

Active Living and Transportation

The table below summarizes evidence for the policy elements found in the *Active Living and Transportation Playbook* (G4).

Outcome: Adopt policies that encourage physical activity through active living and transportation

What does a policy that encourages active living and transportation do?	What is the evidence-based rationale for the policy?	
Transform the Street Space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creates vibrant, active public spaces and transforms how people think about, see, and experience streets. Implements pilot projects or makes other low-cost changes to roadways that enhance safety and comfort for people walking and bicycling. 	<p>The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Community Guide, the Institute of Medicine (IOM), and the Surgeon General recommend changing land use and built environment policies to support physical activity.¹⁻³ They specifically recommend transforming the street space to encourage physical activity.¹⁻³ Research confirms that people with access to safe, high-quality space for play, exercise, and recreation are more physically active than those who do not have that access.⁴⁻¹¹ Physical activity (bicycling or walking) is linked to higher cognitive functioning and greater emotional well-being, and can help prevent mental health disorders.^{3,12,13} Studies also show that residents living in “walkable” environments are more likely to know their neighbors and participate in social activities, which benefits general health and well-being.^{3,14,15}</p>
Show the Way	<p>Installs wayfinding signs and maps that increase awareness of places to walk and bike and that promote “placemaking.”</p>	<p>The Surgeon General recommends using signs to encourage physical activity.³</p>
Safe Routes to School	<p>Supports Safe Routes to School efforts through program participation and/or policy implementation to ensure that all children can safely walk, bike, and roll to school.</p>	<p>The Surgeon General, the IOM, and Healthy People 2020 recommend Safe Routes to School.^{2,3,16} A multistate evaluation of Safe Routes to School programs showed these programs led to significant increases in active transportation to school.¹⁷ Other research has found that children who walk or bike to school have higher levels of physical activity than children who do not.¹⁸</p>
Shared Use	<p>Creates safe, accessible places for physical activity and play by adopting shared use policies. Shared use – also called joint use or community use – traditionally occurs when government entities (or sometimes private, nonprofit organizations) agree to allow public access to their facilities.</p>	<p>The Surgeon General and Healthy People 2020 both recommend shared use and allowing community use of recreational facilities.^{3,16,19} Research finds that children who live near parks and recreational facilities are more active and less likely to be overweight or obese than those who live farther away.^{20,21}</p>
Complete Streets	<p>Adopts a Complete Streets policy so that people of all ages and abilities can get around safely and easily on foot, bicycle, or public transit, as well as by car.</p>	<p>The Surgeon General recommends Complete Streets policies.³ Research has found that implementing Complete Streets principles – such as improved sidewalks, additional lighting, and traffic calming measures – makes streets safer for pedestrians.²² Complete Streets are also good for the local economy. Multiple studies show that people who visit shopping districts on foot or bicycle spend more on a weekly basis than those who visit by car.^{3,23-28} Research also shows building infrastructure that supports biking and walking creates jobs.^{3,28}</p>

<p>Design and Plan for All</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sets design standards that support active streets and neighborhoods. • Implements plans that include bike- and walk-friendly policy language. 	<p>The Surgeon General and the Community Guide recommend using design guidelines and land use policies to support active living.^{1,3} Research has found bicycling benefits both adults and youth. Adults enjoy lower weight and blood pressure and are less likely to become diabetic.^{20,29} Youth who bicycle are 48 percent less likely to be overweight as adults.³⁰</p>
<p>Vision Zero</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Puts safety for all people who use streets, especially those who are most vulnerable (e.g., children, older adults) at the center of transportation planning decisions by adopting a Vision Zero policy. 	<p>Research on Vision Zero is limited because of the relatively few jurisdictions that have adopted this type of policy. However, instituting a Vision Zero policy led to significant improvements in pedestrian safety in Sweden³¹ and New York City.³²</p>

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