chicago and the Pilsen neighborhood in Chicago. Where Humble Park has a great Puerto Rican history, and many Puerto Ricans are being pushed out, you know, by more affluent people who tend to be white. And for years I've known of it, you know, like – Part of the resistance is well housing, right, and like, this is where I'm from, and this is what it is. I would say the cultural part of it, right, like nope – Like Humble Park is Puerto Rican, like this is the way it has been for a long, long time in this city. Like this is – This is our community. This is where we're from. This is where we live and work and play kind of thing, and so that is like part of it, and then in Pilsen as well. Pilsen being primarily Mexican, Mexican American, and then people getting pushed out, and then it tends to be wealthier whites that will come to the area.

And these neighborhoods and communities – It is very cultural, right, like. And so, then that can be, the way I think of it is like diluted, or like washed away, right, because people who are from there, originally, now have to move elsewhere. And so, it changes the proportion of people who are from certain backgrounds, and with that the culture gets diluted as well.

Mariela Fernandez: Okay. And I don't know – I haven't been in Chicago awhile, especially doing research, I don’t know if you're aware of any strategies that are being used to tackle gentrification and anti-displacement?

David Marquez: I am not as familiar. I know that they're there, right, I know but – I don't know about as much of that.

Mariela Fernandez: Okay, yeah, that's fine. Now I will ask you about other strategies that are being implemented in communities across the US. So first I'll ask you if you're aware of them, so the first one is complete streets.

David Marquez: Yes.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah. The second one, Open Streets.

David Marquez: I don't know – What I know about, I don't know if it's complete streets or open streets because I didn't make – Those sound the same to me, right. So can I briefly tell you what I know about, and then I don't know if you're able to like, “Oh, that's this kind.”

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

David Marquez: Where it’s like, kind of based off the *** in Colombia, and how streets are closed for cars and motorized vehicles, and then they're open to – So people, shops are still open, and that can – If it's if it's a residential block that's different, but along the larger, what do you call them, through ways or something where there's – So that they can close it down and then it's available for families, kids and stuff can be in the street. Riding bikes, walking, rollerblading, skateboarding, whatever for – If the blocks are in a row, you know, then it's a stretch, and like I think – I know like in Colombia, they also have like where there might be like a fitness class going on or something on a lawn. So that's the way I think of it. That is meant for the purpose of, one of the purposes is increasing physical activity.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah, it's Open Streets.

David Marquez: That's Open Streets, okay.

Mariela Fernandez: So mark off Open Streets.

David Marquez: Yes, okay.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah, complete streets as when they do – When the city is designed for everyone in mind, so bikers, walkers. *** and different transportation modes.

David Marquez: Yeah.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah, but Open Street is what you're talking about. So I'm going to mark Open Streets.

David Marquez: Okay yeah, so I didn't – I have not heard of complete streets as a program. I mean Chicago has been very good about bike lanes, you know, and creating bike lanes, but I did – I have not heard of anything referred to as complete streets.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah, how about Vision Zero?

David Marquez: I have not heard of Vision Zero.

Mariela Fernandez: Are you aware of the Comprehensive and Master Plans.

David Marquez: No.

Mariela Fernandez: Safe Routes to School?

David Marquez: Yes, yes.

Mariela Fernandez: Okay, single family zoning?

David Marquez: No.

Mariela Fernandez: And then Accessory Dwelling Units.

David Marquez: No.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah, that was the least popular one.

David Marquez: I am interested in learning about them now.

Mariela Fernandez: Well, I'll definitely send you information.

David Marquez: Okay cool, yeah good. Thank you.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah, well focused on Open Streets and Safe Routes to School,

David Marquez: Okay.

Mariela Fernandez: So the next question is, what is your perception of how effective these initiatives have been?

David Marquez: Effective, I would say, with barriers in Chicago. So, should I talk a little, like should I go on with my perception, right? So the Open Streets, it's with Chicago police and in our – The funding to

make sure that police can be present to make sure that the streets stay blocked off. And that the chance of crime is going to be, well they think, with the presence of police that crime would be decreased, and that can be very costly.

And then I have heard concerns from business owners, the small business owners, that if you close off the streets, then I might not get the business that I normally would. When in reality though, if people are walking and if there are people that are participating, then they are likely to stop into shops and stores and that kind of thing. So and – And what was the original question that I can answer for the Safe Routes to School?

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah, how effective you perceive them to be.

David Marquez: A it's – I think it's tough in Chicago, certain neighborhoods in Chicago, because of just high crime rates in some areas, so the parents that might be concerned about their children participating in it.

Although, I have seen many of the employees, you know, or like – I don't know if it's volunteers or employees, but people wearing vests.

And they're there, you know, before school starts so that, hopefully, then more people's children are able to do the walking. I've primarily seen it as walking, not like biking or anything to get to school. So, I think successful as long as primary barriers can be overcome.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah. When I was there, so I left Illinois 2015. I believe people talked about some of the youth being bused to their schools? I don't know if they still do that.

David Marquez: Yeah. Yeah, there's still – Definitely. Yeah, sometimes it's local, sometimes they're taken farther away to schools, but yeah busing, definitely, still there.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah. Okay. Are there any successful initiatives that you heard that you would like to highlight?

David Marquez: Not necessarily. I did have a guest speaker in one of my courses, who doesn't live in Chicago, who taught about some of the Open Streets work in Chicago. That's how I learned about some of that, but I don't know of, I haven't participated in any programs myself where I know firsthand about them.

Mariela Fernandez: Okay, yeah. Alright, so the next set of questions speaks specifically to the constraints found in Latino communities. So when we did the environmental scan of literature, for example, of course one of the things that came up was law enforcement and Border Patrol. So, this next section is about that. So the next question is, how does law enforcement impact physical activity in active living in Latino neighborhoods?

David Marquez: It depends, I would say it depends on the person, right. Some will feel – Maybe older, will feel more comfortable where it would increase their comfort and, therefore, their physical activity, their ability to get out and about. I think younger are, in general, this is a generalization but – Or concerned about police presence, right, that they're going to be targeted and so I think that would – I think that's more of a like a negative correlation or a negative influence on physical activity. Where younger Latinos, and I'm not saying you're like six years old, right. I'm saying like younger teenagers or something like that, young 20s, might – You know that might be a deterrent, or like I don't want to interact, or I've had negative interactions with police and so it's not seen as a positive thing and so – So, in some ways, it might depend on the person and I'm generalizing by like age group, as well. I think it differs.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah so during the interviews, we've heard kind of the both spectrums from some individuals feeling comfortable just some not.

David Marquez: Okay

Mariela Fernandez: You're one of the first who mentioned age into it.

David Marquez: Okay yeah.

Mariela Fernandez: We're wondering about that.

David Marquez: Sure sure.

Mariela Fernandez: And, and how does law enforcement impact Latinos residents' perceptions of safety and desire to be active outdoors?

David Marquez: So I think those who see that, the police and so say like, “Okay, this is good. There's, you know, there's patrol, there's presence, and so I feel comfortable. I feel safe going out.”

But it's kind of similar or, you know, to what I was saying in the previous question I feel. But others like – That it's not a positive thing, right. It's just “oh, they're just people that are going to harass us. You know, that are going to question me on why I'm running the neighborhood,” or something like that, you know.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah. And I don't know if in Chicago, in the neighborhoods that you worked in, if there's been some strategies that have been implemented to kind of improve relations between law enforcement and residents?

David Marquez: The ones that I've seen like on the South East side, where the police were part of the planning of events to try to not make it so adversarial. You know that, there's a police and then there's us, but rather to integrate that. So in the planning of block events, you know, something like that, so that when police are there, it's not like, “oh, what are they doing here?” It's like the organizers – They were part of the organizing team, or that type of thing, and so it was just – All at every step, it was just an integration of like I'll say like police with civilians, so to speak.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

David Marquez: And I remember hearing how that was helpful.

Mariela Fernandez: Okay. Now, how about immigration? So how does immigration enforcement impact physical activity in Latino neighborhoods?

David Marquez: I mean so in Chicago, right, we're not near the border. There are many documented Latinos, many undocumented Latinos. My – What I've heard about it and talk to people about, mostly, it's more with jobs, right. So, you know, when ICE will go and raid factories, and stuff like that. So it influences lives and employment, and that type of thing. For physical activity, I don't know.

I think it's the risk of being out and about, and then being stopped and questioned. But I haven't – I haven't heard anybody's specific story like that, because I mean if – I think of it likely in terms of, right, just going one by one to people like this, you know, versus they're thinking, “well, if we go to a factory or something like that, then there's a lot of people.” So, I haven't heard of you know immigration, or like ICE directly impacting physical activity, necessarily.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah, okay. Now the other thing that really came up in the scan of the gray literature was safety concerns, and not necessarily with crime. Although that's one. Safety concerns as in, being scared that they'll be hit by a car if they are physically active. So I don't know if that's come up in any of your work.

David Marquez: Yeah traffic, the amount of traffic, the speed of cars. Again, working with midlife and older Latinos, you know, that will – Who can't move as quickly, can't react as quickly, that has definitely come

up, with presence and speed of cars. Also, with like, you know, loose dogs, which are not, I mean, it's not a crime specifically, right. It's related, but a little bit different. Yeah, loose dogs playing a role, you know, not wanting to be chased by a dog or the risk of that. So I think that is part of safety as well.

Mariela Fernandez: Right, yeah. Have any of your participants kind of mentioned eModes of transportation like scooters, eBikes?

David Marquez: No, it might be partially midlife and older, you know, that I typically work with, but no. So, I haven't heard many conversations about that in the Latino community.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah, okay. Now the last constraints, and we're down to the last two questions.

David Marquez: Ah, okay.

Mariela Fernandez: You know, people keep talking about the root causes. So the next one is, how does historic and continued systemic racism hinder physical activity in Latino communities?

David Marquez: Okay, so I would say, where Latinos live or in a way like are forced to live, right. So, because Latinos might come in with, as immigrants, like the mean or the median being a lower level of education, then where are the jobs that you can start off with, right. And so the communities that you live in, right, like I talked about them as like circumstantial correlates of physical activity. It's not because somebody is Latino that they live in a neighborhood with higher crime.

Like no, it's the way that this has been set up so that it's harder to advance, right, or it's harder to – And then if the schools, you know, like the social determinants of health would like, the schools and the education, that's possible. Well, if the local public school isn't the greatest academically, then how do the kids advance themselves as well, right. And so that's where I think this systemic racism is at the root, and, you know, immigrants are people being born here and live here.

The environments that people are living in, the schools that are available, the crime that might be going on, the racism, you know, that people of color endure at every level, whether it's going into a store or applying for jobs, right, and you have a certain name, then, how is that going to be reviewed by you know, a hiring firm or committee?

You know, I think about like a search committee in Academia, but, you know, people see your name first, right, before they see any of your credentials or qualifications, and we know that that kind of racism is there. So the places that Latinos live, I think systemic racism plays a role there. The education, the income, the jobs, what's available in the neighborhood in terms of jobs, or do you have to go outside of the neighborhood, you know, for employment. And then that could indirectly affect physical activity, because of how many – There's only 24 hours in a day, right, and if you're spending time in commuting to somewhere outside of your neighborhood for a job, then that's less like, we would call it, right, like free time or leisure time available, if that's even an option in the first place.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

David Marquez: So I do think it's related, absolutely related, to the physical activity of Latinos.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah. And the last one, if you had unlimited resources, what would you do to improve communities in which Latino residents live?

David Marquez: I would have quality education easily available and accessible. And I would remove racism. So, you know, so the one – As impractical as it is, it's more practical, right, because there can be – But the racism just perpetuates things that are going on.

A physician colleague of mine like 10 years ago, who works in a Latino Community, you know, he says, like, “I see patients and I'm saying the right things, and they're saying the right things. But the reality is,

when they leave my office and they go back home, the environment is just not conducive to health. And it's not because the person doesn't want to be healthy, the person does want to be healthy. But when it comes to physical activity options and diet and nutrition and stress, the stress of the lives that people are living, it just makes it really difficult to be physically active. So, it's not on them, it's not on me, it's on the broader environment and society."

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah. Now, I don't know if you have any other comments that you would like to include that I didn't ask about.

David Marquez: Shoot there was one other – I don't know that's going to come back to me. At some point halfway through I thought of something, but I either said it or I'm not thinking at the moment.

Transcript #8

Mariela Fernandez: Alright, alright. So, the first question is what is your job title?

Marisol Becerra: My current job title is post-doc, and Bridge to Faculty Post-doctoral Research Associate at UIC.

Mariela Fernandez: And you've been working with the LatinX Community for a long time, especially related to e.j., so I mean, how long have you been doing this work?

Marisol Becerra: I've been doing this work since 2003.

Mariela Fernandez: Okay. Now, the next question is during your career, have you noticed any changes in the way that Latinx residents engage in physical activity or move through their community, including using different transportation modes like walking, biking and so forth?

Marisol Becerra: At least within the Little Village context as well as Chicago in general, I have noticed that there's an increase in the deservability for bike paths in Latino communities, which are often underserved and have been historically underserved. Bike paths, to have good sidewalks, increase in public transportation, or the demand for better public transportation routes, and better road infrastructure for cars, because there's a lot of potholes.

Mariela Fernandez: Oh yeah. And you would know about this – It's something that came up in the discussion is that in some communities, bike paths are being seen as a link to gentrification. And I don't know if that's been coming up?

Marisol Becerra: It has. It's been part of the discussion for several years, at least for the past seven, probably more. Because with the increase in interest and demand for better bike paths, and just access to public transportation, the question of like, "well, this sparked gentrification," that comes into play in Community meetings.

And so that brings the question of, how green is green enough? But then also like, why can't we have nice things? Does it have to be one or the other? So that's kind of been the conversation around community, with regards to bike paths and public transportation. Part of it is also just to have accessible routes to work, to not depend on the car. And that's for several reasons. One, not everyone has a car, not everyone drives. But even if they do, people would still prefer to be in a walkable area or a walkable community, bike to work, bike to school. I think part of that is also the desire to be more physically active. It's environmentally friendly.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Marisol: Yeah.

Mariela Fernandez: And the desire to be more physically active, and use the sidewalks, and the bike paths. Is that something seeing across like, more the younger population, or the older one, or across the board?
Marisol Becerra: I would say across the board. I mean, I noticed that a lot with, like Gen Z and Millennials, because those are the people who I usually hang out with. But I also see a lot of elders biking, walking, and taking public transportation. It's really all ages.

Mariela Fernandez: Okay, and so in LatinX communities, what factors make it easier for Latinx residents to engage in physical activity or travel throughout their community?

Marisol Becerra: To make it easy?

Mariela Fernandez: Mm hmm.

Marisol Becerra: I think a lot of it has to do with urban planning, because it's not as simple as saying we're going to build a bike path. It's also about thinking, how is this community structured?

You know in Chicago we have the grid system. It's easy to walk around and navigate the neighborhood. That you have a central business district where you can, you know, the groceries etc. Compare that to other places like the suburbs or other places in the Midwest, and I'll talk a little bit about my experience living in different cities within the Midwest, it's different. A suburban area sometimes may not have sidewalks, so it makes it difficult to walk to the neighborhood. It requires you to have a car. You could bike around. Give me one second.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Marisol Becerra: Sorry about that. Yeah, so saying, you know, different types of neighborhoods lend themselves for physical activity like biking or walking, but there's other neighborhoods that are structured in a way that requires you to be dependent on a car. And so, for Latinos that are living in those types of areas, like in suburbs, it's much more difficult for them to navigate their neighborhood or to go to work. There's a soft cost attached to driving, so all those factors play a role.

Mariela Fernandez: Like in somewhere like the suburbs, so what would make it easier for them to get to work or school using those routes?

Marisol Becerra: Well, as far as biking goes, biking is still somewhat feasible if say the suburb is not too far from their workplace. I'm thinking like in the city.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Marisol Becerra: So, like places like Oak Park, it wouldn't be difficult to bike into Chicago. Also, *** has sidewalks so it's walkable.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Marisol Becerra: There might be some places like Naperville, where there aren't sidewalks.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Marisol Becerra: In those places, though, they sometimes, at least in like the Chicago metro area, you have the Metra train system.

Mariela Fernandez: Oh, okay.

Marisol Becerra: Which a lot of people say, you know, this is good because it gets into the city, but there are many delays that come with Metra. It's not as reliable, especially in the winter. It doesn't run as frequently as CTA. CTA is every 15 minutes***it might be every half hour, for example. So those are different big differences.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Marisol Becerra: Yeah.

Mariela Fernandez: Okay. And what would you say are the biggest challenges in LatinX communities that make physical activity or travel harder?

Marisol Becerra: Well, one is the infrastructure. Is there a good bike public transit infrastructure or even sidewalk infrastructure? And then two would be, safety. Like, how safe do people feel biking and walking, or taking public transit?

Like particularly with walking, if there's a lot of crime in the neighborhood, if there's concerns about safety, about gangs or like crossing gang boundaries, like that is a very legitimate valid safety issue for all ages really, but mostly more focused on like teens. And then that becomes a big issue, and I mean I've experienced that myself, and like my peers to all growing up. Like that was a big concern, can we feel safe walking around the neighborhood.

So that's one thing, and I think that that issue merits more attention. I don't think it gets as much attention, say from, the local government. The only attention it gets from local government or from the media is very negative, and it puts the blame on the individual. I'm looking at it from a system perspective, from a systemic violence***That it's something that needs to be addressed in a manner that is sensitive to the community, and to recognize it as a very valid concern.

Mariela Fernandez: And that was one of the things that came up in the environmental scan of what people are saying, safety really stood out as one major challenge. And yeah, so people described it in different ways, so you can talk about gangs and crime for safety, I don't know if you – If there are other safety concerns?

Marisol Becerra: Well, as a woman, I mean I always have to be more mindful about where I'm walking, and are there enough people walking around. Try not to walk alone at night, or even go for a run. That's also something that kind of sucks, like I don't feel as comfortable doing that in the evening.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah, yeah. And some people – well, that has come up in the interviews and the scan and some other folks talked about safety as in like being scared of being hit, so if you're walking or if you're biking.

Marisol Becerra: Oh, yeah. Honestly, I like, in terms of being – That hasn't been much of a concern for me in Chicago. It is more of a concern when I'm in other cities in the Midwest, especially in suburban areas.

Mariela Fernandez: Other places, do they have the bike paths and the infrastructure for biking?

Marisol Becerra: Where? In other cities or? Yeah, so there's some, like Columbus has bike lanes. I think Chicago has more. In Ann Arbor, drivers are more friendly towards bicyclists, but it's also a very small town, so I feel like that might be a little bit more feasible.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Marisol Becerra: Yeah. But I will also say the concerns of walking, or biking, or running outside of Chicago, like say, Ann Arbor or like suburbs of Columbus, I am concerned for other reasons. I'm concerned about standing out as the non-normal resident in the development.

Mariela Fernandez: Are there things that you do to stand out less?

Marisol Becerra: As a result, I go out less, which is not good.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Marisol Becerra: I've thought about getting a running vest, like a neon running vest that says “runner" so that people aren’t thinking, “why is there a POC running through my neighborhood?” which is awful to think about.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Marisol Becerra: It's something that also has been more heightened I think for me, after all of the incidents that happened in the past few years, with people going on, out for runs, or you know birdwatching, and just having these like terrible experiences.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Marisol Becerra: Sometimes even costing their life, so yeah.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah. So, like things like that, what strategies do you think might be helpful to ensure our safety in those public spaces, if any?

Marisol Becerra: I mean my first thought is like, "well, there should be more efforts to be welcoming and diversifying these areas," but that's not the way that these areas are designed. I mean even Chicago, even though I love it here, like it's very segregated.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Marisol Becerra: And like my complaints about being in Ohio suburbs are not too different from the racism that also exists in the city, even though sometimes you feel like it doesn't, but it's there.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah. Okay. I shifted around a bit, so let me go back to the other questions. So, what would you say to the question, what factors should all LatinX neighborhoods have to ensure residents are physically active and able to move throughout their communities?

Marisol Becerra: I think green space is a big aspect of it, but also just walkable communities. And if a neighborhood is not already designed as a walkable neighborhood, it doesn't mean it's impossible.

I mean, there are many examples that we can look at outside of the US, where there were car centric cities, and then they were redeveloped to allow for bike paths. Like actual legit bike paths, not just some small cement poles. In particular, I'm thinking about Denmark, Copenhagen.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Marisol Becerra: Yeah, it's like most people bike instead of driving over there, and that's fantastic.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah. And thinking about the cities in which you've lived and work in, which neighborhoods are more likely to have resources that encourage physical activity?

Marisol Becerra: So, I've noticed that the neighborhoods near universities tend to have the most resources. As, you know, in my experience as a grad student at Michigan and at Ohio State, I mean there was great public transportation. It was bike friendly, it felt safe. Drivers were not too crazy.

There were also a lot of bike racks, so it also encouraged people to bike and be able to leave their bike outside of their work building or school. But again, that's like a university setting and that comes with a lot of privilege. People who can afford to attend college.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah, and I was going to ask, why do you think the neighborhoods near the universities have those types of resources? So, you know, you just mentioned privilege, the economic privilege. Anything else?

Marisol Becerra: It makes the area more desirable to live in, as well. It's not just the students, it's also young professionals, like perhaps alumni who graduate and want to stick around, professors, people that are employed by the university, doctors, like hospital staff. I mean both Michigan and OSU have a large hospital system.

Mariela Fernandez: Mm hmm.

Marisol Becerra: They are the largest employers in those areas, so it's not just students.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Marisol Becerra: Particularly with Ohio State, like the years that I – Most of the years that I attended there, I live not too far from a trail. It was the Olentangy trail. And it's like a running and bike path, and it connects into the campus. And so it's very easy for me to just walk to campus.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Marisol Becerra: Or to run, like practice for a half marathon. But then I moved in with my partner, he lives in – It looks like it's more like a suburban development. It's still within the city of Columbus. It's like its own little area, and it's so different from living near campus.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah. And I appreciate that you brought this up, because this hasn't come up in the scan nor in any of the interviews. Okay, now, and I mean we've had conversations about this, but whenever you do invest in communities, especially those of color, so in this case LatinX, gentrification may happen or will happen. We are noticing that different people have different definitions for gentrification depending on who they are, and what position they are in society, so I was going to start off with saying how you define the term gentrification.

Marisol Becerra: So I define the term gentrification as the estimated return on investment from development, or from a policy that encourages urban green redevelopment. It renders a neighborhood desirable, when there's a new project coming in. And that serves as a catalyst to attract attention, which then drives up the price of property values, and that can significantly impact the long-term residents living in that community.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Marisol Becerra: So, I think about it more as a rent scale, but I'm also trying to encourage myself to look at it outside of just the rent gap lens, because there's more that happens. It's not just about the price. I'm finding, especially within Latino neighborhoods, not just Little Village, but also others like East LA.

Mariela Fernandez: Mm hmm.

Marisol Becerra: What is the name of that neighborhood? I forgot, but in any case, it's also the gentrification that's happening, even though there are new projects coming in and whatnot. And when we look at the statistics, it might still look like it's a Latino neighborhood, but what we're seeing, or at least what I've been seeing in the literature and in my own research is that there's Latinos that are not from that area, who want to consume culture.

And feel an – They long for that attachment to culture, but they're not from that neighborhood. They're middle class or upper class, and they are moving into these areas.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Marisol Becerra: And so, that also is something that's coming up, and it's caused some internal discussions within the community about what that means for us. Is that a good thing, or is that just perpetuating inequality? It's an interesting concept, too, because I'm complicit to some extent.

Mariela Fernandez: Same. Like both of us, if we move back.

Marisol Becerra: And, this is actually something that I was asked during my dissertation defense. There was a committee member who asked me, you know, well you write about the struggle to get a park built in Little Village.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Marisol Becerra: And your experience throughout the years, and like you contributed to this, and now you're saying this is causing issues, so are you part of the problem, and I'm like, “oh. wow.” Very interesting question, valid question, as something that I'm still reckoning with. But I think that also goes back to like the initial things I was sharing about like, “how green is green enough?’’ has become like the common question when looking at gentrification. But I would push people to consider, “why can't we have nice things,” and by we, I mean Latinos. “Why can't Latinos have nice things?”

Mariela Fernandez: Why, yeah.

Marisol Becerra: It's not how green is green enough, because then we're looking at it from like a – How can I put it? Like, “quanto es suficiente?” Like, how much can we give them?

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Marisol Becerra: Before it turns over, and I see it as a scarcity thing like. You can't have it all. We can only give you a little bit. ***You know a little piece of bread, and I'm like, “well, why can we have nice things?” Because we want nice things too, right. We're working for those nice things.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Marisol Becerra: But there's something within the system that just doesn't allow us to be equal players. Why and what is that? Like don't tell us like, “how much can we give you?” Like no, that's not cool. Yeah.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah. I feel like now you've opened Pandora's box – Where I've noticed when I go back into some communities, where I noticed the tension between me and them. Whether it's because I’m lighter complected or just different income levels, different education, so now I'm thinking like, I guess kind of the same thing, how am I perpetuating inequalities in these neighborhoods?

Marisol Becerra: Yeah, there was – There's a recent article on this, also from the LA, East LA area. There was a lighter shade of brown or something like that, and it was looking at gentrification through the lens of racial hierarchies, and that really gets into this very same thing. Like, what does it mean to be like something like a Latina who is light complected or who is middle class, or upper class, being in this in these neighborhoods? Like, what does that mean?

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Marisol Becerra: And how does that play out? What are the relationships like? So that's all – I can send it to you if you're interested.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Marisol Becerra: That was a really interesting article. It does not talk about green space, or like those green amenities. But it's not far-fetched, because it's the same areas that are going through these very same development phases.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah and, I mean with the gentrification we're also asking about cultural displacement and for some examples. Now, I feel like you've opened-I have so many thoughts and that's a different conversation.

Marisol Becerra: Yeah.

Mariela Fernandez: When I’m there, maybe we can have coffee and talk about it.

Marisol Becerra: We should, because I'm like, “I don't know what this means for me.”

Mariela Fernandez: I know, you just – I was not ready for this interview.

Marisol Becerra: Yeah.

Mariela Fernandez: So, before going that – For cultural displacement, I don't know if you have any examples of what that would look like?

Marisol Becerra: Oh yeah, I mean there've been so many people that have moved out of Little Village, but also out of Chicago, in general. We're seeing this trend in many other cities too, particularly within historical immigrant destinations, so places like LA, Chicago, New York.

We saw that happen because of the pandemic. We're also starting to see that happen because of how high the rent is, and most people living in these areas are, for the most part, renters. I'm sorry. I lost my train of thought. What was the question again?

Mariela Fernandez: Cultural displacement.

Marisol Becerra: Cultural displacement, yes. So yeah, there's been a lot of people that have been moving over the past like, honestly, within the past decade. And what that creates is like you lose all of the social ties and social networks. You know, your community or like groups that you would gather together to do very cultural things, like say things like – Performing in like a group, groupo folklorico, you know, like folklorico dance, or mariachi groups, etc. I mentioned those because I'm in the arts. So like when I think about culture, I immediately think about these groups that I've been a part of.

And like we've had members move to other states. It's also more so a social network in the sense of like your neighbors, which are big. Like a social safety net or even like friends within the neighborhood. I'm in particular thinking about moms, and sometimes they need someone to take care of their child.You know, childcare is very expensive.

But if you have a friend who has some free time it's just, “I take care of your kid today, and you can return the favor when I need it.” That type of thing. When you – When people from that network move out of state, you lose that safety net, and then you're just kind of – You're not completely alone, but it changes things for you.

And then once you start seeing that more and more people are leaving, it's like, “well, when is it going to be me?”

Mariela Fernandez: Right.

Marisol Becerra: And those conversations are starting to happen around the area where my parents live. There's neighbors that told me, “You know what? We get calls and postcards asking us if we want to sell our home.”
Mariela Fernandez: Oh.

Marisol Becerra: And I go, “Well, that's fun.”

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah. But think about what you can sell it for.

Marisol Becerra: Yeah. And you know, some people are seriously considering it.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Marisol Becerra: It's like the fact – If you can cash out, great. But then it's like, what does that do to the social network? What does that do to the community or to social cohesion? It’s just fragmented.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah, and one of the questions is how gentrification has impacted that, physical activity or ability to move within one's neighborhood.

Marisol Becerra: Yeah so I've definitely seen more white people moving into the neighborhood, running. And I'm like, "oh, they feel safe to run." Like that's such confidence, because, I – No. Like, I am not in the neighborhood. I'm like, "wow, you have confidence," and things must be changing for that to happen.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah, okay. Any effective anti-displacement strategies that you come across with your work?

Marisol Becerra: Not really. I wish I could say yes, but no. I mean the most common one that I see is the Memorandum of Understanding. And in some developments, it's required. Make it some cities require there to be a Memorandum of Understanding, and that's all great. But how is it – In other words, does it have any actual teeth?

Like is it something that can be evaluated from a policy standpoint? Like, what is this? Like, how do we evaluate and measure this? If it's effective or not, or is it just to say, "hey, we are doing this in good faith, but there's nothing to hold you accountable. Also, I find it really difficult to control what the market does.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Marisol Becerra: Because we're under capital – Like it's a capitalist system. It's a capitalist society. How do you work with that? I mean there's like rent control.

Mariela Fernandez: Mm hmm.

Marisol Becerra: But that might not be good for homeowners.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Marisol Becerra: And there are a few people in the neighborhood that do own their homes, and so that would be bad for them.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Marisol Becerra: Then they're not getting the market rate. But then like you also have to look at it from the other side, you're like, "well, yeah, they can't afford the rent." So like, what do we do here?

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah. The capitalistic way of doing things has definitely come up in these conversations, and so that makes sense. But the memo of understanding, we will talk about this once I get there. I had an IRB approved for doing a project on CBA's and how effective they are.

Marisol Becerra: Yeah I see it more like as a good faith practice, but also as a mechanism to try to pacify like a community being not happy about it, like less resistance. It's like saying, "hey, you know, we are coming here because we want to help you."

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah. Alright, so then there's a couple of initiatives that I wanted to read out to see if you're familiar with them. So the first one is complete streets, calles completas, complete streets? Have you heard of that one?

Marisol Becerra: I have not.

Mariela Fernandez: Okay, how about Open Streets?

Marisol Becerra: That sounds familiar, like I've heard it. I can't tell you what it is.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah, so that one – I don't know if they were using the term before Covid, but the term became more popular during Covid. But it's when people close off the streets and people are engaged in physical activity or whatever it is. Yeah, I was like I remember Little Village.

Marisol Becerra: Yeah, we had that a couple times. Yeah.

Mariela Fernandez: Have you heard of Vision Zero?

Marisol Becerra: I have not.

Mariela Fernandez: And that's kind of building a community, so there are zero fatalities through traffic and things like that. And comprehensive master plans?

Marisol Becerra: No.

Mariela Fernandez: Okay, have you heard of the Safe Routes to School?

Marisol Becerra: Yes.

Mariela Fernandez: Okay, single families zoning?

Marisol Becerra: Yes.

Mariela Fernandez: And accessory dwelling units?

Marisol Becerra: Can you repeat the first part?

Mariela Fernandez: Accessory.

Marisol Becerra: Accessory dwellings.

Mariela Fernandez: Mm hmm.

Marisol Becerra: That, no. I'm curious.

Mariela Fernandez: It's kind of like when people will have, if you buy a home and you have like that spare bedroom on the second floor and you rent it out.

Marisol Becerra: Okay.

Mariela Fernandez: Renting out a little, maybe you turn your garage into a room and rent it.

Marisol Becerra: Like Airbnb?

Mariela Fernandez: More longer-term resident. Yeah, so people have been using it for – To deal with gentrification and the increase from housing markets, and lack of availability in housing. But I guess, we can focus on open streets. Because you said open streets, safe routes to school, and single families zoning. So, I guess the next question is how effective you think these initiatives have been? If you want to focus on one, you can do so. Or if you wanted to just comment on them in general, you can do that as.

Marisol Becerra: So the open streets, I do think that's effective because it does get people out of all ages, like you see kids using their bikes and they're happy because they don't have to worry about the cars. They're hanging out with their friends.

It gets people from the community together in a shared space. It encourages conversations. You get to meet more people, you walk. In some cases, it also highlights local entrepreneurs like arts and crafts. I think that's pretty effective in many ways, in the sense that it gets people out of the house, they walk. They interact with their neighbors and with people in the community, which supports social cohesion. And it's safe because you've blocked the streets, so you don't have to worry about cars, and it's a community event.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah. Are there ways that Open Streets could be improved in any way?

Marisol Becerra: I think it would be great to have it be like a weekly thing as opposed to like a once in a while thing. And now I understand that that could interfere with traffic. But there are also other places throughout the US and in other countries where they've completely closed off the street and that's just like, “Como una plaza or something.”

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Marisol Becerra: That would be nice too, but I don't know how feasible that would be. I'm thinking if you close off a section of 26th Street, that’s just going to create a headache, and it's going to create more traffic and congestion, because then you have to go around it. So that might not be feasible.

Mariela Fernandez: Alrighty. Then, we talked about concerns with safety. The other major concern of course has been being outside in your neighborhood has been enforcement, so law enforcement, but also ICE. I had those sections and separated, but everyone actually keeps talking about them together.

Marisol Becerra: Oh yeah. Yeah.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah. So, you know, from your work, how does law enforcement impact physical activity or just the ability to move around in one's neighborhood?

Marisol Becerra: I mean it impacts greatly, especially for people that are concerned about ICE, like undocumented immigrants. That's a bit of – A very valid concern. And so, people have to be more mindful about where they go, when they go, with who they go. Yeah, I will say though, there was a period of time, I don't know if it's still happening right now. There was a period of time, maybe over a decade ago, where there would be stops throughout the neighborhood, particularly checking for ID’s. And so that would really put undocumented immigrants on alert.

Mariela Fernandez: yeah.

Marisol Becerra: And so there used to be this page on Facebook that would tell people, “Hey, there's folks checking ID, so you might want to avoid this intersection.” And I mean those statuses would go out, almost every other day. It didn't matter if it was a weekend, or during the week, because at the beginning people were more concerned about the weekend. People are out, you know, drinking etc., but like, no, this was like, it didn't matter what day of the week.

So, that's one. There's been several raids in the neighborhood. I can at least recall three. One was very traumatic.

Mariela Fernandez: in Little Village?

Marisol Becerra: Yeah. Yeah, by the Sunmark. Like to the point, they brought-they brought in this – It looked like an army style tank. Like yeah, like I'm thinking, “Oh, you just want to pack us all in, you’re not even seeing us as human.”

Mariela Fernandez: Was that when you were younger? Like a teenager, or was that more recent?

Marisol Becerra: I was in high school. I was in high school. It was a really, really traumatic experience.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Marisol Becerra: And I'm seeing this is like someone who was born in the US, like it affected everyone.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Marisol Becerra: Yeah.

Mariela Fernandez: Did someone in the neighborhood like the Alderman or police, did they end up partnering with ICE? What was up with the raids?

Marisol Becerra: You know, to my knowledge, no. I mean I do remember there was like a visual in March, demonstration, like in the days after that.

Marisol Becerra: Yeah.

Marisol Becerra: But in terms of whether they cooperate or not, I do not know.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah. And how does law enforcement and even ICE, how does that impact the perception of safety and desires to be outside?

Marisol Becerra: I mean when you have an event like that happen, people are less prone to be out, because they're concerned about their safety. They're concerned about, you know, even it's – At that point, it's not even about me. It's like, "Who am I hanging out with?" And, "Do I have to be mindful of some – Of a friend or a family member who could be significantly impacted by that?"

Mariela Fernandez: Mm hmm.

Marisol Becerra: But on the just overall surveillance, are law enforcement, well, I see them as both surveillance and law enforcement. With the increase in gentrification, there is more policing, but it doesn't make us feel safer.

Mariela Fernandez: Right.

Marisol Becerra: It makes us feel more like a target. It then brings a question of like, "Is this protection for us or is this protection for the new incoming class of people moving into the neighborhood?"

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Marisol Becerra: Who's calls are being prioritized?

Mariela Fernandez: Right. I remember that in previous interviews or people mentioned, the wait time is very long sometimes, even if you're in the city.

Marisol Becerra: Yeah.

Mariela Fernandez: Especially, I mean, Cook County Jail was there, so you wouldn't have expected the wait time.

Marisol Becerra: Yeah. I think also neighborhoods that are going through gentrification in various phases tend to experience violence, too. And at times it's just like, I don't even know how to explain it but – Like it's bad, because the violence increases, but at the same time, you understand why the violence is happening, because it's like people fighting over turf. Gangs are still fighting over turf. But they're essentially also fighting to stay.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Marisol Becerra: Because they're also seeing the displacement. So, I think this is really, really, I don't know – To me, it's difficult to conceptualize because there's so many layers to this. It's like well, you know, the gangs are going to get displaced too. And they are, you know, everywhere.

It's not just a Chicago thing. I mean, they are in the suburbs too. But like they're also fighting for their right to stay. And then you have like these newcomers, and they're like, "WTF, what's going on?"

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah. And I need to send you the paper *Greensplaining*.

Marisol Becerra: Yeah.

Mariela Fernandez: Okay, so, making sure – There's two last questions, so the next one is, how does historic and continued institutional and systemic racism hinder that physical activity or ability to migrate within one Community, in LatinX communities?

Marisol Becerra: Like how? Sorry, that was really long.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Marisol Becerra: So, how does like?

Mariela Fernandez: Racism, yeah.

Marisol Becerra: Racism and institutional – Impact people's physical activity?

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah and the ability to just move around, and get to work or school.

Marisol Becerra: It limits our choices. It limits our choices. I mean with mobility and like – Or let me go back, it's like first you have to think about where you're going to live, right. And then where you live determines, you know, how you move around and the distance that you go. If we're looking at it from a housing standpoint, our options are limited from the get go, because it's about what we can afford.

Mariela Fernandez: Right.

Marisol Becerra: Yeah, at least within like people who live in Little Village, it's like, "Okay, well it's because it's a living destination, it's affordable, you have your community." But then it's like, okay, but then you have all these other things to take into consideration that can limit your mobility, so things like gangs etc. So from like racism and institutional racism, it limits it a lot. It's like, we were still feeling the impacts of redlining. That was institutionalized.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Marisol Becerra: And then there's blockbusting, and there's still a lot of shady practices that still occur. But, yeah, we're still living the effects of redlining. That's also impacting how we experience the environment, and how free we feel to walk outside, to go for a run, to bike, to take public transportation. And there's no easy solution to this because that harm has been done.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Marisol Becerra: It's embedded in how our neighborhoods have been planned.

Mariela Fernandez: Mm hmm.

Marisol Becerra: And so to undo it, is literally like, what are you going to do? Bulldoze the entire neighborhood and start from scratch, because that's also not cool.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Marisol Becerra: There's a lot to reckon with, a lot to reckon with.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah. And if you did have unlimited funding, mean – What would you start tackling first as far as improving communities where LatinX residents live?

Marisol Becerra: I would build things that the community wants for physical activity as opposed to going in as a developer or as an urban planner, and just assume what they're going to like. Like within the Latino community, it's like, "oh, let's just build a bunch of soccer fields." We can do more things to just play soccer, and you see the same thing happening with black communities. It's like, well, let's just put a bunch of basketball courts. Again there's more – There's more sports that we like to play.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Marisol Becerra: And it should not be limited to sports. Like the arts are also a big part of it, and they include dance and dance is movement, and that's usually what I gravitate to.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Marisol Becerra: So I'm also thinking about, you know, accessibility to dance centers or dance programming at local park districts, for example. That can be another way to increase. But that would be one way to use – I would use the funding. Better bike lanes, like legit bike lanes, not just the ones with the cement poles. Like if Copenhagen can do that, why can't we?

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Marisol Becerra: That would be what I would prioritize if I had that budget and if I were like Mayor of Chicago.

Mariela Fernandez: And I mean that was the last question, so I don't know if you want to get anything else on record regarding this topic, maybe something I didn't ask, but you wanted to make sure you brought up.

Marisol Becerra: Well, I think, physical activity is very important, and it's very much also tied to mental health. And so having access to spaces where people can move, or just making their livelihood much easier, to get to work or to school, can significantly impact people's mental health in a positive way. Because otherwise you're constantly worried about how you're going to get to work, or having a very long commute. If we could just make that commute much smoother and simpler without having to worry about, am I going to get hit by a car if I bike, or etc. Yeah, I want to highlight that. The physical affects the mental, and vice versa.

Mariela Fernandez: Make sure I put that in there. Okay, I'm going to stop recording.

Marisol Becerra: That spot on this.

Transcript #9

Mariela Fernandez: What is your job title?

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: I have two. My day job in planning is Senior Project Manager for the South Bay City's Council of Governments.

Mariela Fernandez: Okay.

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: That is a joint powers authority regional government here in LA county, Los Angeles County, and my second job title is Adjunct Professor at Cal Poly Pomona Department of Urban and Regional Planning.

Mariela Fernandez: And how long have you been working in this field?

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: I've been working in urban planning since 2006, so that is now 16 years.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah, goes by fast.

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: It goes by fast.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah, so during your career, have you noticed any changes in the way that LatinX residents engage in physical activity or move throughout their community? So that includes using different transportation modes like walking, biking, and so forth.

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: Yes, I have observed the differences in those special patterns and movements. I do want to say up front that I thought about this question, and I read the original email, and I kind of broke it down in a binary – I've seen differences in the way it's done in urban environments and in suburban environments, suburban and rural environments, I should say.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: There's some overlap, but there's a lot more observation that I've made in urban environments, because that's where I've worked mostly as an urban planner. But I do have a little bit of ideas about both so I'm not sure down the road if you have questions that identify both, but I would probably just let you know whether I'm speaking about urban and suburban.

Mariela Fernandez: You can definitely include everything, so whenever you feel comfortable with. Usually, if people had more experience with urban, I ask them about the urban versus if they had worked in rural, I asked about that. But I don't have too many folks that worked in rural communities, so if you have worked in both. That would definitely be helpful.

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: Great, it's not it not extensive by any way, but I have worked in suburban and more rural environments so there's a lot more I can tell you about urban. And again, there's some overlap, but I – There is a few differences – There's I think at least two I have in my notes here. There's a couple differences that I identified that I think would be worth mentioning.

Mariela Fernandez: Okay, and so what were some of the changes that you've noticed?

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: Well, let's see. The way I framed my notes here my thinking was, I think it was less about the changes, and more about the obstacles and limitations.

Mariela Fernandez: Okay.

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: So, the – I guess like thinking about changes I can certainly speak to the more recent times in Covid where in Latino communities, especially when the beginning of the pandemic happen, we were all quarantine and lockdown, right.

There were really no alternatives for exercise in public space, exercise in an open space, like you would have in – Or exercise period and physical activity, I should say. There were no alternatives like you would have in wealthier communities. For example, in wealthier communities, non-Latino communities, people had the option to still go to their home gyms or sometimes the gyms that were in their condo, apartment building, or their rooftop gyms.

We didn't have that in the Latino communities that I work in. You were just locked down in space. Maybe you had a backyard or your front yard, but oftentimes those are paved over to provide more space for parking, because of the higher density in the neighborhood.

So, in terms of changes, I think that's the first thing that really comes to mind during the pandemic where in working class Latino communities, you really had no option. You were just kind of frozen at home, and you didn't have alternatives for physical activity. The job that I used to do was in the Los Angeles Neighborhood Land Trust, and that organization develops parks and gardens in Communities of Color. Our work was very much frozen during the pandemic when I started working with them during the pandemic, and we couldn't go out to our parks. We couldn't go out and do engagements. We had to do everything by Zoom, and our parks were closed, just like the parks that are operated by the city and county were closed. There was this physical exclusion and lockdown of space, and you had just simply no alternatives. But we definitely – I definitely observed, noted and talked about the alternatives that wealthier people had.

So, I think talking about change, that's the one that's really salient for me. But I can certainly talk more about obstacles, if there's a question down the road that's more calibrated to that.

Mariela Fernandez: I'll ask that in two questions.

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: Cool. Thank you.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah, yeah so in LatinX communities, what factors make it easier for LatinX residents to engage in physical activity or travel throughout their community?

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: It helps when community members have access to safe streets. And in a lot of our communities, that is not available, or it's available at a lesser degree, because of things like gang violence, and also dangers from automobiles.

So some of these answers are going to tie into my obstacles that I outlined. But in terms of making it easier for people to move through public space for Latinos, LatinX, Latins to move through public space, the things that I think about first are – How many people have to constantly dodge speeding cars in our neighborhoods?

Mariela Fernandez: Mm hmm.

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: Cars running through red lights. Street takeovers, where people do a whole illegal auto show in the street. They're spinning out, and doing things that are extremely dangerous. Hit and runs are very, very common in Latino communities here. You have just a lot of people speeding through, blowing stop signs, blowing red lights. And then there's also the threat of gang violence.

So removing those would make it a lot easier. If those were not prevalent or if they were reduced to a significant degree, I think our community members would have a much more comfortable time in public space, and this goes for people of all ages.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah, okay. With your answer, should I assume that you're talking about urban cities, unless you tell me otherwise?

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: Yes, yes. Can you hold on for one second, I got a call coming in. One second, I'm sorry.

Mariela Fernandez: No, you're fine.

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: Okay I'm back, sorry about that. That was one of – One of my other duties as an urban planner, I'm also part of a community-based organization. And we're kind of up in forming now, and looking to turn ourselves into a nonprofit, so.

Mariela Fernandez: Oh, okay.

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: Yeah, that comes up a lot during all of my days, so apologies on that.

Mariela Fernandez: No, you're fine. Alright, so now it's the question you've been waiting for, which is what are the big challenges for LatinX communities?

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: Thank you, and this – I'll start with the urban challenges, and then I can give you the suburban and rural ones after.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: This is based on my experience, not only as a practicing urban planner for the last 16 years, who has worked in all three sectors: public, nonprofit and private. This is based off of my work with my feet on the ground. I created embedded planning, this is an approach to urban planning where the planner works on the street level, not behind a desk. We move with intention to be on the ground in the spaces and places of the community members. I have this particular perspective that's much more close, proximate and authentic, because the work that I do has largely been in the spaces and places of the people. I get to see things shoulder to shoulder with them, and talk to them about challenges in their spaces. But also, this comes from my own personal experience. I'm Chicano. I grew up born and raised in Los Angeles on the East side, right, the Latino Mecca of East LA, and my experience has been almost entirely in Latino communities. So, I do feel like I have some perspective to offer these here for you. The first challenge in the urban environment is the lack of parks and open spaces. There's very few places to go to in LatinX communities, especially compared to wealthier white neighborhoods in LA county, here in Los Angeles, in the Los Angeles region.

We have very few park spaces per capita. We have very few parks in our region. The parks that we do have are oftentimes small. They are oftentimes understaffed, and lacking some of the basic amenities that you would see in parks.

Outside of parks, there's also fewer gardens. There's fewer – There's fewer open spaces that offer a place for respite from the urban condition. And the ones that are there are sometimes far to walk to. And then when you do get out on the ground, walk into your neighborhood park, you run into what the next obstacle is, and that is a lack of shade. There is a visible paucity of shade in LatinX communities. You see it very clearly when you go from a community like where I live now in Pasadena, California, much more green.

The city has a deliberate expansive tree canopy, but when you go into next door [into] lower income latinX neighborhoods, you can see at the at the border of the city, the tree line stops. And all the trees basically around the city side, in the wealthier side in the city of Pasadena, and I'm talking about the tree canopy that's in the public right of way. So trees that are placed in the parkway, for example, right.

These are supposed to be shade trees for the neighborhood, not just the one – We're not talking about the ones in backyards. I'm talking about trees and public space. They're utterly lacking in LatinX

communities. I see that today in the communities that I work in, communities in South Central Los Angeles, where I've worked for almost the entirety of my career as an urban planner. And the problem is that that lack of shade makes it incredibly hot to be in public space, and to move through public space on foot or on a non-motorized form of transport like bikes, and skateboards, and scooters. It's just really hot to be in public space, and you have very little break from it, right. You have these long stretches of the built environment that are shadeless, so you find yourself burning up.

One of the things that I've seen over the years is that, in true LatinX fashion, if you need to do it, you just do it. So people would build informal shade structures, just like people would build informal housing.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: And oftentimes the city or the county, depending on the jurisdiction, would come in and order it to be removed for a code violation. So you know, you solve one problem by creating an informal shade structure, but then you create another by creating a code violation. And the government doesn't care about the informal problem that you solve, they just care about liability. So the solutions that LatinX often come up with are then made illegal through strict zoning, which is rooted in middle and upper class values, and it is declared illegal, and removed, right.

So you have that problem, that lack of shade, and I can't help but mention that the lack of shade also is a legacy of redlining. Our communities were redlined and declared to be not worth investment, so when developers were developing them, they weren't putting in shade trees, right. So this is a long legacy of redlining.

The third challenge is gang violence. This is very prevalent in the urban core, and also in some of our other regions like in the San Fernando Valley here in LA county and the San Gabriel Valley, where you have long legacies of originally chicano, but also now Salvadoran gangs, right.

And you have gang violence in the street that makes it very uncomfortable, and dangerous and limiting for LatinX folks to move through public space. They don't want to get shot, they don't want to get shot in the crossfire. So that's prevalent throughout many geographies within the LA region that are LatinX geographies. Like I said, South Central LA, Central LA in the MacArthur Park Area, the San Fernando Valley, the San Gabriel Valley, and you even have that in the Northern County, in the more rural part, which I'll talk about later because you have gang violence that travels when the gang members move out of the neighborhood when they can no longer afford it.

Right, so that is ever present, and that makes it dangerous for LatinX to move through their communities. Dangers from automobiles is the next one. Like I mentioned earlier, there's just so many instances of reckless driving, speeding, running red lights and stop signs, illegal street takeovers, and exhibitions of speed. And it's like every day we turn on our local news, and we see a tragedy of someone getting hit in a hit and run. And it's almost always in LatinX and Black communities. By the way, I know that this is a focus on LatinX communities, but many of these communities in South Central LA are integrating, so there is a tie-in to the black experience too.

These geographies have become more Latinx in terms of demographics here in LA over the last many decades, but South Central LA, for example, is still very integrated, so. This is in no way to say that it just impacts on LatinX folks here.

So here's another one that I think – Getting outside of the public space realm, but this is definitely something I see that I think it's really important to note, video gaming or gamer culture. Right now, you have, with all the context that I just provided –

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: You have that, plus you have this incredible access to virtual reality and gaming, and all these things that you can do indoors where like – It's almost like, why even go outside. We can

almost be in a game realm in our house, right, and you have it. It's not only like in the old school days where you had to have a really expensive Nintendo, like you could have it on your phone. I just think – I've seen a lot more sedentary lifestyle, and I'll give you an example of how I know this.

I used to be a Zoning Enforcement Planner Inspector for the county of LA. That was what I did, for the first 13 years. That's how I developed embedded planning, because I was going out into the community to enforce the zoning code. I was going into people's homes responding to complaints at homes and also businesses, and in other types of land uses, but the majority of it was residential. I would go into people's homes at all times of the day. Days, nights, weekends, and I would see, I saw – I guess this might go towards the changes, the first question you had. Over the years, I would see more and more young people – Also, not in school, but just hanging out at home playing video games. And I would be doing an inspection for let's say an unpermitted, informal conversion of a garage into a house, and I would have to walk through the main house for some reason, or there were unpermitted informal additions to the main house, and I would access their house and I would see people, young people, just like doing that instead of being outside.

But in a way, I can kind of understand where in the same neighborhood, it was dangerous to be outside, and they had no access to parks so might as well just stay home. And I think it's that much more pronounced now, given that the technology is so much more incredibly realistic and that much more accessible.

I would be remiss if I didn't mention gamer culture.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: The next obstacle is in terms of safe access to schools and safe access to parks. We have programs here in LA county in LatinX neighborhoods, but they often require police intervention. That is both a benefit and an obstacle.

It’s a benefit in that, when you have clearly marked police vehicles that create lanes and escort kids to school, to and from, or to create ways for families to go to parks. You have fewer instances of speeding cars. You probably have a reduction in gang violence because there's this clear police presence.

So that's good, but at the same time these communities are over-policed. So having that police presence there for whatever benefits that it creates, it also can create intimidation. And you know, the sheriff's deputy that's escorting you to the park on one day, that could have been the guy that beat up your cousin the day before. So you have these tensions where it's like – It's good that the police presence is here to a certain degree, but at the same time the LatinX community has a lot of tension with the police, so they're not always wanted.

Mariela Fernandez: Right.

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: Right, so you have this like, “damned if you do, damned if you don't.” I do think that it’s both a benefit and an obstacle, and it should probably be looked at a little bit more.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah, we – I definitely noticed that. So that's come up quite a bit where the police, there's mixed reactions. So no one has said like we need to defund the police or get rid of them, but it was more like we need someone to enforce the policies, but then we're also nervous about the police.

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: Yeah.

Mariela Fernandez: So it seems to be both.

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: I'm glad that it's been mentioned, because I knew that wasn’t unique to this geography, but it's something that – I think people that have this like blind devotion and allegiance to the police function don't understand that these communities, they may not – They may not be comfortable

with law enforcement for all these reasons that I've noted, right, and there needs to be not a kind of black and white binary way of looking at it. People need to understand the perspective of the LatinX community. The police apparatus is not always a good thing.

Mariela Fernandez: Right.

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: And I think that's something that we've been more conscious of in the last two years, especially after the justice uprising of the summer of 2020. But it's still something that is heavily debated. I really would want that uplifted for additional consideration for this research. So, then the last thing that I wanted to note for the difficulties is our infrastructure is oftentimes just God awful. We have sidewalks in LatinX communities that are impossible to navigate because tree roots have up-ended them decades before.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: And there's no action from the city or the county to fix it. So you have sidewalks that look like this. They become – They can become like informal skateboarding ramps, right. You can imagine how difficult that is for people in wheelchairs, people in walkers, people walking in crutches, or people that have disabilities. And then I think about the communities that I work in, and you have a lot of elders walking the streets, and they have to navigate these really dangerous sidewalks and parkways that have holes in them. It becomes a precarious exercise, so you can see why people would, unless they absolutely have to, why people stay home.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: Yeah, so those were the things I – The challenges that I thought about for the urban condition, and then for the suburban and rural, I have three for you.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: The first one is a bit of a spin on parks and open space. I would say it's more of a lack of open space and programmed parks. I'm Sorry, I think I reverse the order there. So in suburban or rural areas, I think it's a lack of programmed parks and open space, that's what it is.

Mariela Fernandez: Okay.

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: And the reason why is because in rural areas, you have large swaths of open land, right. You have expensive desserts here in LA county. I'm thinking of the north county. I'm thinking of Palmdale and Lancaster.

You have desert, so I mean that's open space, technically, but it's not programmed for open space. So you have open spaces in rural areas that might be just littered with illegal dumping and debris, and it makes it hard for anybody to use that like a park. And then also you have the lack of parks. So, this – The nuance for this one is the lack of program open spaces and parks in those areas. Having an open field doesn't necessarily make it usable. It might be hard to have a soccer game when you're trying to dodge rubble that's been dumped from a construction site, which happens a lot.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: The third – The second obstacle for the suburban and rural condition is isolation. I don't think we have the same isolation in the urban environment. We have a lot of high-density areas where people have come together. But in these rural areas, we have houses that are spread out really, really far away from each other, and that's I guess by design. People, they're trying to get away from the urban condition, but with that isolation, they have lesser access to public resources, like open space and parks. So you're – You could be living kind of loner on a remote part of the land, and have just nowhere to go because you're isolated.

You stay home, and then that comes back around to the third idea, and that's video gaming, gamer culture. When you have no destinations, because you live in suburban and rural areas where everything is really far away, you might as well stay home and just play football video games instead of actually playing football.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: So those are the obstacles that I thought about that I scratched out on my outline here from my experience from actually seeing this with my own eyes as a planner, not seeing this from a distance. I'm talking about being embedded in the community. You know, on the ground, shoulder to shoulder with the people, talking with them about what they need, what their challenges are. And a lot of this is informed by my recent experience with the LA neighborhood Land Trust where our focus was on developing parks and gardens, so I really got to know what the challenges were.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah. So when you think about all the LatinX neighborhoods, what factors do you think they should all have in order to kind of encourage physical activity and just mobility throughout the neighborhood?

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: Well I'll start with pedestrian infrastructure that is safe. Resolve all of those unsafe conditions that we see in LatinX neighborhoods. Those broken sidewalks that make it difficult for anybody outside of a car to navigate, right. Pedestrian, wheelchair, walkers, folks with disabilities, the public ground, the pedestrian infrastructure part of it has to be made safe first. The next is to go back to the idea of having more shade, so that people can comfortably move through public space and not burn up. So the question is, how can these neighborhoods?

Mariela Fernandez: What they should have.

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: What they should have, right. So, we're talking about also amenities.

Mariela Fernandez: Mmm hm.

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: Yeah. I guess the other thing is to like, is to have – It's to have a more vibrant public realm, and we have that in many ways that is informal, right. Like we have just pop up activities and informal street markets, and all these things that happen in LatinX neighborhoods. But they're oftentimes made illegal, because of land use and zoning codes.

So, in order for it to be a much more enjoyable experience, it will be nice to have those kinds of amenities in public space that aren't over policed and shoot away. That's part of the culture, it makes a neighborhood. But the default here is to just rely on the zoning code or the land use code from 1930 that says it's illegal, and not to rethink ways to make it legal. We've made progress, so statewide in California, street vending was kind of decriminalized.

I mean I'm doing air quotes for our transcript here, because the state legislature also built in a bunch of caveats for the local jurisdictions to still criminalize it, and that's what's happened. You know, we have statewide so-called decriminalization, but the local level can still do all these things to criminalize street vending, and remove this vibrancy of public space.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: In LatinX neighborhoods, where street vending is very common and part of the culture. We need to look at ways to incentivize that rather than shoo that away, because it makes for a much more enjoyable time in public space, and it gives people destinations along the way.

So if they're walking from their home to a park several blocks away, it's not just from A to B, home to park, but they have all these micro destinations along the way where they can be part of the community, and

enjoy public space and engage in local commerce and conversation, and do all these things instead of just having kind of like the functional, “well, I gotta do this trip just A to B, and that's it.”

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah. Now, one of the things – The next question is when thinking of cities in which you work in, which neighborhoods are more likely to have resources that encourage physical activity? And you've kind of mentioned the middle-income white neighborhoods, and so the follow up question is, why do you think that is?

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: It’s middle income and higher income white neighborhoods, for sure. The reason why is that these neighborhoods have exponentially more wealth and resources to be able to develop parks and to develop amenities, and also to craft whatever they see for their community members as I guess appropriate public space uses versus what you see in LatinX communities. You see a different use of public space. But it really comes down to resources, and also I think I need to add political power that you have in wealthier middle and upper class white neighborhoods where the residents know their power.

The Community members there can wield power in much more effective ways than communities of color, LatinX communities. They know who the representatives are. In LatinX communities, we have a lot of immigration. One thing that I saw as an LA county planner working in South Central is that I had to explain, not only to my community members, what it is when I say County of LA versus City of LA, because they're not the same jurisdiction. I also had to explain to them that the county government is unincorporated, meaning this is not a city. There's no mayor. There's no city council. Our territory is spread throughout the county. It's basically all the leftover land, right.

Whereas the city is its own little micro kingdom. So I had to explain representation. I had to explain the concept of government, and these concepts don't always translate over into their prior experiences. I don't think that there's a similar concept of unincorporated versus incorporated in a lot of Latin America, so it was confusing to people. So people would never even know, they would be going to, you know, Villaraigosa or Garcetti, the mayors of LA, and I'm like that's not even your jurisdiction, because you're on our side of the street. So people would be like, “well, the zip code says Los Angeles,” and I didn't have to explain the zip codes are federal.

It's a – So you can see where it becomes this spiral of confusion, but white wealthy residents don't have to deal with that. They know. They've been part of this culture. They've been part of this political system for a long time. They've probably lived in these neighborhoods, or neighborhoods like them, so they can go right to their Mayor if they're mad about something. They can go right to their City Council Member if they want something. Whereas in LatinX communities, working class high immigration, people will be going all over the county because they had no idea where to get their services.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: So that creates a power imbalance, too, because if they want to take action with something, they don't even know where to start.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: So, they start with that disadvantage, and you don't have that when you have wealth and power. And it's also – It's gotten better over the last couple years because community organizing, especially after the 2020 summer justice uprisings, has gotten so much more pronounced here. We've gotten better with community organizing. So LatinX communities have community-based organizations, CBO’s that they can go to for help. But that's – And they've been around for a long time, but it's really only now where we've seen this very large presence and accessibility. It helps with social media. It helps with people being much more radicalized now, but for the last many years, people just didn't know where to go for help outside of government.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: Right, so there were non-governmental organizations and community based organizations out there, but it was hard to make that connection and have people go on a larger scale. So you know you can see the challenges, and then in another geography and other community that's wealthy and oftentimes white, you don't even need a CBO. You can just demand to speak to your Mayor, and then they'll respond because of the way that that culture is set up.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah, I had been – That was one of my recommendations of getting more political clout for communities of color, but as far as saying exactly what that is, I was having trouble, so thank you because that definitely gives me something to work on. I talked about the nonprofit sector, and how helpful it is, but it's good it's good to be reminded of that by participants.

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: Locally, I just want to – Since we're recording this, I want to put on record some people that are – Some organizations that are doing really great work, Los Angeles Neighborhood Land Trust, where I used to work. They build parks and gardens exclusively in communities of color. It's a land trust, so they own the land. They create the park; they own the land. Strategic Actions for a Just Economy, SAJE; they do a lot of tenant organizing, housing organizing, and in working with coalitions to build local power. Trust South LA, trust is an acronym. It's in Spanish, and I would – If I try to say it, I'd mangle it right now. So basically, it's a – Trust South LA is a land trust in South Central LA that acquires and builds housing, and it's a land trust, so it's owned by the land trust community members. Those are three that come to mind that I think should be scaled and modeled across all LatinX communities.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah. I'll take a look after the interview. Thanks for that.

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: You're welcome.

Mariela Fernandez: So, in earlier you kind of mentioned the importance of vibrant communities, and some research that shows that that might be linked to gentrification. So when we make improvements, gentrification will happen. And what we're noticing also is that depending on who you are, people use different definitions of gentrification. So I'm going to start off with the question of, how do you define gentrification?

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: Thank you. This is a question that came up in both of my classes that I taught this semester, so it's definitely fresh in my mind, and it's also everywhere now.

Mariela Fernandez: Right.

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: Real estate capital is acquiring so much, and it seems like every corner of the country in every corner of the world is under threat of gentrification. So gentrification is the process of outside forces, oftentimes wealthy white and upwardly mobile, coming into a working class community of color, moving in, buying up property and land, and transforming it into a no longer working class community of color.

It's a bit of an inelegant definition on the fly, but that's the way I – When I think about the neighborhoods that have been gentrified here, that's what's happened. I think about how, and it's happening now. It's happening live. And some neighborhoods have fallen, and some are battlegrounds where the gentry are being pushed back through heavy militancy, oftentimes by LatinX, specifically Chicano, ChicanX folks here. So yeah, that's what it is to me. That process of having the outsiders, the gentry, the wealthy white folks come into a community of color, black and brown community, buy it up, move in, and then start transforming it so it's no longer a community of color for working class folks. And then what I would, what I always would tack on is the result is displacement.

Something that I made sure that my students knew. The byproduct of that is having the LatinX and Black folks have to relocate and move somewhere else be displaced because of these processes. So that's in part how you see community members of color end up having to move to the high desert here, having to move to Palmdale and Lancaster, because they could no longer afford to be in their neighborhood, because they were lifetime renters. Their family didn't have capital to own the home or own the business,

and they – Now the gentry have moved in and turned it into a swanky neighborhood. And you see people now living in the desert, literally in the desert here in LA, in Los Angeles county, because it's one of the few affordable places to live. Also in our Eastern adjacent counties, Riverside and San Bernardino, which are rural and desert to some extent, you see people moving out that way too. So that's the displacement part of it, it's a two pronged thing for me. The process of the replacement of people and driving up property values, and then the longtime residents, who held up this neighborhood for decades, now have to move out.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah and when you talk about that transformation to like this swanky neighborhood, what are some symbols of that? So, for example, one of my colleagues talked about – In his Chicago research talked about how the Mexican murals were painted over, so that culture disappears, but are there any other symbols that come to mind that might disappear in that transformation?

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: That's a great place to start. Gentrification, and specifically gentrifiers, are often – They're the proponents of place erasures. Because of them, you see LatinX murals whitewashed over. That is happening currently here in areas like Highland Park and in Northeast LA, which are battlegrounds for gentrification. There is a push and a fight to get the gentrifiers out.

You see that also locally in Boyle Heights, where to a certain degree the resistance has been winning where they've made it very uncomfortable for gentry. And they've got up and left because they can no longer exist there comfortably. So yeah, the first thing that I would say is to build off of your colleague's observation – You have a place erasure and cultural erasure where you will see the removal of a very important mural or other artwork, and sometimes it's left as a blank white wall or it's turned into a different mural that is now more palatable to the new arrivals. Along with that is the removal of long-time legacy neighborhood businesses that are LatinX businesses. They're the pan dulce shops. They're the little clothing stores, you know, the *tienditas*, the little thrift stores. Things that are smaller scale, and they're local serving. So those, especially if you're looking at neighborhoods that have well preserved historic building stock in architecture, the gentry will gravitate towards that and start opening up shops there, because they can pay higher rents. So those little stores, those mom and pop's are gone. Yeah. The removal of restaurants, right, the local serving restaurants.

The gentry may not want to have the abundance of, I don't know, Mexican food on every corner. So you'll see it turned into extremely expensive coffee shops instead. That's one of the – I think that's one of the harbingers of this, you'll see a new coffee shop come in, like Blue Bottle or Intelligentsia, or one of the more higher end coffees that charged three or four times the price of even a Starbucks, and we know who that's for, right.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: So yeah it's about place erasure, and it's about removal and transformation. Businesses, restaurants, murals. In kind of an amusing way, you also see a lot more businesses that serve pets.

You see a lot more like dog grooming and like doggy spas, because I think gentrifiers are younger and they're, you know, upwardly mobile, and they don't have kids as often so they have pets instead. So the pets become the children, and the neighborhood will cater to that. So yeah, you see the pet spas that take over for the small mom and pop's stuff.

Also, I think it's really important to note there's a connection to violence here. You see the increase in police activity directed towards street vendors. You see the increase in police activity, especially when it comes to evictions. Because the folks often don't want to leave and the law is sent in to remove them. But I know that, locally, what's happening here is, for example, and again in Highland Park, a battleground gentrified neighborhood, the new gentry has been calling the law on street vendors. They're upset because they hear the champurrado guy, you know, doing his horn, or selling tamales with the iconic wail that you can hear from across the neighborhood.

Before that it was just a facet of the Community. It was just part of everyday life. And now, the gentrifiers will be calling LAPD, and saying this is a disturbance, go handle that and the police are now harassing them more.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: Another thing is some of the gentry have been harassing the street venders themselves. It's been documented. In this social media environment where everyone has a camera, everyone is catching bad behavior.

Mariela Fernandez: Right.

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: So I've seen it locally, where the gentry will come up and start harassing and yelling at street vendors. And people will come up by themselves and they'll take on a whole row of street vendors, because they feel like they have power. It's the, what do we call them? Karen's now, right.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: That's the trope. The Karen's are coming up and harassing the street vendors. And then they're getting called out, they're getting doxed, their name and their address is getting put on the Internet because the community, as part of the resistance, is saying, "we're going to make it very uncomfortable for you to be here and doing this."

Mariela Fernandez: Right, yeah. I mean I think of like the ice cream man, and I just think of myself running to get my money. I didn't even think of it like bothering people.

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: Right, but honestly that – Mariela, that does. I've heard complaints, I've seen like on – People will do screenshots of like Next Door, which is by the way the most worthless racist app there is. It's just, let's complain about the person of color in our neighborhood today.

But Next Door, I've seen screenshots of people, you know, saying get a load of this. Look at the latest gentrifier, what they have to say, and they're complaining about the volume of the ice cream truck, the music coming out.

Mariela Fernandez: Ah.

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: So, you know, that those – When you start taking out the things that make the neighborhood special, it's place erasure and its cultural erasure and oftentimes there's a link to police violence. And with that, the threat of eviction and the threat of having to move far away. The violence connects to the potential for being unhoused.

Mariela Fernandez: Right.

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: Gentrification is the culprit in all of this.

Mariela Fernandez: Mm hmm. Yeah and linking it back to the purpose, so how is gentrification linked to physical activity and just mobility within the community?

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: Can you draw out the question for me a little bit more? I think I understand what the question is, but if you can maybe give me some more context that would help.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah, so I guess we've been talking about LatinX residents being able to move and walk throughout their neighborhood, whether that's all these destination sites. But once gentrification happens, how does that change? So their ability to move throughout their neighborhood, how does that change?

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: Thank you. The gentrifiers make it less comfortable for LatinX folks to move through their neighborhoods. And they do this by harassing people, oftentimes, bringing the police into the matter. They do this by making people feel uncomfortable about their own culture. They do this by accusing people of criminality when it's a complete lie, but they know that the police will respond to them, because they are, oftentimes, white and upwardly mobile and wealthy. Gentrifiers also, like we talked about with public art murals, they will make the existing LatinX community less like itself, because they engage in cultural erasure and place erasure. The removal of legacy art and legacy businesses makes your community no longer look like yours. It looks like somebody else's, and you no longer feel welcome in your neighborhood.

When you no longer feel welcome, you don't want to move through your neighborhood, especially if you're made to feel unwelcome in your own neighborhood. The neighborhood that you and your community and your culture has propped up for years. So gentrification has a negative impact on the way LatinX moves through public space, because – Especially if we're talking about the renter population that's not going to profit from spiking their – from their spiking home values and a potential sale of their home. You have people that are going to be filling a very precarious existence in a neighborhood that is slowly slipping away from them, that has been taken over by a wealthy outsider group that makes them feel unwelcome.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: People aren't going to want to move through space. They don't want to, they don't want to be harassed and feel like they've lost their community.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah. Okay, now I'm going to change gears a bit, and so there's some initiatives that were identified that have been implemented in communities. So I'm going to start off whether you've heard of these. So the first one is complete streets?

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: Yes.

Mariela Fernandez: Open streets?

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: Yes.

Mariela Fernandez: Vision Zero?

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: Yes.

Mariela Fernandez: Comprehensive Master Plans.

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: Yes. Definitely, yes.

Mariela Fernandez: Safe Routes to School?

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: Yes.

Mariela Fernandez: Yes, the Single Family Zoning.?

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: Definitely, yes.

Mariela Fernandez: And Accessory Dwelling Unit?

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: Oh my God, that's my bread and butter, yes.

Mariela Fernandez: A lot of people didn't know about that one, so.

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: Yeah, planners didn't know about or?

Mariela Fernandez: Well, I guess the whole gamut is included here, so there were some public health folks.

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: Oh okay, that makes sense. Yeah.

Mariela Fernandez: And it might be because of the language, but yeah.

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: It's definitely planner jargon, yeah. But yeah, definitely know – I've been walking into them since 2006, before they were made legal. So, yes, definitely know about it.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah, I got that from your example. So just thinking about some of these initiatives, like how effective do you think they've been?

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: I'll start with ADU's, I know that well. Generally, the statewide legalization of accessory dwelling units in California has been successful.

Mariela Fernandez: Okay.

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: Originally, we call them second dwelling units, or second units. They were legalized many years before, I think in the 80s and then there were a couple updates in the early 2000s. But the problem is that the local jurisdictions could still have all these abilities to put poison pills in the local zoning code to make them functionally impossible to build. And as a result, one of many reasons why people built informal housing in LatinX neighborhoods that I was an inspector in and I continue to work in.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: People had a dire need for housing to house their families and to account for the in-migration from LatinX communities, from Latino communities, but they didn't have enough housing. So they ran into codes, if they were even aware of the codes that said, you can't do it legally. But people are skilled, Latinos, LatinX are skilled. They have a lot of ingenuity and experience from life back home, so people would just build housing out of necessity. And it was almost always unpermitted. So the laws that change here locally in 2017, statewide, that forced all the cities and counties to allow ADU's have created a critical pathway for people to build housing anew and to legalize existing unpermitted housing, so that they have potentially new opportunities to house their family.

They have new opportunities for rental income. They have a way to not default to demolition, and to keep something and legalize it after the fact. It's not without problems. There's still a lot to be discussed and learned and figured out. The ADU laws need tweaking, but by and large, it's been a success because it's created a pathway for legalization or the opportunity to build anew without all of the built in poison pills that the local jurisdictions used to add to their codes.

So, for that reason, the ADU campaign, locally in California, and I think across the country is something that should be looked at and scaled and modeled up.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: The others, so Vision Zero, it's had mixed results here. I think it's one of those things – I think this one is one of those things – It's like, it's very aspirational. It's talked about a lot in terms of all the different levels of government, and you have it at the policy level, the aspirational level from the elected offices, and then you have plans that are worked on at the staff level and planning departments. And, you know, we're trying to get to a wonderful thing here but the implementation and the execution of it is still, I think I've seen, far off.

I think it's still a work in progress as we go.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: So success rates? It's kind of like – It's in that middle ground, mediocre spot where it's good that it's being worked on. It's a very high priority, but I think that we need to have a lot more work to do, and we haven't reached zero yet.

We still have a lot of danger in the public right away. Single family zoning is certainly a hotly contested topic. Recently in California, the governor approved SB9, senate bill nine, which essentially removes single family zoning statewide, although it's not a literal removal. Basically with SB9, a person on a single family zone lot can now statewide legally, as long as you're in an urbanized area, I don't think this applies to rural counties. But if you're in an urbanized area, you can split your lot in ways that you never could before, and create up to four dwelling units on a one single family zone lot. So there's progress in that. I know as a planner and as a person who had to enforce these codes that single family zoning is imbued with middle class and upper class values. I know that it is exclusionary.

But at the same time, I also see challenges with things like SB9, that senate bill that allows lot splits, because there is a threat of gentrification.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: But with developers potentially being able to come in and split up lots. The State Senator who enacted the bill put in a couple of safeguards, but I don't think that they're strong enough.

So I, as a planner in black and brown communities, what I worry about is lot splits not being done by actual community members, but somehow developers finding a way to buy up land, and subdivide it, and create profit driven subdivisions on *** land that doesn't bet – That don't benefit the community.

So, bottom line is *** single family zoning has a hell of a lot of problems. But in California, our latest proposed fix, SB9, I don't know if that's the way, because I think it can invite gentrification despite the safeguards.

Mariela Fernandez: Make sense.

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: Comprehensive? Was it a Comprehensive Master Plan?

Mariela Fernandez: Mm hmm. Or just the Comprehensive Plans. Yeah.

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: Yeah, so that, locally, that reminds me of what we do when we create general plans for the city or the county, the political subdivision. It reminds me of what we do when we create specific plans and community plans. It's a process that I've been involved in from the time that I started as a planner, from 2006 onward. What I will say is the problem with it is that it is done from a distance. It is done from a desk. That is because planning is still done from a desk, detached from the community. I propose an alternative way in the creation of embedded planning. One of the reasons why I created embedded planning was to bridge the divide between planners and the People.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: We can do comprehensive planning much more meaningfully if we're planning on the ground. If our trips to the community are not the exception to the rule, but rather the rule. The planner is working at the street level.

So Comprehensive Rational Planning, or that's my Freudian slip there. Comprehensive Planning, oftentimes, is from a rational planning perspective. Rational planning being the baseline of what the work

that we do is. Rational planning is very problematic. And since its inception, there have been so many responses to it, to take planning it in a much more, what I call laboratory way.

So my creation of embedded planning is part of that legacy of the laboratory planning theories that come in reaction to rational planning. It comes in reaction to that technocracy, that has planning done from the top down. So that's what we need to do; that's the direction that we need to go in. We need to plan from the street, not from our desk.

Complete Streets and Open Streets, when we talk about Open Streets, are we talking about – So locally, and internationally like ***, are we talking about that? For open streets?

Mariela Fernandez: I'm not familiar with that term, but yeah, it's when they close all the streets and then.

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: Yeah.

Mariela Fernandez: And like the kids can go outside and things like that.

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: Yeah, I'm thinking of *** or – And I know it, the term originated from South America, I think from Columbia. But locally it's called ***, and it's exactly that. It's a wonderful thing. I've seen it. It brings out so many more people. It brings out so many more community members of all levels, and I like seeing that here. It started in more of the downtown and centralized parts, the CBD, the business district, and now it's spread all to all different parts of the region, so you have it in different geographies, and it's always been a hit.

What I'd like to see with that is to do it more often and to scale it up, and somehow we'll just – We'll have to find a way to mitigate the ire of the business community that can sometimes be annoyed by it, and residents if it goes to their streets. But it's a very good way to show that the public ground is something that can be enjoyed if we remove the automobile.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: It can be enjoyed when we remove the threat of being hit by a car, and it brings out people of all ages to enjoy the public ground. Honestly, unlike a lot of things that are happening in planning, like part of the creation of parks can lead to gentrification. We know that. But I don't think Open Streets does, because it's usually temporary and it's a pop up and it doesn't stay too long. So it can just kind of travel, and with that I don't see a threat of gentrification.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: Although I guess it could invite speculators into new neighborhoods. But the thing that we got to do as a bulwark against gentrification is find ways to buy back the land. That's something that I wanted to mention before our talk was over.

We need to find ways to own the land as a community, whether it be through land trusts or cooperatives or some other mechanisms, or like – Like the hip hop artist who was murdered here, Nipsey Hustle, he was buying up the community.

Mariela Fernandez: Oh okay.

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: So it can be around his neighborhood. He was buying up the community so it can be owned locally.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: You know, stuff like that. We need to do stuff like that. That is a way to have a bulwark against gentrifiers.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah, I guess like Chicago has $1 lots.

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: Right, right. Right, so scale that across all LatinX communities. Find ways where we can buy up the land, and buy it back so that it's a prevention against speculative real estate.

I know of Complete Streets. Can you give me a little bit of a definition? I've heard of it, and I've kind of seen it, but the definition is evading me. Can you give me an idea of what it is?

Mariela Fernandez: I believe that one is. accommodates all sorts of transportation, so the biking, walking. So there's more infrastructure than just the car.

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: Right, right. Right, so it's complete for all modes of travel, right, so.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: In my day job, we're working on that now at the Council of Governments. I know of it. I can say, critically, that I don't know of many areas locally that have it.

Mariela Fernandez: Okay.

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: It might be more of a kind of a work in progress because we're probably retrofitting our existing urban condition to allow it. I think there are some areas that are a little bit better than others, but yeah, so I'm aware of it. And I think it could and should be scaled up. But yeah, it seems like it's more of an exercise on paper, in my experience right now, versus actually seeing it out in public space.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah, gotcha. Alright, and we had been asking about more challenges, and you've talked about a lot. The thing you haven't mentioned yet is immigration, so ICE, and how that impacts the neighborhoods.

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: Yes. Yeah, I can certainly talk about that. I did earlier mention that immigration is one of the reasons why we have very high densities in South Central LA, and why the population shifts have occurred. This used to be – The geography that I've worked in for a long time used to be, I mean originally it was working class white. Then it was working class black, and now it's – Then it was working class Mexican, but now it's working class LatinX, because we have people from all of Latin America. It's no longer just Mexican and Chicano.

So, immigration is definitely part of my work as a planner. The reason why I work in predominantly LatinX neighborhoods is because of immigration. I can tell you, I saw a shift when Donald Trump became President.

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: But I had already seen the impact and the threat of ICE before Donald Trump is President. So I'll give you a story. In 2014 –

Mariela Fernandez: Mm hmm.

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: This was when President Obama was in office. I did a – I responded to a report that we had for an unpermitted garage conversion into housing in South Central LA. So I went out there by myself. Sometimes we worked in teams that looked a lot scarier, because it looked like you brought the whole department with you. But for this one, I didn't need a team and I didn't feel unsafe, so I didn't need the police with me so I went by myself.

Now the work that you do out there, you have the choice of being plainclothes or to have what looks like a uniform. What I learned is that it's better to have what looks like a uniform, because you can – You're clearly identified as a county employee. You know, I wear this uniform that looks kind of like a firefighter.

It was a blue, like blue Dickies work pants, and a dark blue long sleeve with the county seal right here, right.

Kind of – It kind of looked like the Fire Department, but it also looked like law enforcement, but you don't have guns or anything. You don't have a whole utility belt. But you walk up to this person's home, you have all this appearance.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: And people have certain impressions, so I remember that I knocked on the door, and I can hear and see people inside the house.

Mariela Fernandez: Mm hmm.

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: But nobody was coming to the door, and I was knocking and saying, “Hello, it's LA County, and I can see you. Hello.”

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: And finally, the folks came to the door, and they told me in Spanish, “I'm so sorry we took so long. We thought you were La Migra. We thought you were ICE.”

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: And I told them, “No, no, no, no, no, no, no, no. See this see this seal? The seal is the County of LA. We don't care about any of that. We don't care about papers, nothing. I'm just here to look at the building. That's why I'm here.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: They were really, really fearful, because they thought I was ICE.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: This was in 2014. This was before Trump.

Mariela Fernandez: Right.

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: So those folks let me in and I inspected, and found an unpermitted garage conversion, and did what I had to do. But before I left, I told them once again. Remember, if you see this seal, it's never the federal government and it's never ICE. You don't have to worry.

Because I wanted to give them the assurance that if anybody came after me from another department or if they ever ran into anybody else, that they at least wouldn't have to worry about the immigration status if it was the county.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: So that was 2014, and I saw the look. I saw the fear. I saw the worry in their faces. What I thought about after was how much more fearful they were after Donald Trump became President, because of the deliberate weaponization and threat of ICE, right.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: What I noticed is that before Trump, when I would be able to – When I would move through space, and take pictures of the built environment for inspections, right. If I had to document

things for an inspection from the public right-of-way or even from someone's property. People weren't too jumpy. People weren't too nervous.

After Trump, everyone was extremely careful and cautious about not being photographed. And also everyone was so much more protective of their buildings, their homes, their businesses where they would come out and say, “Why are you photographing? Well, who are you? What are you doing?” I had a little bit of that before, but it was so extremely noticeable after Trump, because of the terror that they had thinking that I was part of the deportation apparatus.

So I would always use it as an occasion to educate people, right? Being a planner on the ground, you're working in their space. You're working in their neighborhood. You have to build partnerships, relationships and trust. So I would de-escalate a tense situation, and explain, “I’m from the county. I’m not the feds. I'm just here about the building. I'm just here about the land-use.” And then use that as an education to tell them what Urban Planning is, and what zoning codes are, right.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: It's all relationship building. So, it got more tense, and I and my colleagues adapted our way of documenting things.

So when I would train new people. I would train them to take pictures very surreptitiously. The new planners, I trained them to not documents so obviously, right.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: And I would also train people to never take pictures of a person if they're in the shot.

Mariela Fernandez: Oh right.

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: If you're doing an inspection, never get a person in the shot, because they may come back after a day later and say, “You need to delete that,” and you're like, “No, it's part of the record now.” And that becomes a tense conversation.

Mariela Fernandez: Right.

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: ICE terrifies the neighbor – ICE terrified the neighborhoods. I saw it. It was a really difficult time for the communities I worked in. And when we worked in those teams, when we worked in a task force, it was even more scary, because some of them involved the police. And they look – Some of them look like they were, you know, ready for tactical war, because of their gear. And we would have to explain to them too, this is not ICE. This is just about the buildings.

I think it's still scary now, but it's not as bad in that ICE’s role has been de-emphasized a little under President Biden. I think they've got a bit of a muzzle on them right now, and they're not terrifying people as much. But the damage that was done under Donald trump is probably going to be just irreparable harm for the Federal Government to try to build relationships with the people. It's probably going to be impossible, because if the folks know that if it's a Federal Planner or the Federal Government, and you're part of that level of governance, you have a proximity to ICE.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: I don't think people feel comfortable having any proximity to ICE.

Mariela Fernandez: Right, yeah. Makes sense. Now. I only have two questions left, and this one you kind of answered throughout. So, how does historic and continued institutional systemic racism hinder physical activity and mobility in Latin next communities? You have mentioned redlining, the continued

disinvestment in communities, LatinX communities. I don't know if you wanted to add anything else about institutional or systemic racism.

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: I'll double down on everything that I've said so far. All of that applies here.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: The middle-and upper-class values that enforce single family zoning lead to a lot of planning actions, decisions, and implementation that is hostile to LatinX communities and to working class communities, right. You have things that are declared illegal in single family zoning and in single family neighborhoods that are just part of everyday life in other neighborhoods, in more working-class neighborhoods. And then, who are the ones that are sent to enforce that? It's planners, and it's other municipal agents.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: We end up enforcing racism and classism, because those things are built into the zoning code. The lack of shade, and the difficulty of navigating public spaces is a legacy of redlining. The fact that freeways, highways and freeways cut through all of our neighborhoods is the legacy of not only racist and classist policy, but also rational planning.

My perpetual target, where you have so called technocrats who have decreed that this is the best route to put the freeway through, and it always cuts through a community of color. There's a reason why there's no Beverly Hills freeway. The freeways dodge that city, because they have power, and they're white and wealthy. But all of our LatinX and Black communities have freeways cutting through them. So that's a legacy that transportation planners, especially, have to bear.

I think that we've discussed it a lot, and we can probably just you know refer back to our conversations from earlier since you've covered it a lot through our chat.

Mariela Fernandez: I think so too, and now the last one is, if you had unlimited resources, what would you do to improve the next communities?

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: The first thing I would do is distribute the money so everyone can buy their homes and buy their businesses. We remove the precarious renter population, and we have homeowners and business owners that are no longer beholden to outside interests, who hold ownership to their land. If we own the community, we control the community. So, the first step is to distribute those resources to everybody so that they are no longer in a precarious renter state, and I mean residents and businesses.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: Large and small. Continue to educate people on – The next thing I would do is to continue to educate people on the value of community land ownership.

What I would want to do is to say, “Okay. Now we all own the community, because we own our houses, and own our apartments, and we own our businesses.” And it doesn't mean that you move out. It doesn't mean that you sell, and you move to *** or Hacienda Heights, or the other, what we affectionately call the Mexican Beverly hills over here, right. You don't move away. You stay in the community, and you build the community. You build wealth for the next generation, and you continue to own it. I would want to educate people to have them understand the value of community ownership and control, so that we continue to be and exist as a bulwark against outside interests. The first step is to own it. The next step is to find a way to sustain it. And then the third step, this is a bit parochial for me, but – My goal is to take planning completely outside the hands of so-called experts. What I want to do with embedded planning and any other ways is to take planning completely outside of City Halls, to deinstitutionalize it, and to base it in the community.

I think that the community members know better. They may not know all the stupid jargon that we use, but the community members know what to do, because they've been living there, and the planners are oftentimes from outside. And if they're part of the community, it's usually in very small doses.

What I want to do is make planning a part of everyday life, so that you no longer need professional so-called planners.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: I want to deinstitutionalize planning through education and through training. I want it to be free. I want there to be people's planning schools. And essentially what I want to do is to make me irrelevant. I don't want to be needed anymore. It's good that we have embedded planning, and it's good that we have planners who are rooted in the street but imagine if we can have the truly of true most embedded planners. People who actually live there. They're deciding the direction and development of the neighborhood. That's one of my big kind of big picture goals.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah.

Jonathan Pacheco Bell: To just basically take planning to the streets for the future. And to make it no longer something that you need to get four-to-six years of expensive training to be able to get a piece of paper that says you could do it.

Mariela Fernandez: Yeah. I might have to pick your brain out some other time.

THANK YOU

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