The
Active Communities Tool
Action Planning Guide (Vol. 1)

The Active Communities Tool (ACT): An Action Planning
Guide and Assessment Modules to Improve Community
Built Environments to Promote Physical Activity

CREATING AN ACTIVE AMERICA, TOGETHER
ACTIVE
PEOPLE,
HEALTHY
NATION™

Contents

SECTION 1:

BACKGROUND

One of the most important steps that people of all ages and abilities can take to improve their health is to be physically active.[1] Physical activity can reduce the risk of at least 20 chronic diseases and conditions, provide effective treatment for many of those conditions, and support positive mental health and healthy aging.[1] Yet, physical activity levels of Americans remain low, and have only slightly improved over the last 20 years.[2]

To promote physical activity, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) launched Active People, Healthy Nation[SM], an initiative to get 27 million Americans more active by 2027. This multisector initiative promotes the recommendations from the *Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans*, 2nd edition and effective strategies recommended by the Community Preventive Services Task Force (Task Force) to improve physical activity.[3]
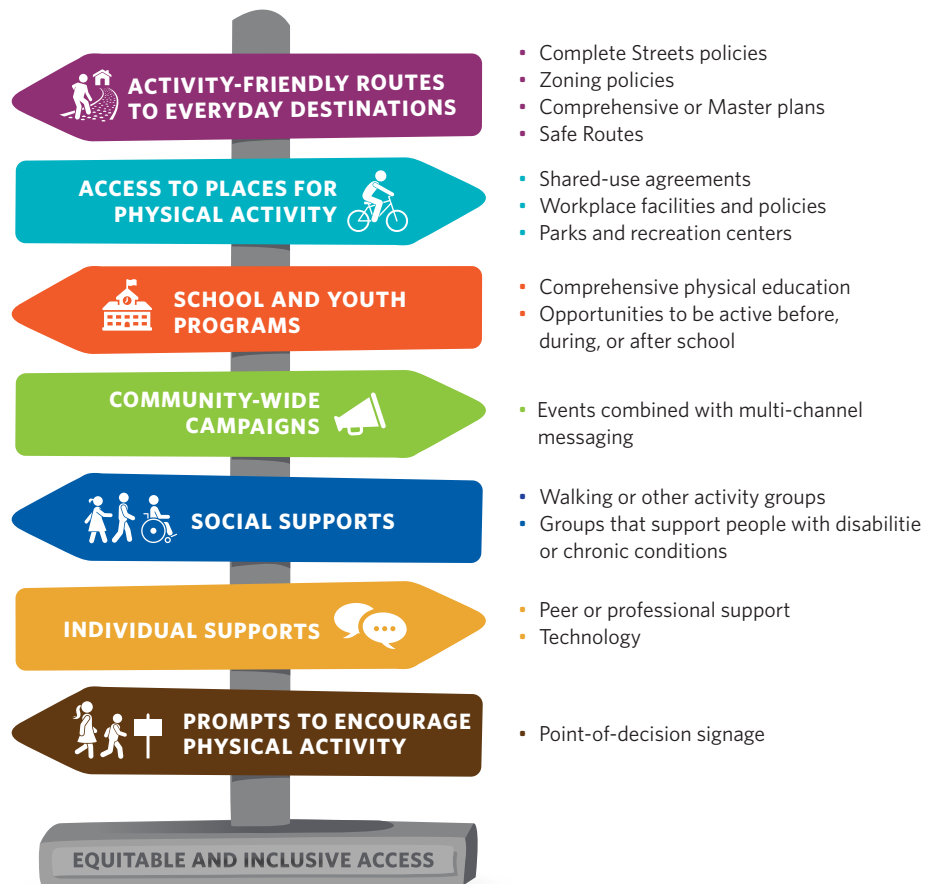
To increase physical activity, the Task Force recommends a number of strategies. The Active Communities Tool Action Planning Guide primarily focuses on the Built Environment Approaches Combining Transportation System Interventions with Land Use and Environmental Design and the Active Travel to School recommendations.[4,5]

PURPOSE

The purpose of *The Active Communities Tool Action Planning Guide (Guide)* is to help committed, cross-sector teams create an action plan for improving community built environments that promote physical activity consistent with their community context. The Guide includes self-assessment modules (the Active Communities Tool Assessment Modules, in a separate document) to help teams better understand their community context. The Guide briefly describes how to use the Active Communities Tool Assessment Modules to develop an action plan. For individuals who may need more assistance developing a coalition and/or an action plan, please see the resources noted within those sections of the document.

What Works: Strategies to Increase Physical Activity

ACTIVITY-FRIENDLY ROUTES TO EVERYDAY DESTINATIONS
- Complete Streets policies
- Zoning policies
- Comprehensive or Master plans
- Safe Routes

ACCESS TO PLACES FOR PHYSICAL ACTIVITY
- Shared-use agreements
- Workplace facilities and policies
- Parks and recreation centers

SCHOOL AND YOUTH PROGRAMS
- Comprehensive physical education
- Opportunities to be active before, during, or after school

COMMUNITY-WIDE CAMPAIGNS
- Events combined with multi-channel messaging

SOCIAL SUPPORTS
- Walking or other activity groups
- Groups that support people with disabilitie or chronic conditions

INDIVIDUAL SUPPORTS
- Peer or professional support
- Technology

PROMPTS TO ENCOURAGE PHYSICAL ACTIVITY
- Point-of-decision signage

EQUITABLE AND INCLUSIVE ACCESS

The Guide may be best suited for use with a single municipality (also referred to as a community) given that this town or city will have powers of self-governance that will facilitate the success of the action plan. A county or region may use the Guide; however, plans and policies may differ across municipal jurisdictions within those areas. In counties or regions containing more than one municipality, teams may want to complete the assessment portion separately for each one.

SECTION 2:

LEVERAGING CROSS-SECTOR COMMITMENT

Creating community built environments that promote physical activity requires commitment from individuals and organizations across multiple sectors. The most important thing to keep in mind is that this should be a group effort involving technical experts who have the information at their fingertips and a broader group of decision-makers, (e.g., cross-sectoral coalition) to discuss the results, identify priorities, and develop an action plan.

The following list provides examples of disciplines that should be considered for inclusion on a cross-sector team or as an addition to an existing community coalition:

- public health;
- transportation;
- planning;
- school district;
- public works;
- parks and recreation;
- tourism;
- economic development;
- healthcare;
- elected official; and
- organizations or individuals representing or supporting key constituencies, such as individuals with disabilities and those disproportionately facing barriers to being safely physically active.

It is important to create a shared understanding of why increasing physical activity is important for the community and how improving the built environment of the community will help promote physical activity.

Useful resources include:

- » Physical Activity Guidelines for American, 2nd Edition
- » Step it Up! The Surgeon General's Call to Action to Promote Walking & Walkable Communities
- » National Physical Activity Plan
- » Inclusive Community Health Implementation Package
- » The Case for Healthy Places
- » Building for Wellness: The Business Case
- » The Case for Open Space: Why the Real Estate Industry Should Invest in Parks and Open Spaces
- » Protected Bike Lanes Mean Business
- » TRB Report: Does the Built Environment Influence Physical Activity?

Useful resources for leveraging cross-sector commitment include:

> » [The Tension Of Turf: Making It Work For The Coalition](#)
> » [Community of Practice Resources](#)
> » [Collaborative Effectiveness Assessment Activity](#)
> » [The Collaboration Multiplier](#)

Useful resources for developing coalitions include:

> » [Developing Effective Coalitions: An Eight Step Guide](#)
> » [Mobilizing Community Partnerships in Rural Communities](#)
> » [CoalitionsWork](#)

SECTION 3:

UNDERSTANDING THE COMMUNITY CONTEXT TO INFORM THE SELECTION OF POTENTIAL ACTIONABLE AREAS

Here are some key steps to understand the community context to inform the creation of an action plan to improve community built environments that promote physical activity.

- **Learn about recent physical activity-related built environment projects.** Identify current and recently completed physical activity-related built environment policy, system, and environmental interventions led by organizations and agencies in the community. There may be opportunities to build on or leverage work that is ongoing or already established. This also helps avoid possible duplication of efforts.

- **Engage the community.** Engaging the people affected by, or who have an interest in, the initiative is key. Engagement leads to greater community support and buy-in and a better understanding of the community. It provides an opportunity for people living and working in the community to share their vision of what the built environment should look like to promote physical activity. Specifically engage the community in prioritizing the actions or issues they would like to see addressed. Useful resources include:

  - » Principles of Community Engagement - Second Edition
  - » Community Engagement Guide for Sustainable Communities

- **Compile relevant information and data.**

  - » **Gather existing data.** Many organizations and agencies collect data and information that may be useful in developing an action plan to improve the community's plans and policies to create built environments that support physical activity. This includes information from previous community health needs assessments; reports or data collected by transportation, parks and recreation, and other sectors; demographic data (e.g., race/ethnicity, gender, disability status and type); and more.

  - » **Complete the Active Communities Tool Assessment Modules** (Appendix A). The Active Communities Tool Assessment Modules is a self-assessment tool designed to help cross-sector teams create an action plan for creating community built environments that promote physical activity that is consistent with their community context. It guides consideration of the strengths and weaknesses of your community's plans, policies, and resources for creating community built environments that promote physical activity.

The six modules of the Assessment Modules

Activity-Friendly Routes

Module 1
Street Design and Connectivity

Module 2
Infrastructure to Accommodate Pedestrians and Bicyclists

Module A: Infrastructure to Accommodate Pedestrians and Bicyclists

Module B: Infrastructure to Accommodate Pedestrians

Module C: Infrastructure to Accommodate Bicyclists

Module 3
Public Transportation

Everyday Destinations

Module 4
Land Use Planning

Module 5
Parks and Recreational Facilities

Module 6
Schools

The general layout of assessment modules are as follows:

1. Each module is divided into plans, policies, resources, and environments, as applicable.
2. Broad, general questions are asked first pertaining to whether a plan, policy, resources and environments exists to address a particular topic.
3. A series of detailed sub-questions follow to assess the quality (e.g., strength, comprehensiveness) of existing plans or policies, including specified planning and implementation processes.

In general, the more items marked in the assessment module pertaining to an existing plan or policy, the stronger and more comprehensive it is. The items that remain unmarked represent potential opportunities for action.

For a brief description of each module, see Appendix B.

Key points to remember when completing the Active Communities Tool Assessment Modules

1. Complete the modules selected by the cross-sectoral team. A key benefit to looking at all the modules is to have a full picture of the opportunities potentially available for your community to improve the built environment to promote physical activity.
2. Complete the Active Communities Tool Assessment Modules as a group effort involving the technical experts who know the answers to the questions (or have the information at their fingertips) relevant to the modules selected. *Public health practitioners may need to contact technical experts in other sectors to complete the modules*.
3. Answer each question in each module selecting the answer that best describes your community. If a question does not apply to your community, then mark it as not applicable.

The *Active Communities Tool Assessment Modules* are not intended to:

» assess street level built environment infrastructure (e.g., timing of street lights, existence of benches, width of sidewalks). Data from street level audits can provide important and complementary information about built environment features related to physical activity. However, other tools such as the CDC Built Environment Assessment Tool, the Microscale Audit of Pedestrian Streetscapes (MAPS) or the Community Health Inclusion Index support these efforts.

» assess social support and school programs. Social support and school programs are important components of a comprehensive strategy to promote and increase physical activity within the community, but they are beyond the scope of this tool.

» assess the quality of community facilities (e.g., parks, schools, and infrastructure for safe walking and bicycling). Understanding the quality of community facilities is important, particularly when considering equity. Teams may consider using other tools such as the Physical Activity Resource Assessment or Path Environment Assessment Tool to support these efforts.

» compare one community to another. A community can assess their own results over time to understand progress and areas that may need continued improvement. However, the assessment tool is not a scorecard or external benchmarking tool and is not intended for making cross-community comparisons.

SECTION 4:

DEVELOPING AN ACTION PLAN

An action plan is a way to make sure your community's vision for a built environment that promotes physical activity is concrete. It describes the ways your team will address actionable areas that support improving the built environment to promote physical activity. It should be complete, clear, and current. Its development should involve engagement by the team members, a broader group of decision-makers (e.g., cross-sectoral coalition), and/or organizational leadership.

- **Review the information gathered.** This includes the community's priorities, the list of recent and ongoing physical activity-related built environment policy, system, and environmental interventions, and any other data or information collected, such as plans, community health needs assessments, health status indicators, state report cards, health and safety risk and protective factors, community needs and priorities, current land use, and rates of active transportation.
  - » Review the responses for each module completed in the Active Communities Tool Assessment Modules. In general, the more items marked for a plan or policy, the stronger and more comprehensive it is. The items that remain unmarked represent potential opportunities for action.
- **Consider the following questions.**
  - » What additional data or information are needed?
  - » What opportunities may exist for improvement?
  - » Where could the biggest improvements be made?
  - » What actions are likely to get political support?
  - » What actions are likely to get community support?
  - » What opportunities may exist to address health equity?
  - » What actions are feasible?
  - » What actions best align with the relevant planning cycle(s) (e.g., year 5 of a 20 year plan)?
  - » What actions best align with addressing community needs and preferences?
- **Create a list of all the potential opportunities for action or engagement.**
- **Decide on which opportunities to focus on.**

Transportation and land use planning processes occur frequently at various scales (e.g., single street corridors, neighborhood-wide, city-wide) within your community. Understanding the planning cycles and processes is key to identifying appropriate opportunities for action. For example, modifying a zoning ordinance adopted in the last six months may not offer the best opportunity for action, even if improvements would be beneficial for physical activity, because it was recently adopted. However, the regional planning authority may be in the process of revising their 30 year Comprehensive Plan which could offer an opportunity to incorporate language and concepts promoting activity-friendly routes to everyday destinations.

The community action plan should contain the following elements:

- identify the issue(s) to be addressed and include a rationale for why the issue was selected;
- develop SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, Timely) objectives;
- indicate the activities necessary to achieve each of the objectives;
- indicate the timeline for each activity;
- establish accountability for each objective and activity by identifying the responsible parties; and
- indicate the measure of success for each activity.

Once your team has drafted the community action plan, consider how you will present it to leadership in the participating organizations and agencies as well as to the community.

Below are two resources that provide further guidance for developing an action plan:

- MAPP Action Plan Resources
  Phase 6 of the MAPP strategic planning tool describes an action cycle that links planning, implementation, and evaluation of a community's strategic plan. It includes a section on creating an action plan, including templates and worksheets, that offer guidance on developing and implementing an action plan for addressing priority goals and objectives. See also the _ to provide guidance on how the MAPP process can be inclusive of people with disabilities.

- Evidence-Based Action Plan Template: A Tool for Evidence-Based Decision Making and Planning
  This document is a tool to support local health departments in developing a comprehensive action plan for integrating evidence-based public health practice into their planning and assessment efforts using the Community Guide as a resource. It provides an example of an action plan template.

As part of any good public health project, evaluation, planning for sustainability, and monitoring progress should be a part of your action planning process. We encourage you to consider integrating them into your action planning process from the beginning. However, if it is too much to address all at once then consider addressing these topics in the future.

SECTION 5:

EVALUATING THE IMPACT

Evaluating outcomes can help communities improve their implementation and better understand the amount and specific type of changes needed to help their members become more physically active. It is important to sustaining a data-informed process.

Below are two resources that provide further guidance for evaluating the impact:

- CDC Evaluation Documents, Workbooks and Tools
  This website includes a variety of tools, resources, and self-guided training to support implementing the CDC Framework for Program Evaluation.

- CDC Framework for Program Evaluation
  This framework is a practical, nonprescriptive tool designed to summarize and organize essential elements of program evaluation. It encourages an approach to evaluation integrated with routine program operations. The emphasis is on practical, ongoing evaluation strategies that involve all program stakeholders, not just evaluation experts.

Why do I have to evaluate if Task Force recommendations are already evidence-based?

It is important for communities to track implementation measures, such as changes in public engagement or the quality of sidewalks, as outcomes along the way to guide their progress. This helps ensure activities are getting done as designed and allows for mid-course correction. Evaluation can also provide stakeholders with information they need to continue supporting or allotting resources to the activity.

SECTION 6:

INTEGRATING IMPROVEMENTS INTO A LASTING COMMUNITY-WIDE EFFORT

Sustainability is a community's ongoing capacity and resolve to work together to establish, advance, and maintain effective strategies that continuously improve health and quality of life for all.[6] It is important because it creates and builds momentum to maintain community-wide change by organizing and maximizing community assets and resources. Coalitions and community stakeholders can be prepared to manage changes and challenges that arise during and after implementation to build foundations for long-term sustainability.

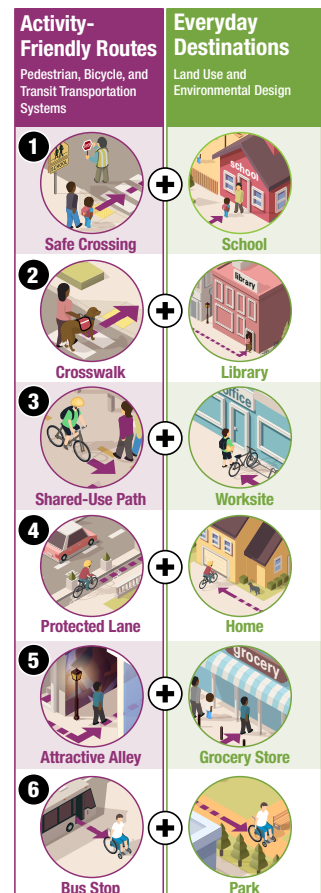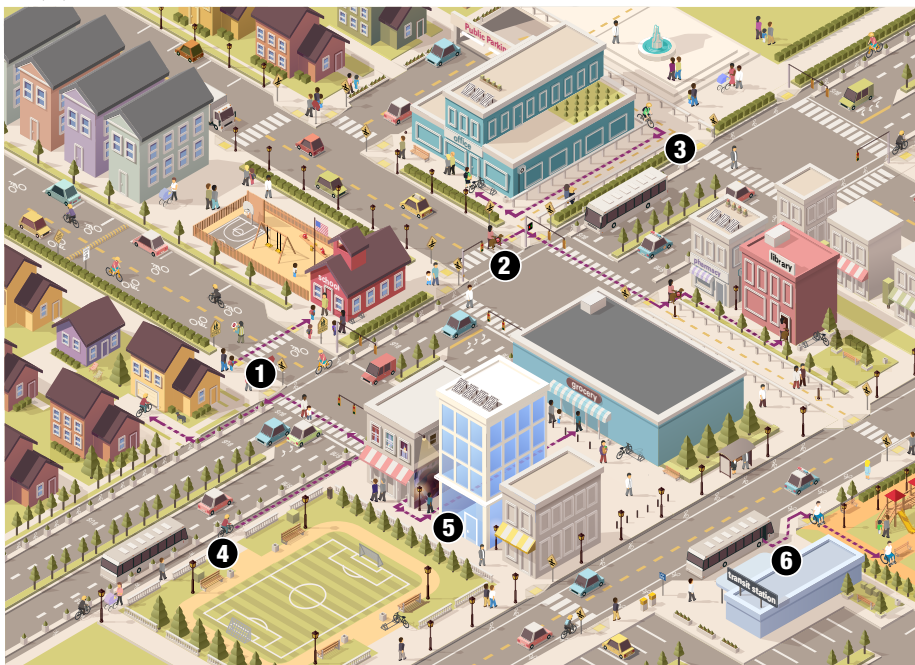Below are two resources that provide further guidance for sustaining the effort:

- CDC Sustainability Planning Guide for Healthy Communities
  This guide is a synthesis of science- and practice-based evidence designed to help coalitions, public health professionals, and other community stakeholders develop, implement, and evaluate a successful sustainability plan. The guide provides a process for sustaining policy strategies and related activities; introduces various approaches to sustainability; and demonstrates sustainability planning in action with real-life examples. See also the Community Health Inclusion Sustainability Planning Guide, a supplement to the *CDC Sustainability Planning Guide for Healthy Communities* and may be used in conjunction with it to ensure inclusion for every community member regarding health initiatives in a community.

- Expert Help from the Safe Routes Partnership
  This section of the Safe Routes Partnership website provides contact information for their consulting services and their individualized technical assistance to help rural or underserved neighborhoods overcome barriers to achieve long-term policy changes. The staff works to coach and assist communities across the country – large and small, urban and rural – to overcome obstacles and adopt policies that create healthy changes.

References

1. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. *Step it up! The surgeon general's call to action to promote walking and walkable communities*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of the Surgeon General; 2015.

2. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. *Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans, 2nd edition*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; 2018.

3. Fulton JE, Buchner DM, Carlson SA, Borbely D, Rose KM, O'Conner AE, Gunn JP, Peterson R. CDC's Active People, Healthy Nation: Creating an Active America, Together. *Journal of Physical Activity and Health*. 2018; 15: 469-473. https://doi.org/10.1123/jpah.2018-0249

4. Community Preventive Services Task Force. *The Guide to Community Preventive Services website: Built Environment Approaches Combining Transportation System Interventions with Land use and Environmental Design*. https://www.thecommunityguide.org/findings/physical-activity-built-environment-approaches. Accessed July 20, 2019.

5. Community Preventive Services Task Force. *The Guide to Community Preventive Services website: Interventions to Increase Active Travel to School*. https://www.thecommunityguide.org/findings/physical-activity-interventions-increase-active-travel-school. Accessed July 20, 2019.

6. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. *A Sustainability Planning Guide for Healthy Communities*. Atlanta, GA: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; https://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dch/programs/healthycommunitiesprogram/pdf/sustainability_guide.pdf. Accessed July 20, 2019.

Appendix A:

THE ACTIVE COMMUNITIES TOOL ASSESSMENT MODULES

The Active Communities Tool Assessment Modules

Activity-Friendly Routes

Module 1: Street Design and Connectivity

Module 2: Infrastructure to Accommodate Pedestrians and Bicyclists

» **Module A:** Infrastructure to Accommodate Pedestrians and Bicyclists

» **Module B:** Infrastructure to Accommodate Pedestrians

» **Module C:** Infrastructure to Accommodate Bicyclists

Module 3: Public Transportation

Everyday Destinations

Module 4: Land Use Planning

Module 5: Parks and Recreational Facilities

Module 6: Schools

Appendix B:

BRIEF OVERVIEW OF EACH MODULE IN THE ACTIVE COMMUNITIES TOOL ASSESSMENT MODULES

Activity-Friendly Routes

- **Module 1: Street Design and Connectivity**
  - » **Context:** Communities can create or modify street networks (e.g., the ways in which everyday destinations are connected) to influence how people choose to travel (e.g., walking, bicycling, driving, taking public transportation) and the frequency of trips. Traditional street networks such as the grid pattern reduce distances between everyday destinations and increase route choices, important factors individuals use when deciding whether to walk or bicycle. More recent suburban development, in contrast, minimizes the degree of connectivity between everyday destinations through the heavy use of dead-end streets, cul-de-sacs and reduced entrances/exits to subdivisions. Streets can be designed to facilitate and support either just automobile travel or both automobiles and non-motorized travel (e.g., walking, bicycling). Streets that are wide and straight encourage automobile travel at fast speeds and discourage travel by foot or bicycle. Conversely, streets that are narrower and less straight discourage high speed travel by automobiles. Additionally, streets that incorporate pedestrian and bicycle facilities (e.g., bicycle lanes, sidewalks, crosswalks) and contain traffic-slowing obstacles and devices (e.g., speed humps, landscaped islands in the middle of intersections) facilitate more walking and bicycling.
  - » **Type of information:** assesses the plans, policies, and resources your community uses to design the physical roadway network, for example, regulations or zoning codes, street connectivity, and plans for existing and future streets constructed by the community and through future development.
  - » **Who should be involved:** technical experts with knowledge of the community's zoning policies and codes and subdivision regulations; specifically experts in planning, transportation, and public works.
  - » **Approximate time to complete:** 30 minutes.

- **Module 2: Infrastructure to Accommodate Pedestrians and Bicyclists**
  - » **Context:** Communities can increase walking and bicycling through separate, dedicated bicycle and pedestrian facilities such as bicycle paths and walking trails.
  - » **Type of information:** assesses the plans, policies, environments, and resources for infrastructure to accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists, including shared-use paths, both paved (e.g., greenways) and unpaved (e.g., trails), bicycle lanes, wide paved shoulders, bicycle routes, and sidewalks.
  - » **Who should be involved:** technical experts with knowledge of the community's pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure plans, policies, and resources; specifically experts in planning, transportation, and public works.
  - » **Approximate time to complete:** 150 minutes (if all sections of Module 2 are completed).

- **Module 3: Public Transportation**
  - » **Context:** Public transportation systems provide opportunities for increased physical activity in the form of walking or bicycling on either end of the trip (e.g., from home to bus stop or from train stop to office).

» **Type of information:** assesses the plans, policies, environments, and resources devoted to public transportation, including public transit infrastructure and access.

» **Who should be involved:** technical experts with knowledge of the community's planning, transportation, and public transit plans, policies, and resources; specifically experts in planning, transportation, and public transit.

» **Approximate time to complete:** 30 minutes.

Everyday Destinations

- **Module 4: Land Use Planning**

  » **Context:** Land use refers to the type of use or activity occurring on a parcel of land or the building occupying the land. Mixed-land use refers to a style of land use (i.e., development that blends uses in a way that are physically and functionally integrated), residential density, and proximity to destinations. All of these concepts are important when designing community built environments that promote physical activity. The mix of land uses in a given area affects how far an individual needs to travel between home, work, and places for recreation, entertainment, and shopping. When residential, commercial and industrial uses are located closer together, travel time is shorter and access becomes easier (e.g., live, work, play type of developments). Mixed-land use site design impacts travel patterns in much the same way as street design. Building design, orientation, and setback, along with other aesthetic considerations, create environments that are either attractive or unattractive for walking and bicycling. Low residential density can also increase distances between origins and destinations. Higher density levels reduce trip distances, increasing the incentive to walk and bicycle. In rural areas, density might refer to creating a hub for a mainstreet or downtown area, or clustering a couple of destinations together. Zoning and mixed-land use can facilitate mixed residential types and costs, creating more diversity of housing type and cost. A diversity of housing types, including some that are smaller and more affordable than single-family homes, may help maintain equitable access to activity-friendly communities when done in combination with activity-friendly routes. This can help better serve the needs of the entire population and help to address issues of affordable housing, gentrification, and displacement.

  » **Type of information:** assesses the plans, policies, and resources that specify and determine development and future land use, for example, mixed land use, proximity to destinations, residential density.

  » **Who should be involved:** technical experts with knowledge of the community's planning, transportation, and engineering plans, policies, and processes (for example, comprehensive/master plans, subdivision regulations, and zoning codes); specifically experts in land use and transportation planning and engineers.

  » **Approximate time to complete:** 60 minutes.

- **Module 5: Parks and Recreational Facilities**

  » **Context:** Public parks and recreation facilities play an important role in facilitating physical activity. They provide places for individuals to walk or bicycle, and many have specific facilities for sports and other types of physical activities. Having access to places for physical activity, such as parks and trails, encourages community residents to participate in physical activity and do so more often. Park proximity plays an important role in promoting higher levels of park use and physical activity among diverse populations, particularly for youth. They are important resources for physical activity in low income and racial/ethnic communities.

  » **Type of information:** assess the plans, policies, environments, and resources for park and recreational facility access.

» **Note:** Due to the focus of the Guide, this module covers the plans, policies, environments, and resources for park and recreational facility access. The quality of the park or programming available in the park and recreational facility are not addressed. These are important factors to consider, but are beyond the scope of this tool.

» **Who should be involved:** Technical experts with knowledge of the community's parks and recreation and planning policies, plans, and resources; specifically experts in parks and recreation and planning.

» **Approximate time to complete:** 40 minutes.

- **Module 6: Schools**

    » **Context:** Schools are an important destination to consider when trying to increase physical activity among children. More than 60 million students attend pre-K, elementary, and secondary schools in the United States, and more than 4 million adults serve as faculty and staff in schools. Active travel to school interventions make it easier for children to commute to school actively (e.g., walking or bicycling). These interventions improve the physical or social safety of common routes to school or by promoting safe pedestrian behaviors. In the United States, the most commonly used active travel to school intervention is Safe Routes to School (SRTS). SRTS encourages increased student physical activity through safe and active transport to and from school.

    » **Type of information:** assesses the plans, policies, environments, and resources specific to school siting, the built environment outside of the school, and connecting the school with other places.

    » **Special notes on this module:**

        ▪ Due to the focus of the Guide, this module covers plans, policies, environment and resources specific to school siting, and connecting the school with other places. Physical activity or physical education policies, or the quality of the programming within the school are not addressed.

        ▪ For engineering-related plans, policies, and resources for improving the built environment around schools to promote walking and bicycling, consult Module 2: Infrastructure to Accommodate Pedestrians and Bicyclists.

        ▪ Responses should be based on one school district. If more than one school district is of interest, consider completing the module separately for each district.

    » **Who should be involved:** technical experts with knowledge of the school district's plans and policies; specifically experts in the school district, planning, facilities management, and transportation.

    » **Approximate time to complete:** 30 minutes.

Appendix C:

GLOSSARY

Active transportation: transportation such as walking or using a bicycle, tri-cycle, velomobile, wheelchair, scooter, skates, skateboard, push scooter, stroller, trailer, hand cart, shopping car, or similar electrical devices. For the purposes of this report, Active Transportation will generally refer to walking, bicycling, and wheelchair rolling, the three most common methods.

Activity-friendly route: a route that is a direct and convenient connection with everyday destinations, offering physical protection from cars, and making it easy to cross the street.

Bicycle facility: A general transportation term to describe improvements and provisions to accommodate or encourage bicycling, including parking and storage facilities, and shared roadways specifically designated for bicycle use.

Built environment: The buildings, roads, utilities, homes, fixtures, parks and all other man-made entities that form the physical characteristics of a community.

Comprehensive plan: The adopted official statement of a governing body of a local government that sets forth (in words, maps, illustrations, and/or tables) goals, policies, and guidelines intended to direct the present and future physical, social, and economic development that occurs within its planning jurisdiction and that includes a unified physical design for the public and private development of land.

Everyday destination: places people can get to by walking, bicycling, or public transit. This can include their home, grocery stores, schools, worksites, libraries, parks, restaurants, cultural and natural landmarks, or health care facilities.

Land use: regulation about how the land can be used, specifically the occupation or use of land or water area for any human activity or purpose.

Mixed land use: Development that blends residential, commercial, cultural, institutional, or entertainment uses, where those functions are physically and functionally integrated, and that provides pedestrian and bicycle connections.

Pedestrian facility: A general transportation term to describe infrastructure and support equipment that accommodates pedestrians, such as sidewalks, curb ramps, shared use paths, crosswalk, signals, and signs.

Residential density: the number of dwelling units in any given area.

Street connectivity: Refers to the directness of links and the density of connections in a street network. A well-connected network has many short links, numerous intersections, and minimal dead ends.

Zoning: Local codes regulating the use and development of property within specific categories.

Appendix D:

RESOURCES

Community Engagement and Cross-Sector Coalitions

Health in All Policies: Experiences from Local Health Departments
This report provides key findings from a qualitative assessment examining the opportunities presented by a Health in All Policies approach. It can inform cross-sector collaboration, which affects how public health professionals coordinate efforts in communities, and in many cases, transforms organizational strategies for local governments.

Mobilizing for Action through Planning and Partnerships (MAPP)
MAPP is a community-driven strategic planning tool for improving community health. Public health leaders can use it to help communities use strategic thinking to prioritize public health issues and identify resources to address them.

Principles of Community Engagement (Second Edition)
This guide provides tools to improve population health through community engagement. Public health professionals, health care providers, researchers, and community-based leaders and organizations can use it for both scientific and practical guidance about engaging partners in projects.

Street Pattern Design and Connectivity

Building Healthy Corridors
This report provides real-world examples of successfully creating healthy corridors including project profiles and lessons learned. It is a resource and reference for those undertaking corridor redevelopment efforts and highlighting the importance of health in decision-making processes.

Framework for Better Integrating Health into Transportation Corridor Planning
This framework highlights specific activities that can inform transportation decisions at each step of the corridor planning process. These activities can help planners support healthy outcomes while improving the transportation system. The document includes real-world case examples from across the country.

Low-Stress Bicycling and Network Connectivity
This report proposes a set of criteria for classifying road segments by levels of traffic stress. Stress classification and stress mapping can help communities target limited resources to areas in need to the widest possible segment of the population with safe and direct routes between origins and destinations.

Urban Street Design Guide
This guide outlines a clear vision for Complete Streets and guidance for their implementation. It includes a toolbox and tactics that cities can use to make streets safer and more accessible.

Pedestrian-Only Infrastructure

Designing Sidewalks and Trails for Access Part 2 of 2: Review of Existing Guidelines & Practices
This guidebook focuses on designing sidewalks and trails to provide access for all users, including people with disabilities. It provides planners, designers, and transportation engineers with information on how to develop sidewalks and trails to promote pedestrian access for all users. The chapters on sidewalk development lay out a methodical and detailed design process, including defining the needs and characteristics of users.

Improving the Pedestrian Environment Through Innovative Transportation Design
This report contains a sample of ways transportation professionals and citizens have brought walking back into focus, not only in the capital budgets of government agencies, but also in the lives of citizens in communities large and small. The real-world case studies may be of particular interest.

[Local Policies and Practices That Support Safe Pedestrian Environments](#)
This document contains tools and strategies to improve the safety, convenience, and accessibility of the pedestrian experience for a range of contexts (e.g., geography, community size, weather, demographics, and regulatory requirements) and development conditions (e.g., new and infill development, street reconstruction, and retrofitting). The Implementation Section in Chapter 2, the specific Case Studies in Chapter 3, and the summary of Implementation Challenges and Strategies in Chapter 4 may be of particular value.

Bicycle-Only Infrastructure

[Getting the Wheels Rolling: A Guide to Using Policy to Create Bicycle Friendly Communities](#)
This guide provides a toolkit for decision-makers, government officials, community groups, and others interested in making all types of communities more bicycle friendly. It can help communities make changes that will allow residents to enjoy bicycling to work, to school, and around town. The four-part breakdown of critical elements, with supporting examples, may be especially useful.

[Separated Bike Lane Planning and Design Guide](#)
This guide is a resource for project planners and designers who are considering, evaluating, and designing separated bike lanes as part of a Complete Streets approach. It also includes a menu of design recommendations for several key components of safe, comfortable, and connected bike networks that can attract people of all ages and abilities to bicycling.

[Urban Bikeway Design Guide](#)
This guide provides cities with state-of-the-practice solutions that can help create Complete Streets that are safe and enjoyable for bicyclists. The set of required, recommended, and optional elements listed in the guide should provide useful input for communities to tailor their efforts to their specific conditions.

[Equity of Access to Bicycle Infrastructure](#)
This document focuses on ways to inform structural change to the decision-making processes. It shows how geographic information system (GIS) can identify those who benefit from current bicycle networks and those who do not.

Public Transportation

[Linking Transit Agencies and Land Use Decision Making: Guidebook for Transit Agencies](#)
This guide outlines the process for building a transit-supportive community and includes related case studies. It can help transit agencies better address connections among transit, land use planning, and development decisions. It addresses improved transit and land use by providing transit agencies with tools for better communication at the decision-making table.

[Planning for Transit-Supportive Development: A Practitioner's Guide](#)
This toolkit provides guidance for integrating transit planning with local land use planning that can help metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs), regional planners, transit agencies, and local government elected officials, staff, land use planners, and transit planners. The best practices and success stories provide useful real-world examples for consideration and offer ideas for planners at every level on how to integrate transit-supportive development and investments.

[Transit Street Design Guide](#)
This document provides design guidance for developing transit facilities on city streets and designing and engineering streets to prioritize transit, improve transit service quality, and support other transit-related goals. It also provides transportation departments, transit agencies, leaders, and practitioners with tools to prioritize transit. The guide includes case studies from a variety of communities.

[Universal Design & Accessible Transit Systems: Facts to Consider When Updating or Expanding Your Transit System](#)
The fact sheet describes some of the accessibility features and concepts that should be considered when making purchasing decisions for transportation infrastructure and equipment capital investments.

Land Use, Density, and Destination

Comprehensive Plan Standards for Sustaining Places
This website describes principles, processes, and attributes that support developing new or revising existing comprehensive plans. These standards include best practices on providing a multimodal transportation system that offers a variety of transportation options to users. The set of standards aims to guide comprehensive plans that can help create sustainable communities.

Guidance for Health in the Development Review Process
This guide addresses why and how to incorporate health into the development review process. It complements other guides and toolkits, such as the Active Design Guidelines and Transit Street Design Guide, focused on street and neighborhood design to promote active living. This document is primarily for public-sector planners at city and county levels and offers support for project implementation.

Healthy Comprehensive Plan Assessment Tool
This web-based tool is an interactive resource for evaluating the policies in a community plan. It helps communities determine if their comprehensive plan puts health first. The final assessment becomes available as a downloadable report that will help planners, public health professionals, and community members strengthen health-related policies.

Healthy Plan Making – Integrating Health into the Comprehensive Planning Process
This report identifies how comprehensive planning strategies can promote long-term community health. It includes recommendations, action steps, and methods for integrating health into the comprehensive planning process.

How to Create and Implement Healthy General Plans – A Toolkit for Building Healthy, Vibrant Communities
This toolkit illustrates how to include health-supporting policies in general plans. It outlines strategies for creating durable multisector partnerships and includes a description of the planning process, model language, and implementation recommendations that may be valuable for those new to the planning process.

Statewide Transportation Planning for Healthy Communities
This report illustrates how state departments of transportation (state DOTs) can consider health in transportation planning and programs. It presents a flexible model for state DOTs to integrate public health considerations into their transportation planning and decision-making. It also includes a summary of relevant policies and resources, five innovative practice case studies, and a synthesis of findings and observations.

Tools and Practices for Land Use Integration – Linking Planning and Public Health
This document offers examples of collaboration to develop effective planning tools, policies, and incentives. Land use, transportation, and health-related decisions involve a range of factors and agencies at different organizational levels.

Zoning to Improve Health and Promote Equity
This article discusses how communities can use zoning and other development regulations to promote healthy living environments. It also provides suggestions to help communities reestablish health in planning and zoning.

Parks and Recreational Facility Access

Improving Public Health through Public Parks and Trails – Eight Common Measures
This summary presents eight common measures that connect park and trail planning to public health goals. Communities can apply these measures to plan, evaluate, monitor, manage, and promote public parks and trail systems at all levels.

[Parks, Trails, and Health Workbook: A Tool for Planners, Parks and Recreational Professionals, and Health Practitioners](#)
This is a guide for incorporating public health considerations in the development and improvement of a park or trail. It can help start collaborative discussions about the health benefits of parks and trails and prepare for a health impact assessment (HIA). It includes information to help users find health data and learn about completed HIAs that included parks, trails, or greenways, along with two case studies.

[Safe Routes to Parks Action Framework](#)
This framework summarizes best practices backed by research and consensus among national organizations. It can help guide local governments to engage leaders and community members in policies and practices that support safe and equitable access to parks.

[Safe Routes to Parks: Improving Access to Parks through Walkability](#)
This report summarizes the obstacles limiting walkability to parks and identifies the essential elements of a safe route to a park. It can help communities assess barriers to walkability, determine the key stakeholders responsible for creating safe routes to parks, and identify strategies to build awareness of the importance of walkability. It also describes two initiatives that are improving safe routes to parks.

Schools

[Safe Routes to School Online Guide](#)
This guide is a comprehensive online reference manual for developing Safe Routes to School (SRTS) programs. Users can choose specific topics based on their interests and needs, such as guidelines for adult school crossing guards, tools to create school route maps, and ways to include children with disabilities in SRTS initiatives. The guide highlights what has worked in other communities and includes links to other SRTS publications and training resources.

Cross-Cutting

[Creating Walkable & Bikeable Communities](#)
This resource provides tools, techniques, and samples for community leaders, elected officials, and others to consider while developing or improving bicycle and pedestrian facilities in their communities. It focuses on small to mid-sized communities of low to moderate income and includes practical tools to implement a comprehensive community process, such as a self-assessment process, design recommendations, and implementation framework.

[Transportation and Health Tool](#)
This tool provides easy access to data that practitioners can use to examine the health impacts of transportation systems. It includes data on a set of transportation and public health indicators for each US state and metropolitan area that describe how the transportation environment affects safety, active transportation, air quality, and connectivity to destinations.

[A Guide to Building Healthy Streets](#)
This guide discusses five key steps for putting a Complete Streets policy into action and highlights the unique roles public health staff can play. Each step includes model policy language, information on how to address equity, community examples, and key resources. It can help communities ensure that their Complete Streets policy creates real, on-the-ground change.

[Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Along Existing Roads—ActiveTrans Priority Tool Guidebook](#)
This guide presents a tool that may be used to help prioritize improvements to pedestrian and bicycle facilities, either separately or together, as part of a Complete Streets evaluation approach.

[A Resident's Guide for Creating Safer Communities for Walking and Biking](#)
This guide includes information on identifying problems, taking action to address concerns, and finding solutions to improve safety for pedestrians and bicyclists. It also contains community success stories and tips for replicating efforts to help residents, parents, community association members, and others get involved in making communities safer.

Rethinking Streets

This book shows actual examples of street re-designs from typical communities to show how they did what they did and see what resulted from the change. The book presents examples from a variety of completed street projects throughout the United States.

Safe Routes for Older Adults Guide

This guide provides communities with background information on walking and bicycling safety for older adults. It also provides tools to make transportation in communities friendly for all ages.

Pursuing Equity in Pedestrian and Bicycle Planning

This document defines transportation equity-related terms in the context of planning for bicycle and pedestrian facilities and programs. It summarizes research findings related to the travel needs of traditionally underserved populations, and shares strategies, practices, and resources to address bicycle and pedestrian planning inequities.

The Equitable Development Toolkit

This toolkit includes a number of tools to reverse patterns of segregation and disinvestment, prevent displacement and promote equitable revitalization.

Community Health Inclusion Index

A set of survey tools used to help communities gather information on the extent to which there are health living resources that are inclusive of all members of the community, including persons with disabilities.

Healthy, Equitable Transportation Policy

This report shows that transportation policy is health policy. It summarizes opportunities for creating transportation systems that promote health and equity.

Notes