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Study of Active Neigborhoods in Detroit (StAND): Findings from a greening natural experiment - 2 /
Empirical testing of the role of greenspace in neighborhood social cohesion

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Empirical testing of the role of greenspace in neighborhood social cohesion

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Abstract

Social cohesion, a trusted network of relationships, is often cited as one mechanism by which neighborhood characteristics contribute to well-being. Parks, community gardens, and other forms of public greenspace have been proposed to promote social cohesion. Previously, we documented that fewer than 2% of papers (19 of 1,254) citing relationships between greenspace, social cohesion, and well-being presented data specifically testing the relationship between social cohesion and greenspace. The papers used diverse methods to assess greenspace. Six papers used subjective metrics, four used objective metrics, and nine used both metrics of greenspace, resulting in differing conclusions on the relationship between social cohesion and greenspace. To address this gap, we compared the relationship between a single score of neighborhood social cohesion (Project on Human Development in Chicago Neighborhoods) and multiple objective measures of greenspace, both static and dynamic, from the 2021 wave of StAND (Study of Active Neighborhoods in

Detroit). Sample characteristics: N = 259, mean age = 54.6 years (sd = 14.4 yrs), 57.5% female, 87.5% Black or African American, and mean length of residency = 13.3 (sd = 15.6). Preliminary results show that social cohesion was positively associated with some measures of greenspace. Dynamic measures of greenspace derived from GPS data predicted stronger relationships between neighborhood social cohesion and greenspace than static measures. These results will inform our understanding of the relationship between neighborhood social cohesion and greenspace and contribute to establishing best practices for the measurement and reporting of neighborhood greenspace.

Paper Abstract

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This abstract is part of a session. **Click here to view the session.**

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