

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.

National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion

Division of Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Obesity



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.**

Effective Built Environment Strategies Combine Activity-Friendly Route Components with Everyday Destination Components

Activity-Friendly Routes	Everyday Destinations
<p data-bbox="117 439 896 554">≥1 Pedestrian and Bicycle-Friendly Transportation System Components</p> <ul data-bbox="117 634 865 1182" style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="117 634 730 743">• Street pattern design and connectivity<li data-bbox="117 825 716 868">• Pedestrian infrastructure<li data-bbox="117 949 639 992">• Bicycle infrastructure<li data-bbox="117 1073 865 1182">• Public transit infrastructure and access	<p data-bbox="987 439 1688 554">≥ 1 Land Use and Environmental Design Components</p> <ul data-bbox="987 634 1746 1182" style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="987 634 1373 676">• Mixed land use<li data-bbox="987 758 1669 801">• Increased residential density<li data-bbox="987 882 1630 996">• Proximity to community or neighborhood destinations<li data-bbox="987 1078 1746 1182">• Access to parks and recreational facilities

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.

The Community Preventive Services Task Force's Built Environment Recommendation to Increase Physical Activity



IMPLEMENTATION RESOURCE GUIDE

What is the recommendation from the Community Preventive Services Task Force?
 The Community Preventive Services Task Force (CPSTF) recommends built environment approaches that combine one or more interventions to improve pedestrian or bicycle transportation systems (activity-friendly routes) with one or more land use and community design interventions (everyday destinations). Combined approaches that connect activity-friendly routes to everyday destinations make it safer and more convenient for people of all abilities to walk, run, bike, skate, or use wheelchairs.

An activity-friendly route is one that is a direct and convenient connection with everyday destinations, offering physical protection from cars, or making it easy to cross the street. These routes can include crosswalks, protected bicycle lanes, multi-use trails, and pedestrian bridges. Everyday destinations are places people can get to from where they live by walking, bicycling, or public transit. These destinations can include grocery stores, schools, workplaces, libraries, parks, restaurants, cultural and natural landmarks, or healthcare facilities.

To increase opportunities for physical activity through the built environment, public health professionals can work in partnership with multiple sectors, particularly transportation, land use, and community planning, but also education, parks and recreation, economic development, and community organizing.

What is this list of resources?
 The Resource Guide includes potential steps to consider for planning and implementation. It includes implementation resources, frequently asked questions (FAQs), and a "Multipurpose Resources" section for crosscutting material. For each content section, a small number of relevant resources were selected, prioritizing current, practical "how to" documents from federal agencies, national organizations, or CDC-funded partners whenever possible that are free and openly accessible to the public.

Who can use it?
 State and local health departments, public health professionals, and community organizations working on ways to increase physical activity can use the resources in each section to guide their implementation process as they aim to build more activity-friendly communities.

How to find what you need:
 Begin by using the resources for forming a cross-sector coalition, or skip ahead to the section that best describes your current stage of work. You will only need to reference the resources below that are relevant to the specific changes your community has selected.

1. Form or consult with a cross-sector coalition
2. Conduct or reference a baseline assessment
3. Select an appropriate combination of the two components for your context:
 - Activity-Friendly Routes (i.e., Pedestrian, Bicycle, and Transit Transportation Systems) and/or
 - Everyday Destinations (i.e., Land Use and Environmental Design)
4. Develop an action plan
5. Whenever possible, evaluate impact
6. Integrate improvements into a lasting community-wide effort

Real-World Example	Activity-Friendly Routes				Everyday Destinations			
	Street Pattern Design and Connectivity	Pedestrian Infrastructure	Bicycle Infrastructure	Public Transit Infrastructure and Access	Mixed Land Use	Increased Residential Density	Proximity to Community Destinations	Parks and Rec Facility Access
The city of El Paso, TX created a walking route between the Union Plaza District and the Downtown Arts District. These destinations of cultural and economic activity were previously divided by a locked parking lot that prohibited public and pedestrian access.	✓	✓					✓	
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 buses during the day, which connected residents to community destinations.		✓		✓			✓	



THANK
YOU!