



East Aldine is home to a vibrant community of people who are passionate about health and wellness, as well as feeling connected to each other. Recent research from the East Aldine Livable Center Project indicated that East Aldine residents report higher rates of social and community cohesion than residents of Harris County as a whole. However, they also report higher rates of chronic illness like obesity, and lower rates of physical activity.

It's time to understand – and try to impact – the many factors driving these undesirable health outcomes in East Aldine! In Spring of 2022, a group of community members and organizations partnered with the East Aldine Management District, Harris County Precinct 2, Harris County Public Health and Tufts University's Catalyzing Communities project to create a whole-of-community health initiative, **Revitalizing East Aldine Community Health (REACH)**.



REACH is committed to promoting healthy lifestyles through: encouraging a more active lifestyle, expanding access to healthy food and knowledge, and increasing the sense of community belonging. Through intentional community collaboration and engagement, we can achieve these goals to create better physical and mental health outcomes for all East Aldine families.



REACHING For A Healthier Community

REACH emerged from a project with Catalyzing Communities using an approach called Community Based System Dynamics, which uses feedback thinking to visually show the structures that shape communities, and illuminates new opportunities for meaningful systems change.

The group created three system map to show the what influences health conditions in East Aldine community members. The maps highlight three key factors:

- Healthy Food Access and Knowledge
- Active Lifestyle
- Community Belonging

Beyond highlighting key components, the maps show various ways the community can take action. These maps are rooted in community voices that provide context and credibility to the patterns they identify and solutions they propose.

REACH has the goal of improving the health and wellness of East Aldine residents through interpersonal and structural change. REACH plans to work with local leaders and policymakers to uplift and empower the voices of community members who are in pursuit of a healthier life. We hope you will add your voice to REACH today!

Immediate:

- Increase opportunities to be active, build relationships, and eat healthy food
- Raise awareness of resources, activities and organizational support in East Aldine
- Promote collaboration across organizations and sectors

Long-term:

- Invest and change the built environment to promote an active lifestyle
- Increase healthy food retail options and nutritional literacy
- Foster culturally responsive and inclusive community engagement efforts



I
M
P
A
C
T

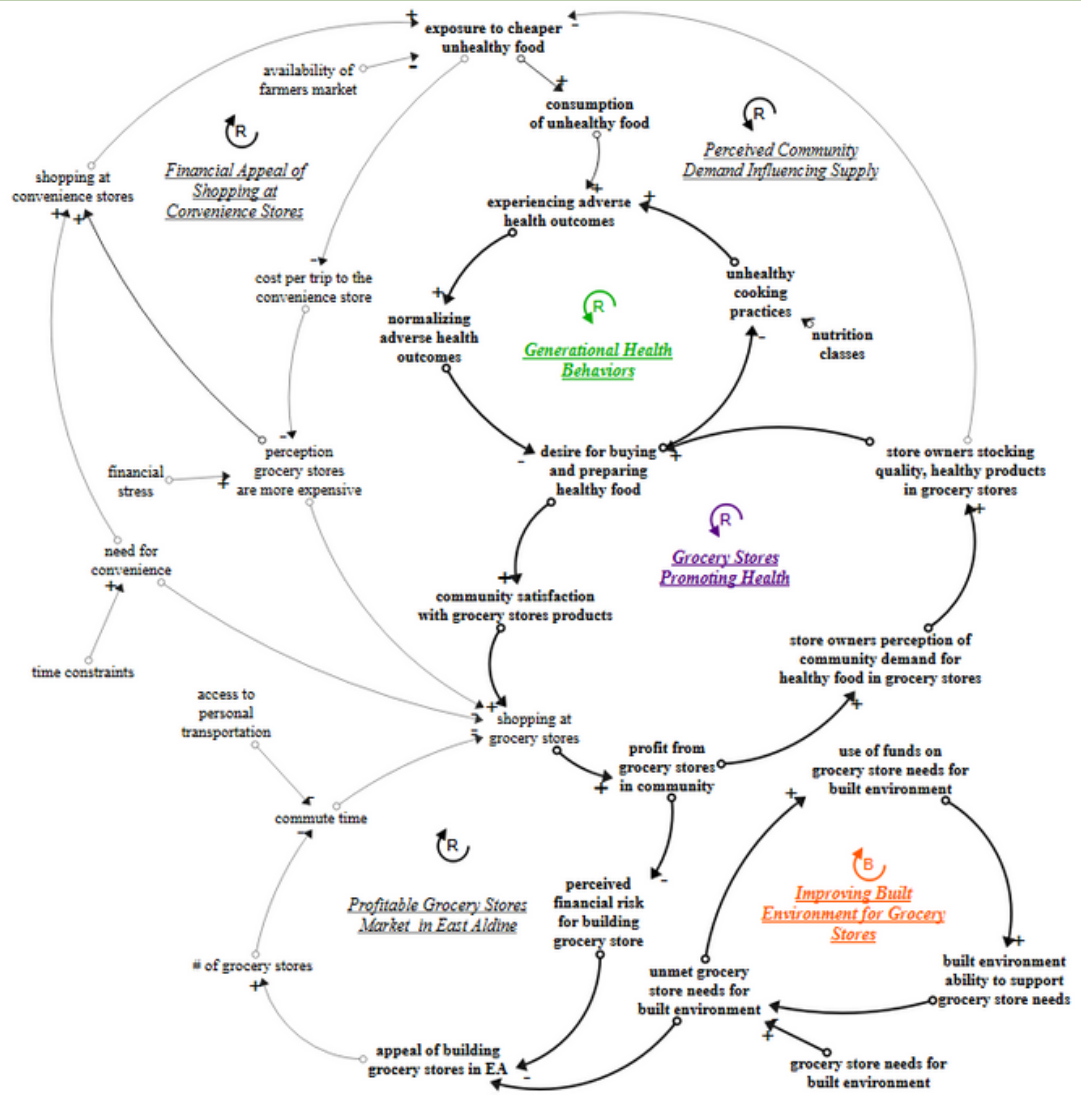
It's All About Healthy Living!

East Aldine offers many opportunities to connect and build a healthier community for everyone. REACH encourages you to take advantage of existing opportunities and join us for Monthly Challenges! Our Monthly Challenges are a way for YOU to get involved and take steps towards lifelong change with the support of the community behind you. Complete a REACH challenge to get entered into a drawing for a chance to win a prize!

Cultivating Healthy Multi-Generational Food Options

MAP KEY

Positive polarity (+)	More → More; Less → Less
Negative polarity (-)	More → Less; Less → More
R	A continuing increase or decrease over time
B	Stabilization over time via negative feedback
⌈	A relationship that develops slowly over time



What we can learn from this map...

...and what we can do about it

Generational health behaviors

Family norms and beliefs play an important role in health behaviors and outcomes of the whole family (e.g., shaping food choices).

Even the youngest family members learn about their own health, seeing and copying the habits of the people they live with.

- Involve the whole family: Provide nutrition education, meal planning, and cooking techniques to people of all ages.
- Honor and use traditional ingredients when leading cooking classes for East Aldine residents.
- Consider where residents shop so they can find similar foods when cooking on their own.

Grocery stores promoting health

East Aldine residents would prefer to shop at grocery stores that sell affordable, high-quality, healthy foods.

People shopping at these types of grocery stores are more likely to buy and eat more healthy foods. This gives way to profitable and longterm storefronts.

- Engage the community to speak up for a multi-purpose grocery store that provides the products and services that East Aldine residents want.
- Design advocacy materials that proudly show the economic potential and prosperity of the East Aldine community.
- Raise awareness of the healthier options that are currently available in East Aldine.

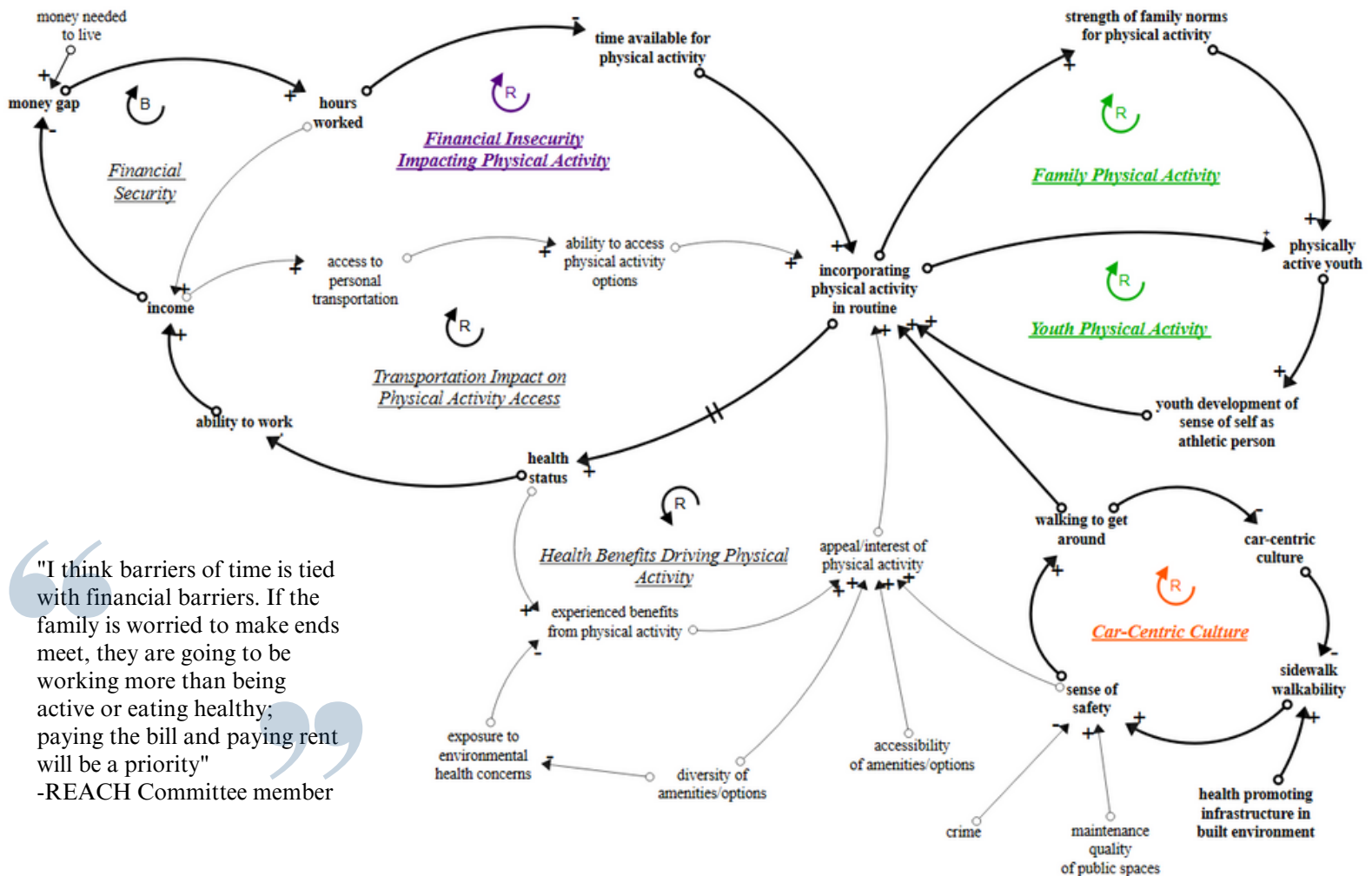
Improving the built environment for grocery stores

Improving the built environment may be a critical first step in attracting a high-quality grocery store.

A grocery store should acknowledge East Aldine's car-centric culture, while also being accessible for people without cars to promote active transportation to and from.

- Research what changes are needed to the built environment in order to attract grocery stores.
- Plan and design the grocery store to be in a location that's accessible for people without cars, and has space for cars for those who do drive.

Developing Convenient Active Lifestyles For All Ages



"I think barriers of time is tied with financial barriers. If the family is worried to make ends meet, they are going to be working more than being active or eating healthy; paying the bill and paying rent will be a priority"

-REACH Committee member

What we can learn from this map...

Youth & family physical activity

When kids are active they feel good about exercising which encourages families to get involved, and makes everyone more active!

Financial insecurity impacting physical activity

When people need to work more to make extra cash, they have less time to be active. Over time, this can make them less healthy and able to work, which makes it harder to make ends meet.

Car-centric culture

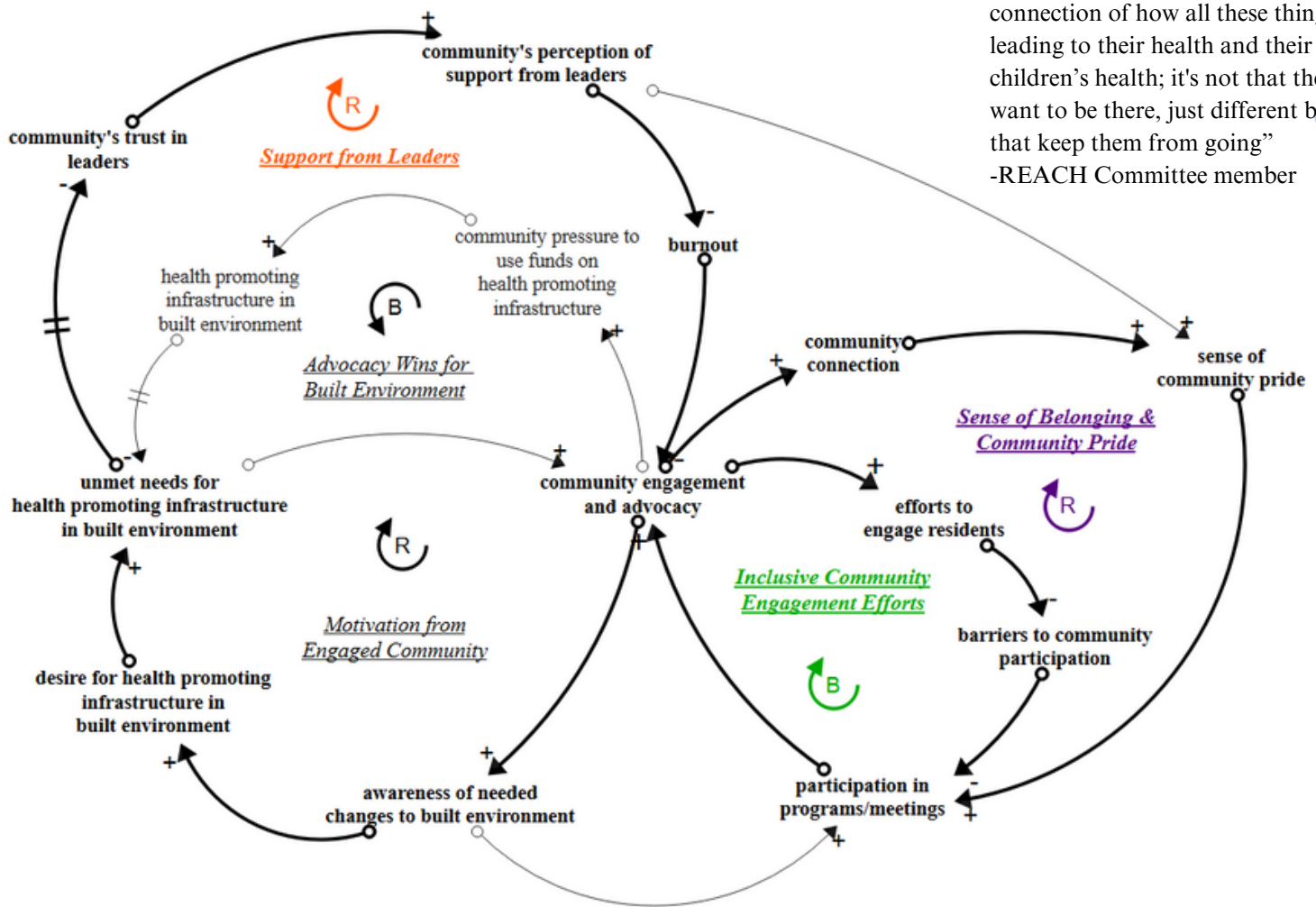
Many people driving cars can make it feel dangerous to walk, so people are less likely to do it. The lack of walking culture leads to low investment in things that make walking feel safe, (e.g., sidewalks and streetlights) making it harder and less appealing to walk.

...and what we can do about it

- Schedule flexibly to reach as many people as possible and fit busy schedules (e.g., offering in-person and virtual options).
 - Design activities different options for length, type, and participation (e.g., team or individual)
 - Include the youth in planning and leading activities.
-
- Support programs that provide lower-cost options so all families, regardless of income, can participate.
 - Share resources about low and no-cost options for families to be physically active.
 - Increase employer awareness of strategies to encourage workplace wellness activities.
-
- Advocate for investments in things like street lights and sidewalks, that make walking safer and more fun.
 - Prioritize walking and biking activities to make them more appealing and fun to residents.

Building Community With Culturally Responsive Engagement

“[Residents] don’t have the time to go to these types of meetings; don’t see the connection of how all these things are leading to their health and their children’s health; it’s not that they don’t want to be there, just different barriers that keep them from going”
-REACH Committee member



What we can learn from this map...

...and what we can do about it

Sense of belonging & community pride

When people feel they are part of a community they are more likely to take pride in that community. This supports sustained positive change for the community. Individuals are then more likely to work with other residents to enact healthy changes to the built environment (e.g., more sidewalks, streetlights).

- Encourage civic engagement and participation in activities to increase town pride.
- Create opportunities for people of all ages to connect, so older residents can pass along knowledge of and pride in the community to future generations.

Inclusive community engagement efforts

Cultural and language barriers can hinder people's ability to participate in community building and advocacy efforts. Lots of unsuccessful attempts to get involved may lead to burnout, which can hurt future efforts to engage with community members and advocacy efforts.

- Offer culturally-responsive community engagement programming in English and Spanish.
- Schedule meetings and activities on nights and weekends to ensure maximum participation.
- Use various outreach efforts (door-to-door, text message, flyers, etc.) to reach community members.

Support from Leaders

Support from community leaders helps residents feel like their voices matter and like they belong, which encourages long-term community participation.

- Support residents in sharing their priorities and concerns with elected officials and community leaders.
- Celebrate and share small wins to keep people engaged in long-term advocacy efforts.

Get Involved.



Stay Informed.

Visit our website and stay up to date with our latest efforts and events!

Reach Website:

<https://aldinedistrict.org/reach>

Thank you to the REACH Committee Members & Partners who have contributed to the work so far!

- Angelica Ayarzagotia
- Rose Avalos
- Maria Bolanos
- Connie Camarillo
- Monica Campos
- Susana Castillo
- Amy Corbett
- Brittany Daniels
- Eliza Gonzalez
- Harris County Precinct 2
- Kenneth Hernandez
- Rosalva Hernandez
- Kara Ihedigbo
- Guadalupe Jimenez
- Chris Lott
- The Catalyzing Communities Team
- Tabbie Saenz
- Ruben Salazar
- Veronica Sanches
- Selina Valdez
- Rocio Witte

If your organization would like to partner with REACH in our efforts to reimagine healthy living in East Aldine, please contact, Veronica Sanches at the East Aldine Management District.

Phone 713.595.1226 E-mail vsanches@haweshill.com



Catalyzing Communities
A ChildObesity180 Initiative

