

# Benefits of Sidewalk & Trail Infrastructure



The built environment plays a vital role in community life by increasing connectivity and providing pedestrians access to public spaces.



## Economic Benefits

- Placemaking & quality of life initiatives that attract & retain employers & employees are increasingly common economic development strategies (2)
- Biking & walking improvements increase retail sales & property values (2)
- Property values are higher and more stable where people can easily bike & walk (2)



## Environmental Benefits

- Active transportation decreases usage & dependency on motor vehicles(4)
- Reduces greenhouse gas emissions & air pollution (4)
- Reduces storm water & mitigates flooding (4)
- Promoting pedestrian & bike infrastructure integrates green infrastructure (4)
- Co-benefits include urban heat island, stormwater & flood mitigation improvements (4)



## Health Benefits

- People who live in neighborhoods with sidewalks are more likely to be active at least 39 minutes a day (1)
- Walking is a generally safe activity for most people (3)
- Physical activity reduces risk of depression & anxiety (3)
- Physical activity reduces risk of type 2 diabetes, metabolic syndrome & some cancers (3)
- Physical activity strengthens bones & muscles (3)
- Physical activity improves quality of sleep (3)



## Equity Benefits

- Enhancing nonmotorized transportation strengthens neighborhood ties, improves access to health care service, and lowers health care costs (5)
- 24% of Americans living in poverty do not own a vehicle (5)
- Immigrants and those with language barriers are more likely to travel by bicycle (5)
- As people age, they increasingly depend on transit as primary transportation (5)

Sources:

- (1) **AARP Livable Communities** (2014) (2) **Bicycling & Walking in the United States: 2018 Benchmarking Report** (2018)  
 (3) **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention** (2020) (4) **Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center** (2020)  
 (5) **Pursuing Equity in Pedestrian and Bicycle Planning** (2016)