

*Collaborating for Environmental
Health and Justice...
...Through Local Initiatives*

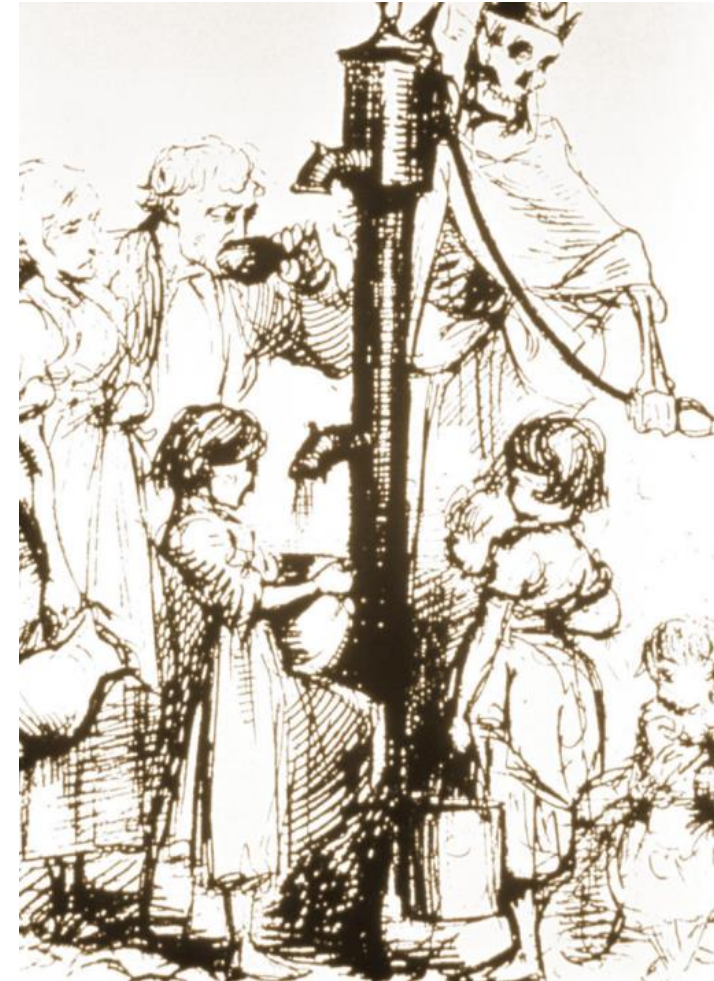
Katrina Smith Korfmacher, PhD

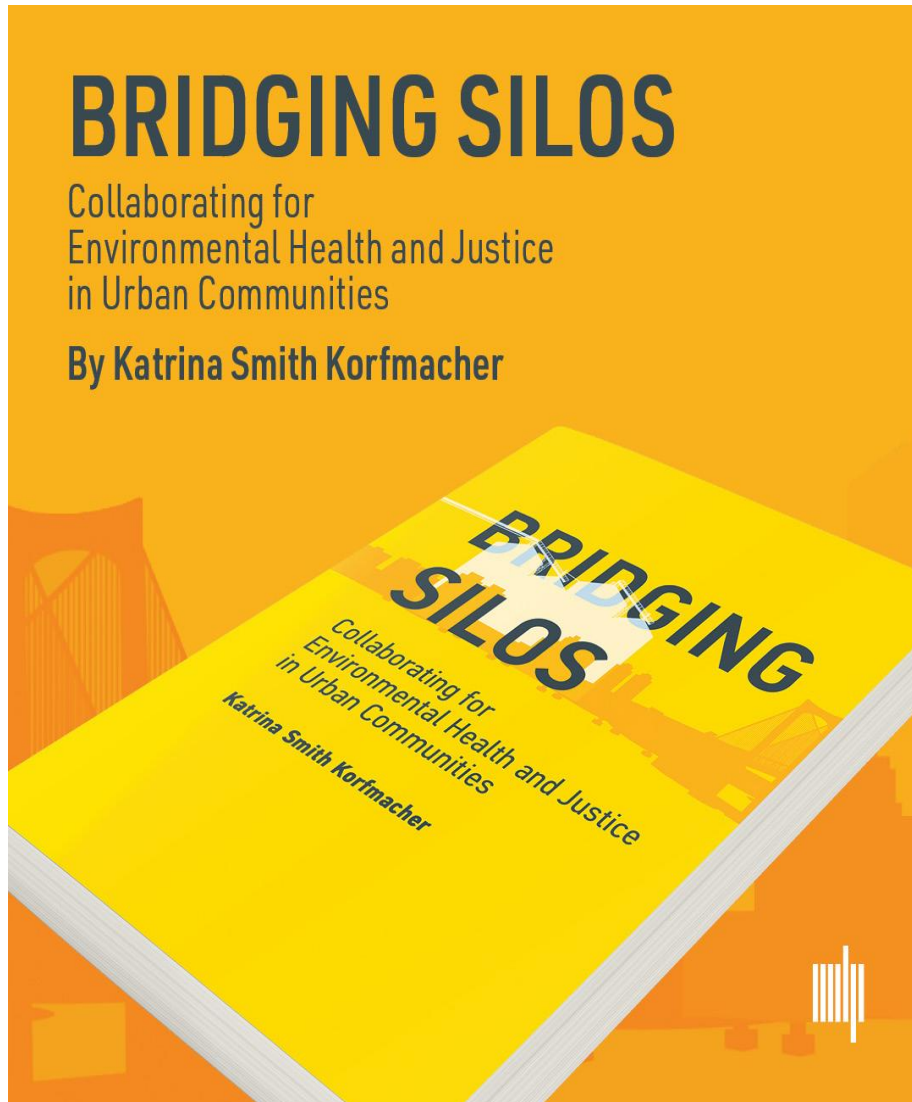
**Assoc. Professor of Environmental Medicine
University of Rochester Medical Center**

University of Kentucky, May 6, 2020

How can we promote an equitable and healthy environment when “health” and “environment” are managed separately?

- Origins of public health = environmental health
- Today: environment and health managed in separate “silos”
- This system leaves gaps that drive environmental injustices
- Local collaborations can help bridge silos and fill gaps in protection of communities’ environmental health





- Local collaborations to address environmental injustice arise all over the country
- Efforts are diverse in scope, scale, structure, and approach
- Some have successfully changed policy to better promote env. health and equity
- Topical / regional “silos” limit ability to share lessons learned
- How can we better support local environmental health initiatives?



“Katrina has made it clear who the government works for and who it does not.”

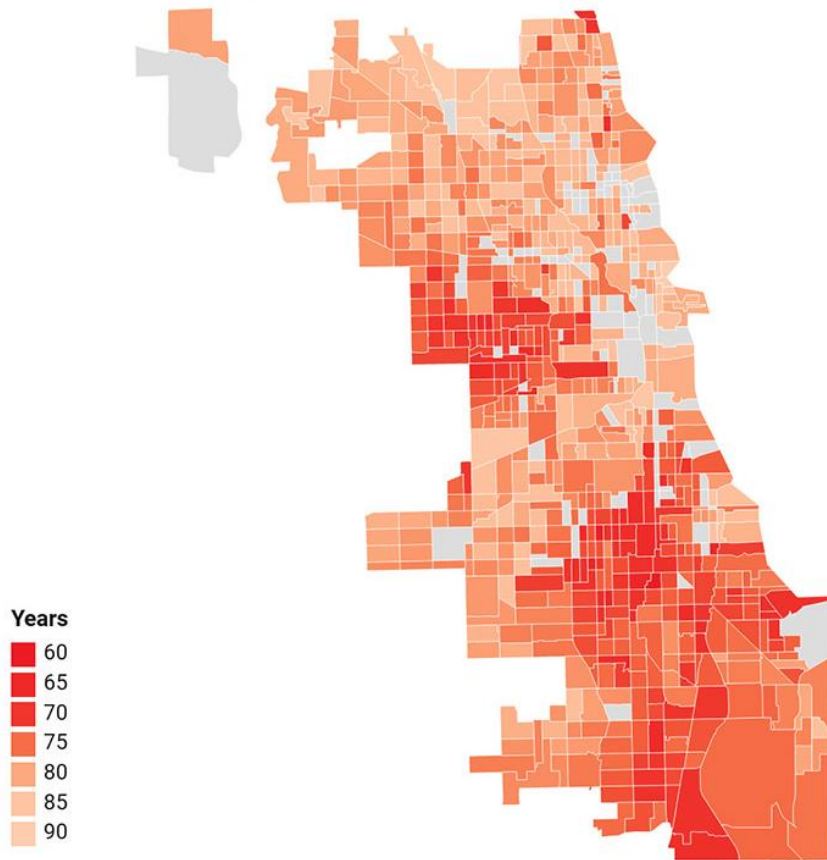






Your ZIP Code Might Determine How Long You Live—and the Difference Could Be Decades

Chicago: life expectancy



HOW THE ENVIRONMENT IMPACTS OUR HEALTH

People are exposed to risk factors in their homes, work places and communities through:



World Health Organization
#EnvironmentalHealth

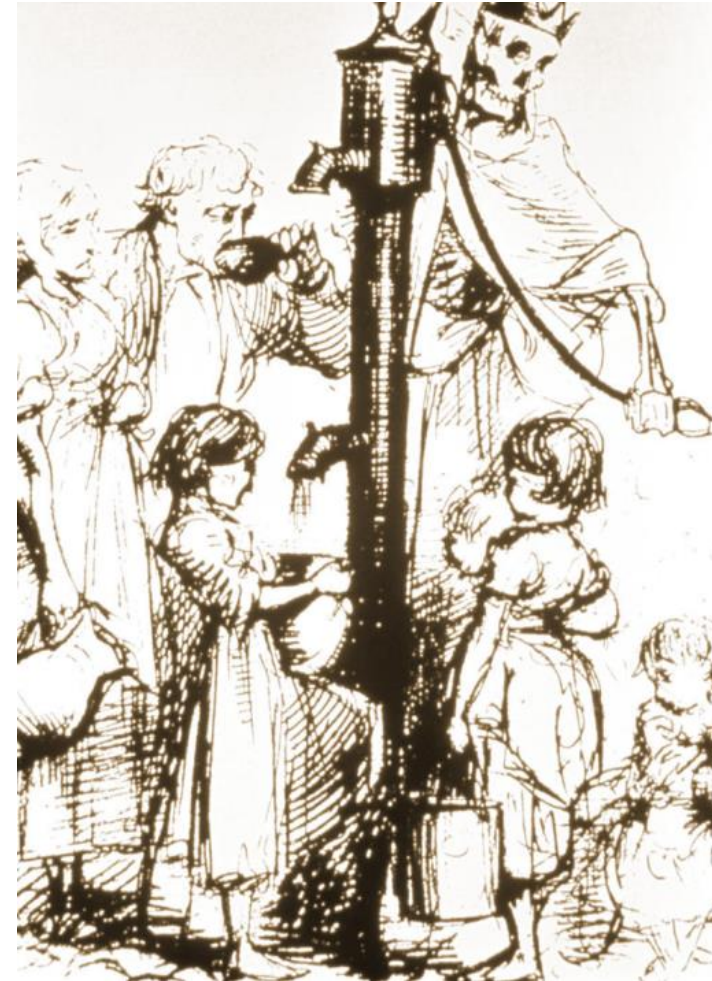
WHAT IF WE TREATED PUBLIC HEALTH LIKE AN ECOSYSTEM?

“LOCAL ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH INITIATIVES”



How can we promote an equitable and healthy environment when “health” and “environment” are managed separately?

- Origins of public health = environmental health
- Today: environment and health managed in separate silos
- This system leaves gaps that drive environmental injustices
- Local collaborations can help bridge silos and fill gaps in protection of communities' environmental health

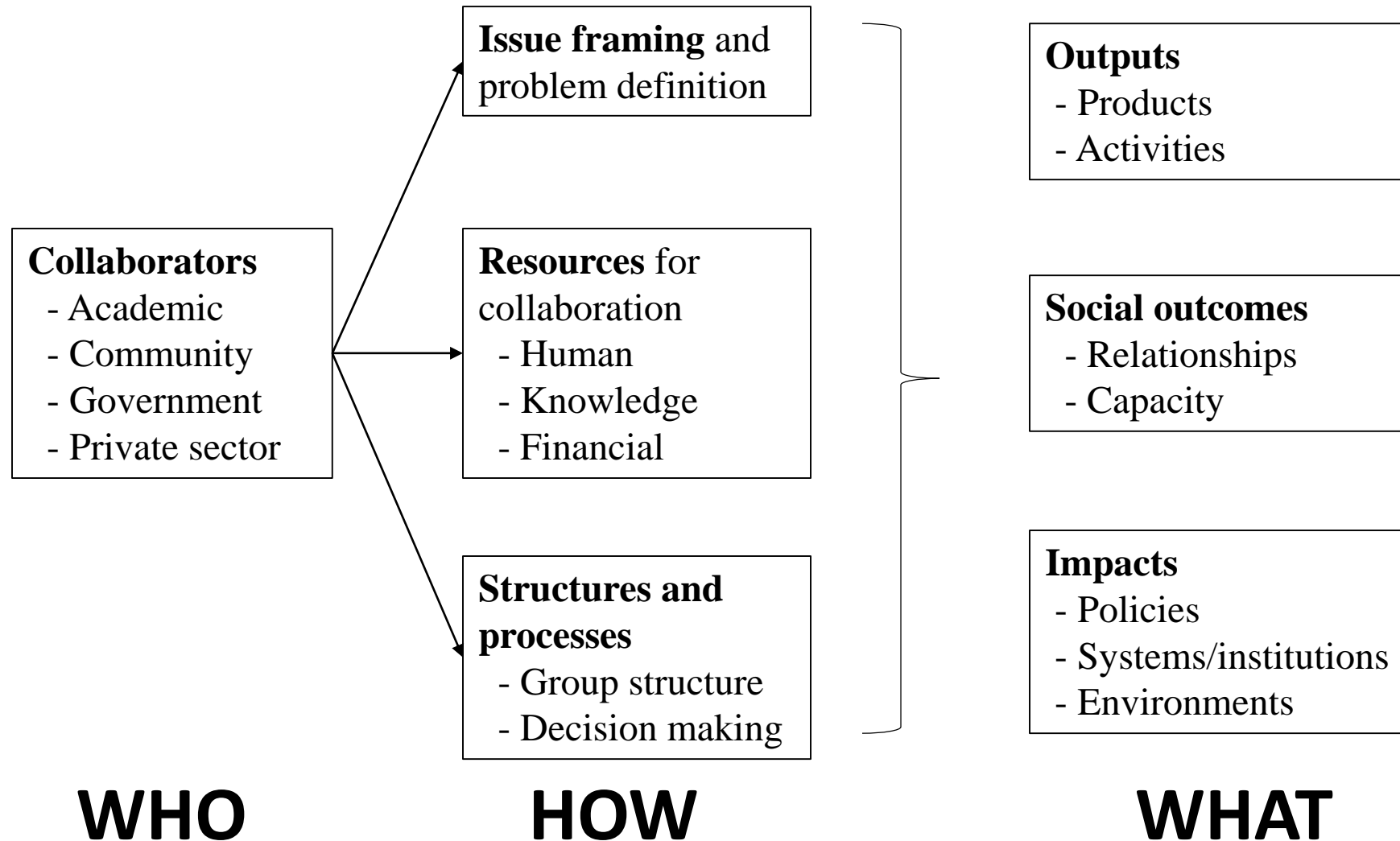


Three Case Studies

- Rochester, New York: Coalition to Prevent Lead Poisoning (hazards in older low-income rental housing)
- Duluth, Minnesota: Promoting an equitably healthy built environment (food access and transportation)
- Ports of Los Angeles/Long Beach: Integrating health equity into decisions about ports and goods movement

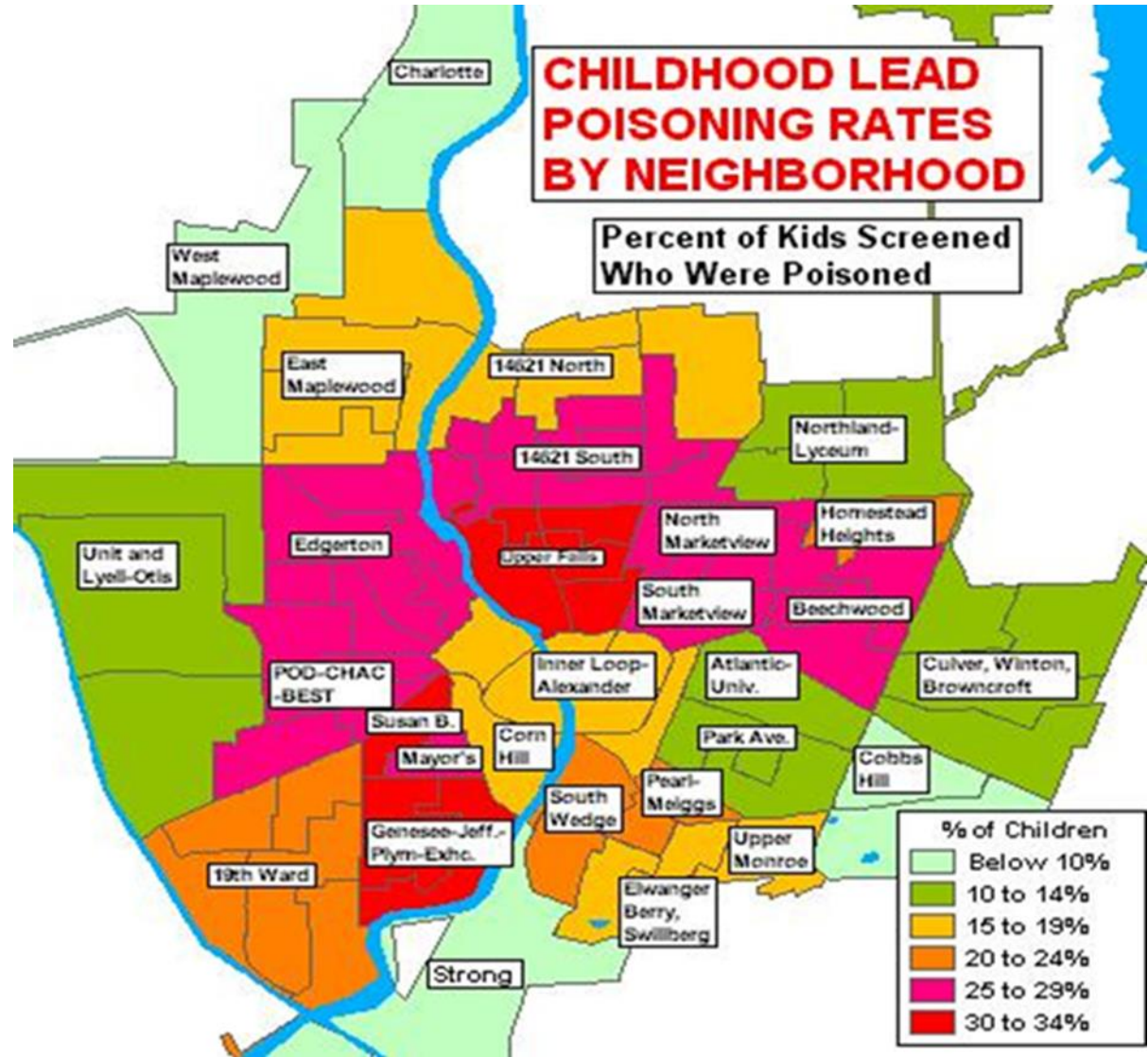


Framework for Local Environmental Health Initiatives



Rochester, New York





**Let's
MAKE
LEAD
HISTORY**



**2002: Rochester Elementary
School 17:
41% of your kids
come to school with
a history of lead poisoning...
What are you going to do?**





Dr. Ralph Spezio
Former Principal
Rochester Elementary School #17

HOUSE HAZARDS: The former principal of a Rochester elementary school, Ralph Spezio began advocating for new lead safety rules after discovering that lead poisoning was common among his students, many of whom had been exposed to the toxin in their own homes. (Photo: Adam Fenster)

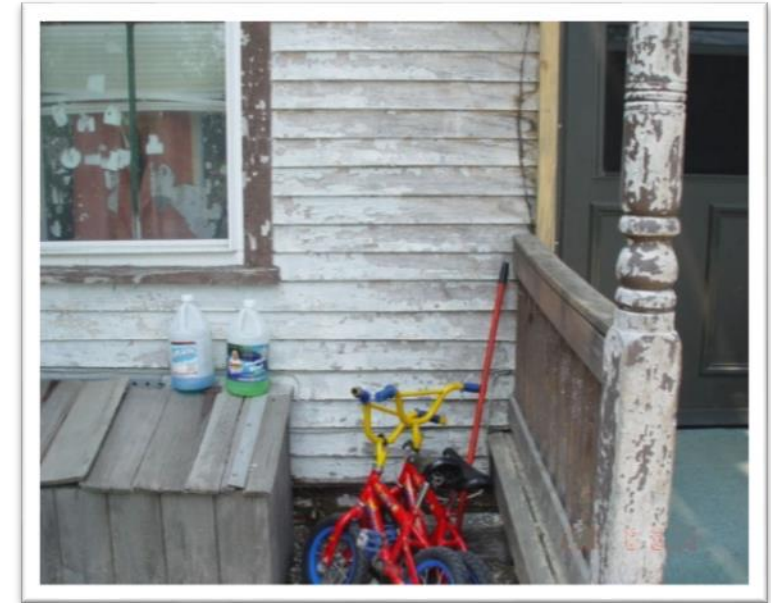
Coalition to Prevent Lead Poisoning Rochester, NY

- 2000: Rochester's lead poisoning rate = ten times national rate
- Strong secondary prevention program
- Main cause = older private rental housing
- Formed Coalition to address causes
- Focused on “science-based systems change”



Coalition to Prevent Lead Poisoning Reframing the problem

- Lead as a “health problem with a housing solution”
- Communications campaign
- 2004 Community Lead Summit

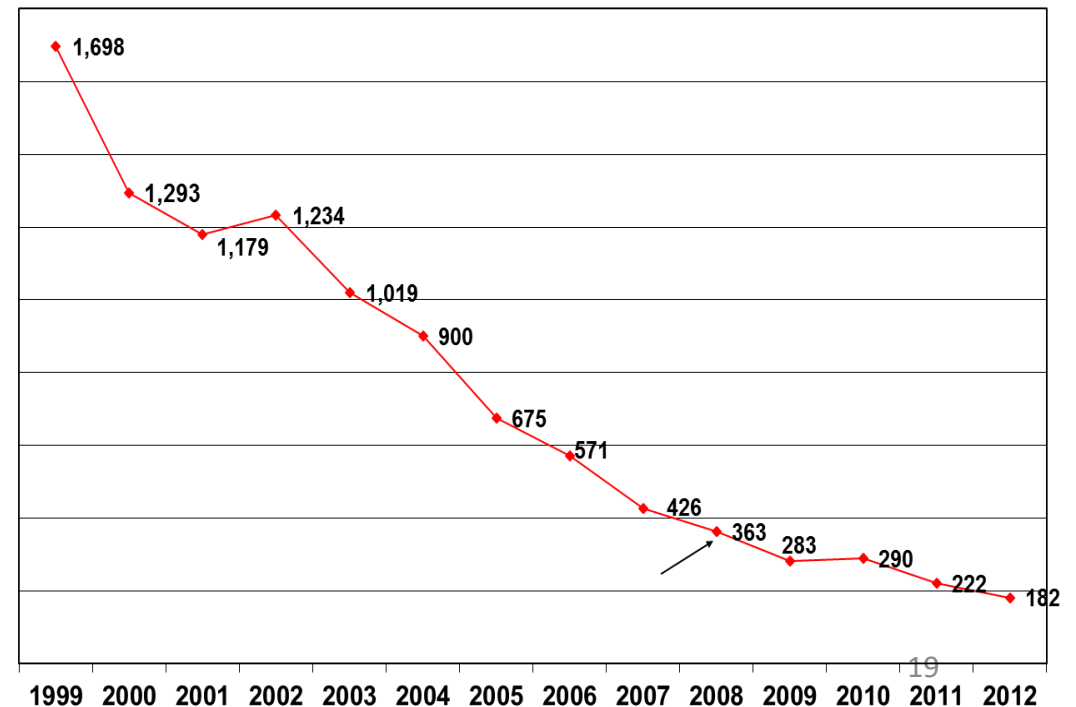


Coalition to Prevent Lead Poisoning Knowledge and Policy

- Expert input: science committee, speakers, reports
- Get the Lead Out: local pilot study
- Local lead law (passed 2005, implemented 2006)
- Requires proactive inspection of units
- Over 160,000 inspections completed

Cityofrochester.gov/lead

Number of Children Poisoned /
Lead Poisoning Prevention Efforts Timeline



Coalition to Prevent Lead Poisoning Wider impacts

- Coalition served as model for local initiatives
- Ongoing support for implementation
- Evaluation of lead “system”
- Efforts to advise other cities
- Informing state/federal programs



Duluth, Minnesota



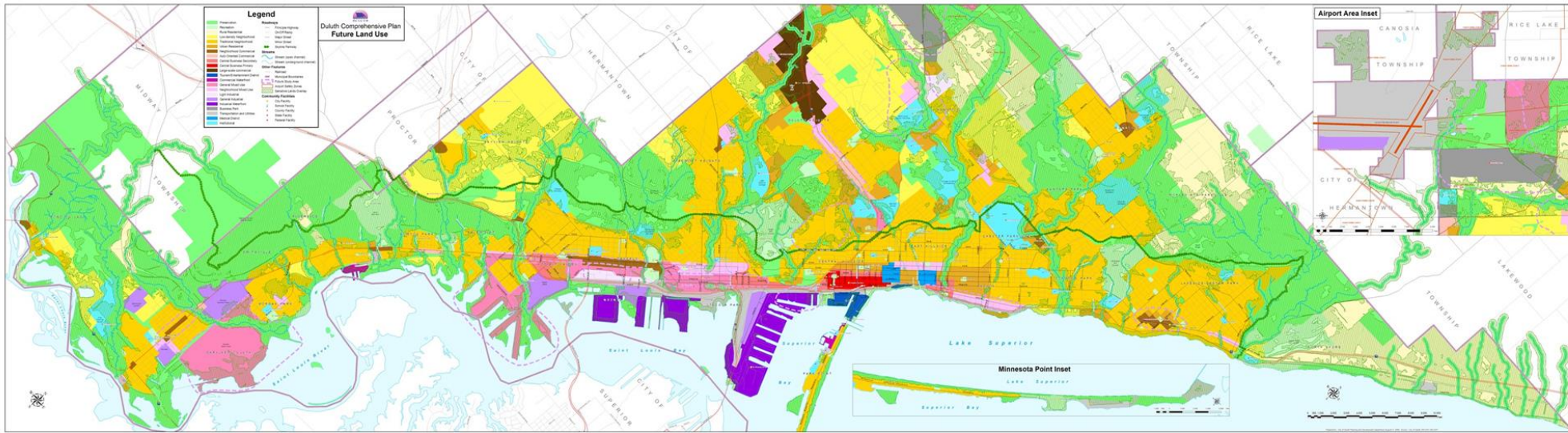


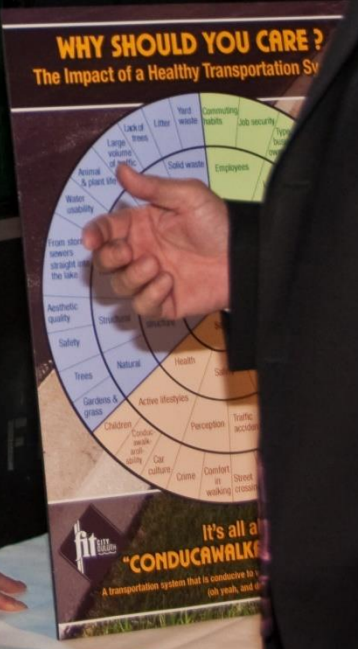
Duluth attracts outdoor-oriented people to live, work, play and visit.



“Healthy Duluth” Duluth, MN

- Redeveloping after deindustrialization
- Strong recreation, health, other sectors
- “The tide is not lifting all boats”
- Multiple streams of activity
- Involved multiple agencies and NGOs





Equitable built environment efforts in Duluth, MN

- Fit City Duluth
- Healthy Duluth Area Coalition
- Health Impact Assessments
- Brownfields Redevelopment and Health
- Transportation Equity efforts



Fit City Duluth (2007)

- Voluntary designation by Governor initiated by city staff
- Initial city board transitioned to nonprofit
- “Pioneering Healthy Communities” conference
- Unnatural Causes DVD
- Focus on “Systems Change”



Healthy Duluth Area Coalition

- Hosted by Zeitgeist Center for Arts and Culture
- Multiple community agency members
- Coordinating forum
- Projects
 - Fair Food Access
 - Active Transportation

healthyeati

It will be easier to get healthy food.

All Duluth residents will have convenient and affordable access to fresh, healthy, whole foods on a regular basis all year long.

activeliving

It will be easier to be active.

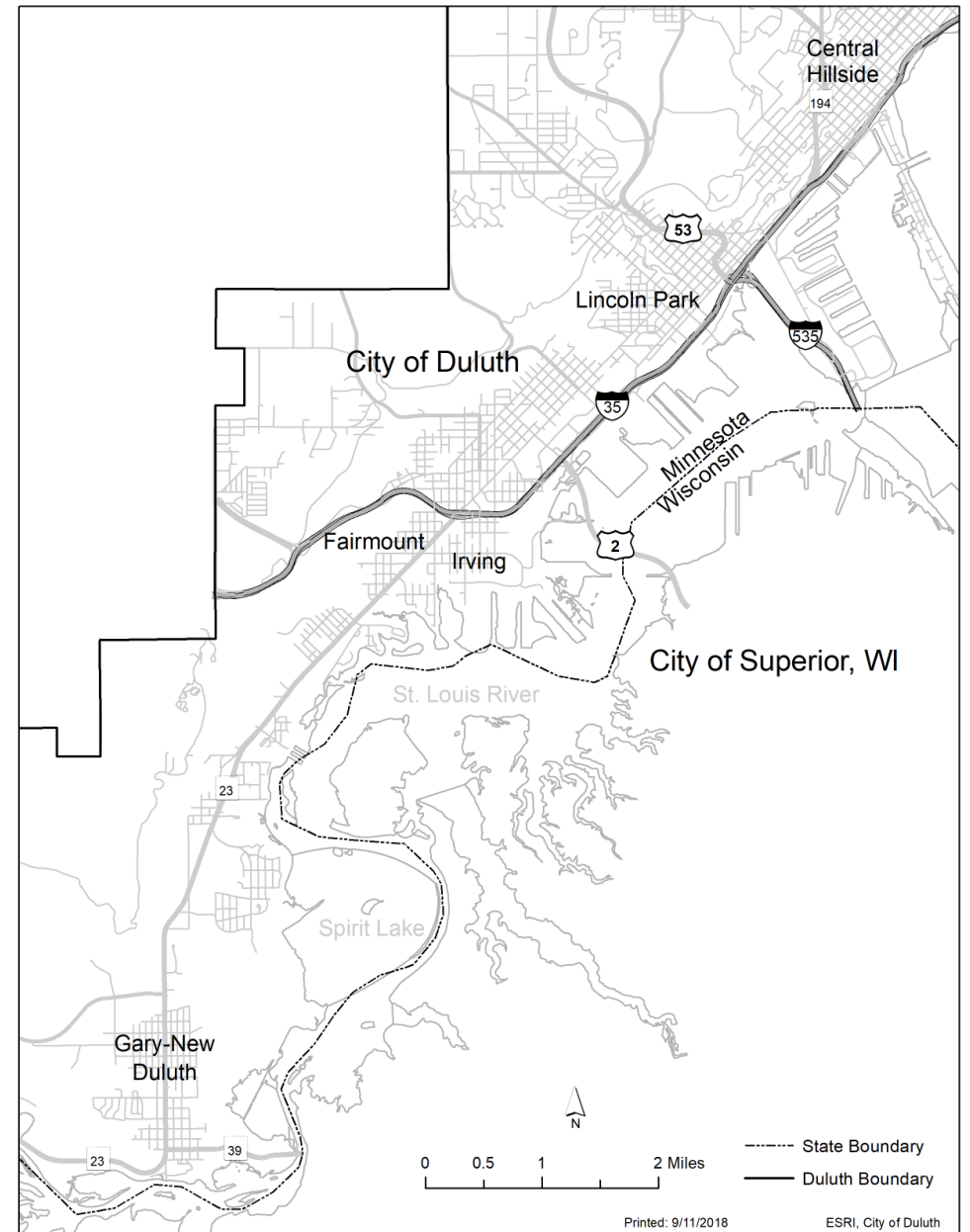
Duluth will have a planned community transportation system which promotes active living, a healthy environment, neighborhood pride, economic opportunity, and a high quality of life in Duluth. Residents will have convenient and safe access to facilities that provide physically active recreation – creating a culture of active living.



Health Impact Assessment in Duluth

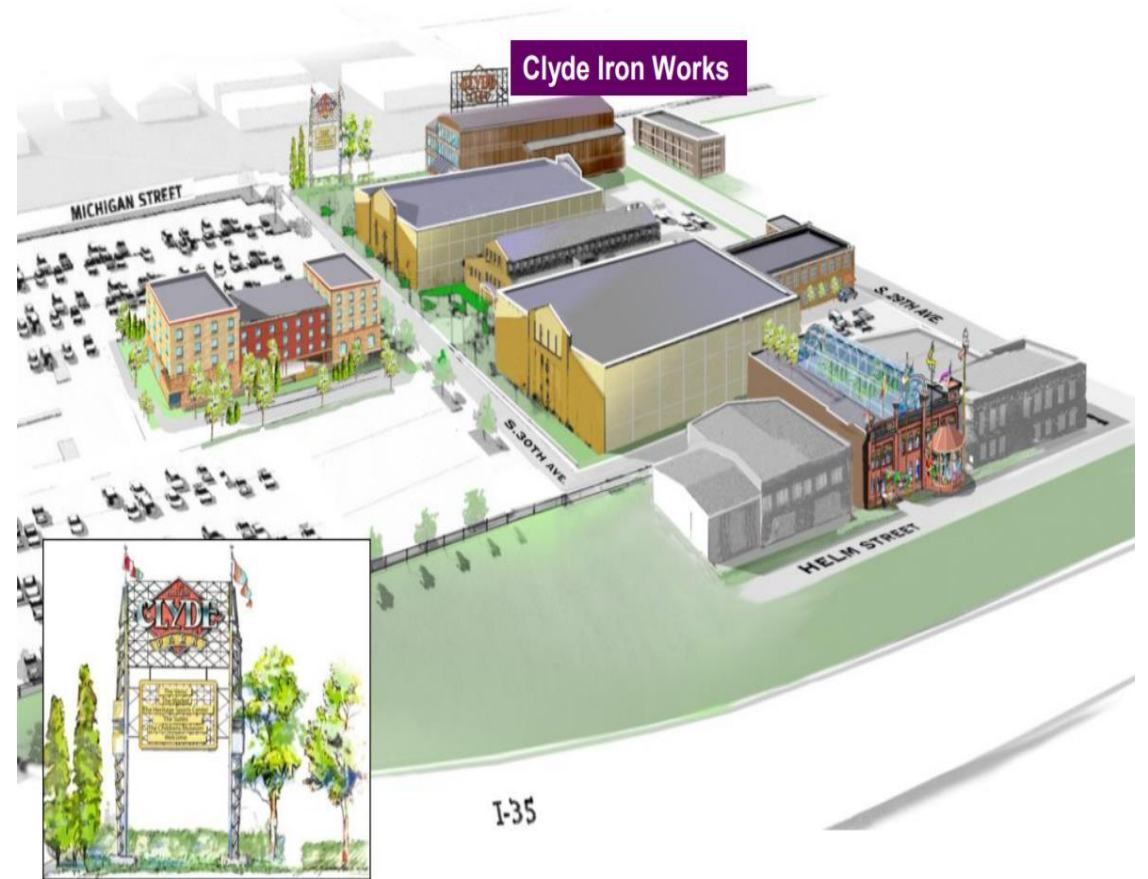
- 6th Avenue Redesign (2013)
- Lincoln Park (2014)
- Gary/New Duluth (2014)

Mid-day on 6th Avenue East



Brownfields Redevelopment and Health

- Extensive brownfield properties in Duluth
- Focus of Duluth Economic Development Authority
- EPA Brownfield grants encouraged public health assessment
- Focus of redevelopment planning efforts/integrated with HIA
- Minnesota Brownfields Health Indicator tool



Clyde Park

www.clydeparkduluth.com

Transportation equity efforts

- Bike Trail planning/prioritization
- Grocery Bus
- Tactical Urbanism efforts
- Street redesign projects
- Complete Streets
- Public Health representation on Metropolitan Planning Organization Technical Advisory Committee



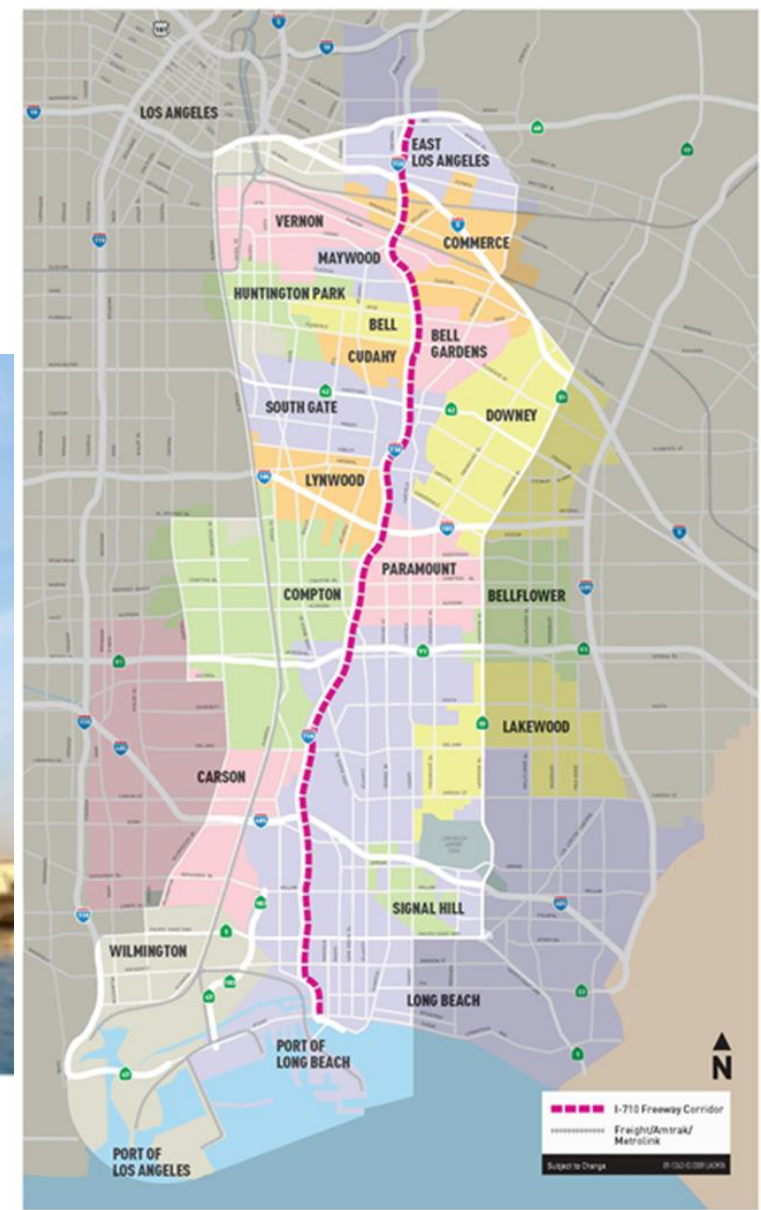
Toward Health in All Policies?

- “Health” and “Fairness” in 2018 Comprehensive Plan revision
- Healthy Duluth Area Coalition: Health Equity Collaborative
- Bridging Health Duluth
- Initiatives recognized by state and national organizations
- “Health in All Policies?”



“our right to a good and healthy life should not be determined by our zip code, or our income, education, race, gender or religion...My vision is of a healthy – prosperous – sustainable – fair – and inclusive community” - Mayor Emily Larson, 2016 State of the City

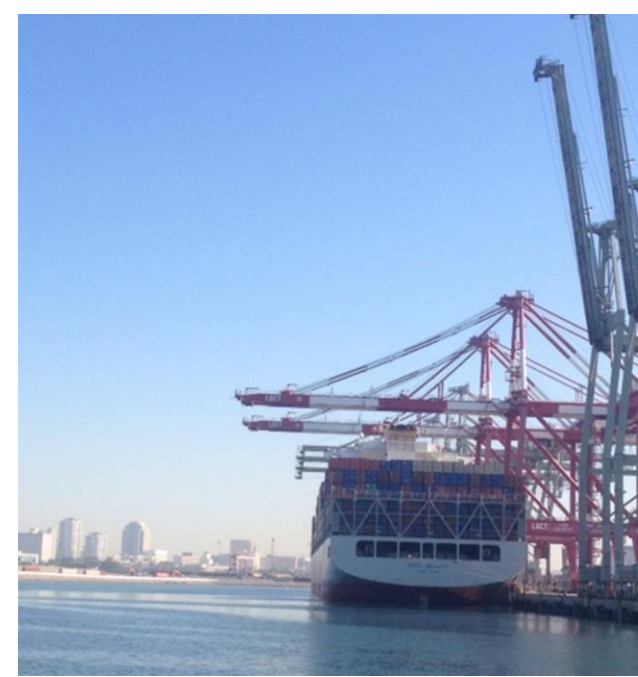
Ports of Long Beach and Los Angeles California



THE Impact Project

Ports of Los Angeles/Long Beach, CA

- 2001 Town Hall meeting identified “goods movement” activities as health issue
- Major concerns = air quality for people living close to ports, roads, railyards
- Predicted continued growth of shipping, trains, trucks, warehouses
- Ports seen as “economic engine”
- Reframed issue as regional environmental Health and justice priority



THE Impact Project (LA/LB)



- Initiated through University of Southern California
 - Environmental Health Sciences Center
 - Community Outreach and Engagement Core
- Partnership development (2002-2006)
 - Common local concerns about pollution from different transportation hubs
 - Reframing “goods movement” as a regional environmental justice issue
- Formed THE Impact Project (2007)
 - 4 local Environmental Justice groups from diverse communities
 - 2 Academic Partners



Jesse Marquez
Coalition for a Safe Environment (CFASE)



Penny Newman
Center for Community Action and
Environmental Justice (CCA EJ)



Elina Green
Long Beach Alliance for Children with Asthma (LBACA)



Angelo Logan
East Yards Communities for Environmental Justice (EYCEJ)

THE Impact Project

Community-based groups:

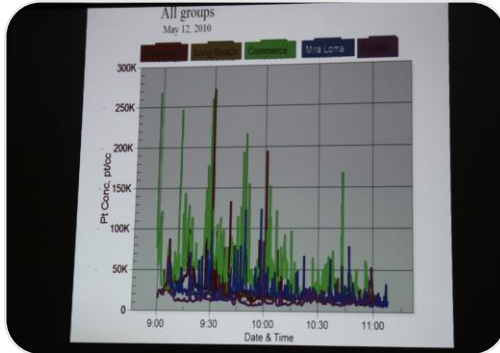
- Center for Community Action & Environmental Justice (CCA EJ)
- Coalition For A Safe Environment (CFASE)
- East Yard Communities for Environmental Justice (EYCEJ)
- Long Beach Alliance for Children with Asthma (LBACA)



Academic/research groups:

- University of Southern California (USC)
- Urban & Environmental Policy Institute (UEPI) at Occidental College

Highlights of Community-Based Efforts



Neighborhood Assessment Teams

Pollution monitoring and traffic counting in five different communities on same day at same time



A-Team Forum

Shared strategies, planned workshop for conference, and discussed future ideas for collaboration



Production of "Digital Stories"

Using a method that empowers members of community groups to write, edit and produce their own stories

Escaping the Labyrinth

Questioning international trade and goods movement expansion in an era of climate change



Policy Briefs

Storing Harm: The Health and community impacts of goods movement warehousing and logistics

THE Impact Project Policy Brief Series, #4

Importing Harm: U.S. Ports' Impacts on Health and Communities

THE Impact Project Policy Brief Series, #2

October 2010



Tracking Harm: Health and Environmental Impacts of Rail Yards

THE Impact Project Policy Brief Series, #1

Driving Harm: Health and Community Impacts from Living near Truck Corridors

THE Impact Project Policy Brief Series, #3

October 2010

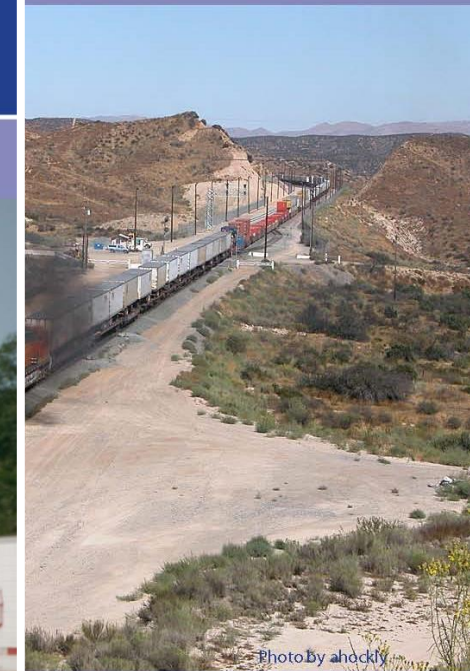


Photo by ahockly



Trade, Health and Environment
www.theimpactproject.org

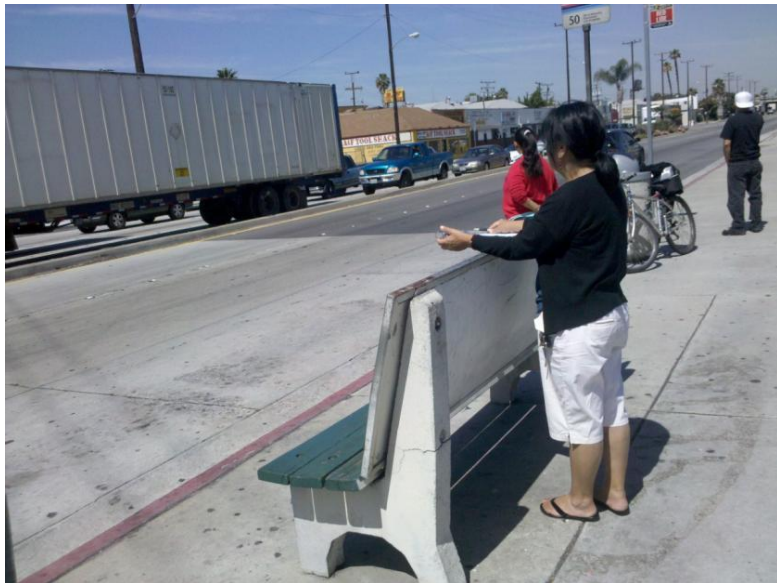
Environment Impact Project

Moving Forward Together Conference



Building partners' capacity to act

- Increased academic partners' understanding of community issues
- Increased EJ groups' capacity to engage in policy
- Developed diverse outreach, education, video, media materials
- Engaged residents in collecting local data (“A-Teams”)
- Local plans/decisions



**Importing Harm:
U.S. Ports' Impacts on Health and
Communities**
THE Impact Project Policy Brief Series

January 2012



Engaging in decision processes

- BNSF Southern California International Gateway
- Expansion of I-710 freeway
 - Commented on Environmental Impact Review
 - Recommended Health Impact Assessment
 - Joined/educated members of committees
 - Testified at hearings



National impact

- Members of THE Impact Project on state/national committees
 - Clean Air Action Plan
 - National Environmental Justice Advisory Council
- Featured in articles, reports, websites
- Spawned the Moving Forward Network



REGISTER NOW!

**MOVING FORWARD NETWORK
4TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
OCTOBER 13TH & 14TH, 2017 - LOS ANGELES**

Join us for this **FREE** two-day conference!

Conference topics will include: Ports and freight operations, pollution, and zero emission technology, environmental and climate justice, community organizing, public health, civic engagement, and community-based participatory research.

CLICK HERE TO REGISTER!

For sponsorship opportunities please contact:
Info@MovingForwardNetwork.com
or visit our website:
<http://www.movingforwardnetwork.com/>

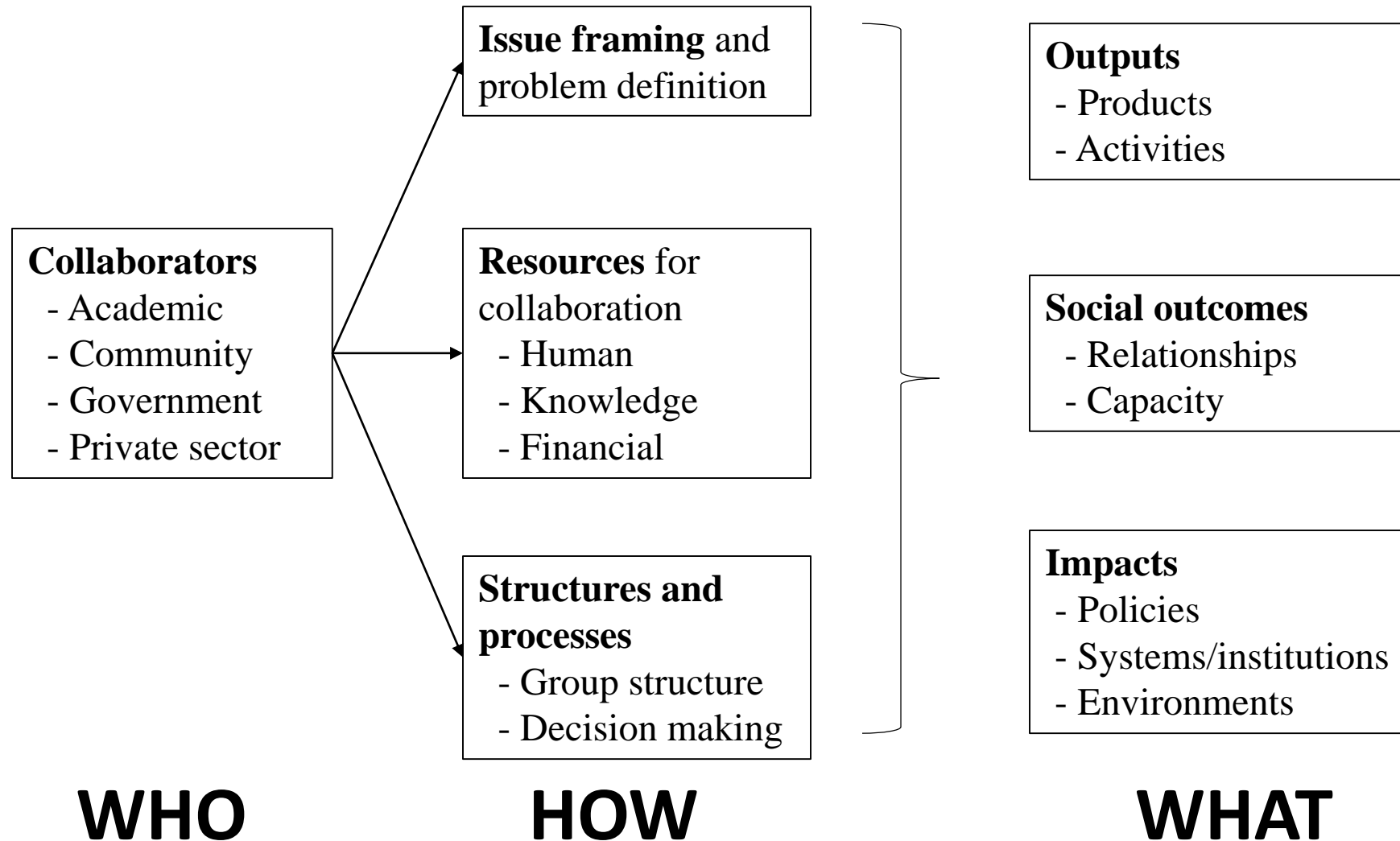
Moving Forward Network

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Built capacity of community partners
- Increased public participation in decisions
- Expanded health considerations in expansion of I-710
- Slowed BNSF Southern California International Gateway Railyard
- Spawned the Moving Forward Network
- Informed local ordinances and regulations
- Contributed to plans and policies at local, state, and national levels



Framework for Local Environmental Health Initiatives



WHO

- Different mixes of Academic, Community, Government, Private sector
- Initiated by local stakeholders “outside” the management system
- Supported by local management system “insiders”
- External actors (non-local) helped
- Different *kinds* of groups served as “conveners”
- Role of community members/groups varied (direct/indirect)
- Wide range of targets for system change
- “Target” sometimes partner, but not = leader

HOW

- “Reframed issue” = longstanding issue, new focus on equity
- Integrated health and environmental information
- Obtained human, knowledge, and financial resources differently
 - Multiple funders over time; challenges funding convening
 - Human resources \Leftrightarrow financial resources
 - Knowledge resources = multidisciplinary, credibility, analysis
- Structure/organization of efforts varied, most informal and temporary

WHAT

- Varied outputs of activities, depending on goals (reports, education, media, proposals...)
- Social outputs were key to long-term impact
 - Development of participants' capacity for action
 - Relationships developed that had local effects beyond initial goal
 - Relationships outside community supported dissemination
- Impacts on policies, systems and environments
 - Impacted decision-making process *and* outcomes
 - Difficult to measure impacts on environment – harder for health
 - Systems changes support future improvement in health equity
 - National interactions
 - Local effects beyond the initial issue

Summary of common themes

- Health equity is a powerful idea to bring into environmental issues
- Collaboration is a process, not an organization
- Many kinds of groups can serve as conveners
- Boundary spanners are created, not born
- Research can be helpful; translation is essential
- Local are listening
- Metrics: environmental vs. health outcomes
- Local initiatives can have national impacts

Bridging Silos offers hope at a time of federal inaction on pressing environmental and public health issues
Gina McCarthy, former administrator of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

For more information

Community Engagement Core, University of Rochester Environmental Health Sciences Center

www.urmc.rochester.edu/environmental-health-sciences/community-engagement-core.aspx

Katrina_Korfmacher@urmc.rochester.edu

Bridging Silos: Collaborating for Environmental Health and Justice in Urban Communities. The MIT Press, 2019

(download free pdf or order with discount code MITPR)

Bridging Silos

Collaborating for Environmental Health and Justice in Urban Communities

By **Katrina Smith Korfmacher**

How communities can collaborate across systems and sectors to address environmental health disparities; with case studies from Rochester, New York; Duluth, Minnesota; and Southern California.

<https://mitpress.mit.edu/books/bridging-silos>

