

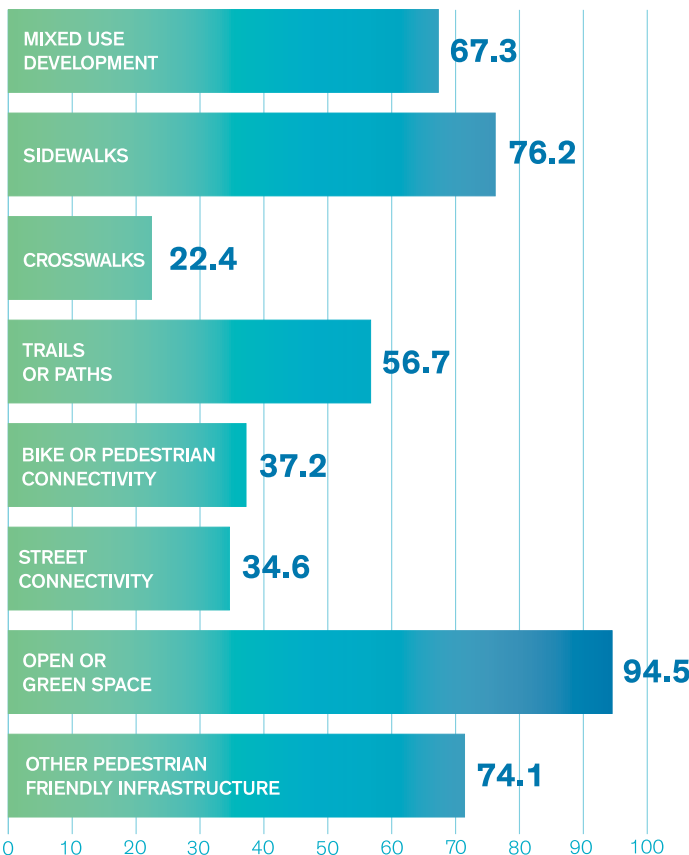
FACTSHEET:

Zoning Elements are Associated with Walking Behaviors in a Nationwide Evaluation

This factsheet serves as a companion document to the product [Components of Local Land Development and Related Zoning Policies Associated with Increased Walking: A Primer for Public Health Practitioners](#). This factsheet summarizes key findings from a recently completed nationwide evaluation of the relationship between zoning elements supportive of walking and both leisure time and active travel-related walking.

Communities seeking to make their land development policies and plans more supportive of walking may consider ensuring that specific elements are included in their zoning codes. Such elements or structural provisions include, but are not limited to: mixed use development; sidewalks; crosswalks; bike or pedestrian trails or paths; bike, pedestrian, and street network connectivity; parks and open space; and other types of pedestrian infrastructure such as street furniture and traffic calming measures.¹⁻⁶

Prevalence of Elements in Zoning Codes that Promote Walking



Specific Zoning Elements are Associated with Walking and Additional Benefits

This nationwide evaluation of zoning codes found that places with zoning elements were more likely to have low physical inactivity among adults aged 65 and older. All zoning elements, with the exception of crosswalks, were associated with lower rates of physical inactivity among adults aged 18-64. All zoning elements except crosswalks were also associated with higher rates of recreational walking among adults aged 18-64.

ZONING FOR MIXED USE DEVELOPMENT

IS ASSOCIATED WITH:

- ▶ 3.1% lower rates of physical inactivity among adults aged 18-64¹⁰
- ▶ 4.1% lower rates of physical inactivity among older adults aged 65 and above
- ▶ 3% higher rates of recreational walking among adults (including both adults aged 18-64 and older adults aged 65 and above)

ZONING FOR SIDEWALKS

IS ASSOCIATED WITH:

- ▶ 3.4% lower rates of physical inactivity among adults aged 18-64¹⁰
- ▶ 4.1% lower rates of physical inactivity among older adults aged 65 and above
- ▶ 2.9% higher rates of recreational walking among adults (including both adults aged 18-64 and older adults aged 65 and above)
- ▶ Reduced income-based disparities in rates of active travel (walking, biking, or public transit) to work⁷

ZONING FOR CROSSWALKS

IS ASSOCIATED WITH:

- ▶ 1.9% lower rates of physical inactivity among older adults aged 65 and above
- ▶ Reduced income-based disparities in rates of active travel to work⁷
- ▶ Higher rates of active travel to work among communities with higher poverty rates relative to those with lower poverty rates⁷

ZONING FOR BIKE AND PEDESTRIAN TRAILS OR PATHS

IS ASSOCIATED WITH:

- ▶ 3% lower rates of physical inactivity among adults aged 18-64¹⁰
- ▶ 4.4% lower rates of physical inactivity among older adults aged 65 and above
- ▶ 3.4% higher rates of recreational walking among adults aged 18-64
- ▶ 3.5% higher rates of recreational walking among older adults aged 65 and above
- ▶ Reduced income-based disparities in rates of active travel to work⁷



ZONING FOR BIKE AND PEDESTRIAN CONNECTIVITY IS ASSOCIATED WITH:

- ▶ 2.1% lower rates of physical inactivity among adults aged 18-64¹⁰
- ▶ 3.9% lower rates of physical inactivity among older adults aged 65 and above
- ▶ 1.8% higher rates of recreational walking among adults aged 18-64
- ▶ Reduced income-based disparities in rates of active travel to work⁷
- ▶ Higher rates of active travel to work among communities with higher poverty rates relative to those with lower poverty rates⁷

ZONING FOR STREET CONNECTIVITY IS ASSOCIATED WITH:

- ▶ 2.3% lower rates of physical inactivity among adults aged 18-64¹⁰
- ▶ 3.4% lower rates of physical inactivity among older adults aged 65 and above
- ▶ 1.9% higher rates of recreational walking among adults aged 18-64
- ▶ Reduced income-based disparities in rates of active travel to work⁷
- ▶ Higher rates of active travel to work among communities with higher poverty rates relative to those with lower poverty rates

ZONING FOR OPEN OR GREEN SPACE IS ASSOCIATED WITH:

- ▶ 3.2% lower rates of physical inactivity among adults aged 18-64¹⁰
- ▶ 4.3% lower rates of physical inactivity among older adults aged 65 and above
- ▶ 3.1% higher rates of recreational walking among adults aged 18-64
- ▶ 3.5% higher rates of recreational walking among older adults aged 65 and above

ZONING FOR OTHER TYPES OF PEDESTRIAN-FRIENDLY INFRASTRUCTURE

(E.G., PLAZAS, TRAFFIC CALMING MEASURES) IS ASSOCIATED WITH:

- ▶ 3.1% lower rates of physical inactivity among adults aged 18-64¹⁰
- ▶ 4.4% lower rates of physical inactivity among older adults aged 65 and above
- ▶ 3.3% higher rates of recreational walking among adults (including both adults aged 18-64 and older adults aged 65 and above)
- ▶ 0.61% higher rates of active travel to work among adults⁸

There are a number of strategies that can help support walkable communities through community design and zoning policies. See the companion document, [Components of Local Land Development and Related Zoning Policies Associated with Increased Walking: A Primer for Public Health Practitioners](#), for actions that different sectors can take to implement the strategies to create walkable communities.

BRIEF OVERVIEW OF STUDY METHODS

Zoning codes in effect as of 2010 were compiled and evaluated for the largest 496 counties and 4 consolidated cities in the United States (U.S.) and 3,921 municipalities located in 472 of those counties and 3 consolidated cities. Collectively, the counties and consolidated cities covered 75.03% of the U.S. population and the municipalities covered 47.40% of the U.S. population with unincorporated county areas covered by county zoning. Each jurisdiction's zoning code was evaluated for the presence of zoning code reforms and then linked to data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) for county-level leisure time-related walking and inactivity and to the Census Bureau's American Community Survey for municipal-level active travel to work-related behaviors. Full descriptions of the study methods are described elsewhere.⁷⁻¹¹

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