Built Environment Approaches That Support Physical Activity: The U.S. Community Preventive Services Task Force Recommendation

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From the Ground Up: Built Environment Strategies and Support for Walkable Communities
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The findings and conclusions in this presentation do not necessarily represent the official position of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.
The U.S. Community Preventive Services Task Force

- The Task Force is an independent, nonfederal, voluntary panel of public health and prevention experts that provides evidence-based findings about community programs to improve health.

- The Task Force issues findings based on systematic reviews of effectiveness and economic evidence.

- These recommendations are collected in the Guide to Community Preventive Services (The Community Guide) - a resource to help decision-makers select interventions.

https://www.thecommunityguide.org/task-force/what-task-force
https://www.thecommunityguide.org/about/our-methodology
https://www.thecommunityguide.org/about/about-community-guide
Latest Review of Evidence for Built Environment and Transportation Interventions to Increase Physical Activity

• The current *systematic review*, to expand on and update reviews last conducted in 2005, examined *built environment interventions to increase physical activity* that create or modify environmental characteristics in a community to make physical activity easier or more accessible.

• It was based on the hypothesis that a built environment can be created or modified to support individual decisions to be active for both:
  - **Transportation** (walking/cycling for shopping, dining, commuting)
  - **Recreation** (leisure, exercise)
2017 Task Force Recommendation

• The Task Force recommends built environment strategies that combine one or more interventions to improve pedestrian, bicycle, or transit transportation systems with one or more land use and environmental design interventions based on sufficient evidence of effectiveness in increasing physical activity.

https://www.thecommunityguide.org/findings/physical-activity-built-environment-approaches/
Effective Built Environment Strategies **Combine** Activity-Friendly Route Components with Everyday Destination Components

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity-Friendly Routes</th>
<th>Everyday Destinations</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>≥1 Pedestrian and Bicycle-Friendly Transportation System Components</td>
<td>≥ 1 Land Use and Environmental Design Components</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Street pattern design and connectivity</td>
<td>• Mixed land use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Pedestrian infrastructure</td>
<td>• Increased residential density</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Bicycle infrastructure</td>
<td>• Proximity to community or neighborhood destinations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Public transit infrastructure and access</td>
<td>• Access to parks and recreational facilities</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Real-World Examples by Level of Cost, Complexity, or Scale

- The city of **El Paso, TX** created a walking route between the **Union Plaza District** and the **Downtown Arts District**. These destinations were previously divided by a locked parking lot that prohibited public and pedestrian access.

- The BeltLine in Atlanta GA is converting abandoned railway into a combination of **trails, parks, high-density residential buildings, and commercial developments**. Expected to eventually cover 22 miles of pathways, this will **connect 45 neighborhoods** and Atlanta’s council districts.

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### Activity-Friendly Routes vs Everyday Destinations

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A neighborhood in St. Louis, MO reduced average vehicle speed by using traffic calming techniques in a busy area served by four bus stops. This improved access to houses during the day, which connected residents to community destinations.

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THANK YOU!