

Walkable Communities are Healthy, Wealthy & Wise

A Fact Sheet from the Transit-Walkability Collaborative

Walking and public transportation are complements. Walking is an efficient way to complete essential journeys within a neighborhood, while transit provides affordable mobility between neighborhoods. According to recent research, 80% of regular riders access transit by walking.¹ Because of this synergy, walkable, transit-rich communities provide significant economic savings and other benefits to residents and local businesses.²

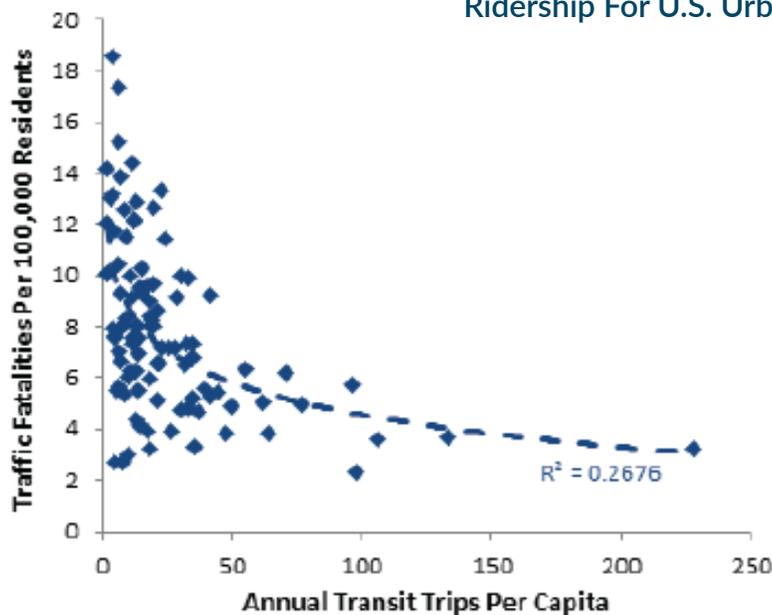


Community Safety and Health Benefits

Vehicle ownership in walkable, transit-rich communities is 50% lower than in automobile-oriented areas.³ Driving less and relying more on public transportation helps residents build physical activity into their daily lives and greatly reduces their risk of being killed or injured in traffic crashes.⁴

- Public transit is ten times safer per mile than traveling by car.⁵
- People who walk for local errands and use public transit are more likely to achieve the U.S. Surgeon General's physical activity targets.⁶
- Residents of these communities inhale about half as much air pollution as those in automobile-oriented communities.⁷

Traffic Fatalities Versus Transit Ridership For U.S. Urban Regions



As transit travel increases in a city, per capita traffic fatality rates tend to decline. Cities where residents average more than 50 annual transit trips have about half the average traffic fatality rates as cities where residents average fewer than 20 annual transit trips.⁵

Transit-Walkability Collaborative Members



Economic and Equity Benefits

Policies that lead to walkable, transit-rich communities (known in some sectors as "transit-oriented development" or TOD) strengthen local economic development, create opportunities for disadvantaged residents, and enhance community resilience.^{8,9}



- TOD increases worker availability, business productivity, and growth.¹⁰
- Lower-income residents have better access to employment in TOD and greater economic opportunity.
- Walking, cycling and transit can eliminate the household expense of one car, saving \$4,000 - \$6,000 annually.¹¹ As a result, residents have more money to spend on local goods and services, increasing local economic activity in their community.¹²
- Walkability and transit improvements make communities more attractive and accessible to residents and business customers.
- TOD reduces the number of parking spaces businesses must subsidize.
- Compact development increases economic productivity, leading to job creation, higher tax revenues, and more government investment in the community.¹³
- Residents are able to "age in place" and maintain their independence.

Quality of Life Benefits

Walkable transit-rich communities are livable communities - while many residents drive for some journeys, diverse mobility options improve quality of life in many ways.

- More people walking provide "eyes on the street," which reduces crime.
- Walkable neighborhoods with shops, restaurants, and parks give residents many opportunities to meet, increasing social capital.¹⁴
- Walkability and transit provide mobility independence for adolescents, seniors, and people with disabilities, reducing chauffeuring burdens.
- Walking for pleasure or exercise is a highly-rated, quality-of-life benefit of livable communities

References

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