

# Healthy Communities

## EASY STEPS TO CREATING A HEALTHY COMMUNITY



Communities that are built to support physical activity, safe walking and biking, use of public transportation, and easy access to fresh foods are essential for good health.

### KEY STRATEGIES FOR HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

#### 1. Add health-supporting language to the town plan

- Restrict the sale of tobacco near schools and playgrounds.
- Require green space, gardening space, or sidewalks in new housing and commercial development.

#### 2. Define action strategies

- Support mixed use development that includes no smoking ordinances in public areas
- Create bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure.
- Maintain smoke-free parks, recreation and open space.
- Increase access to healthy foods.

#### 3. Design “complete” streets and roadways

- Consider the safety of all road users: walkers, bicycles, wheelchairs, public transportation, and cars.

#### 4. Maintain and promote places to be active

- Include parks, recreation facilities, and open spaces.

#### 5. Increase access to healthy foods

- Dedicate space for community gardens and farmers markets.

### THE IMPACT ON HEALTH

Healthy community design makes it easier for people to live healthy lives, Healthy communities see:

- Two-fold increase in daily recommended physical activity in walkable communities.
- 35% increase in physical activity when inviting, safe environments for exercise exist.
- Reduced secondhand smoke exposure and increased quit success with smoke-free places.

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*“As the community garden flourishes, a sense of community has developed among neighbors. Families are eating vegetables when they were not previously.”*

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### MORE RESOURCES

Visit [healthvermont.gov/3-4-50](http://healthvermont.gov/3-4-50) for more resources, including:

*Active Living & Healthy Eating: Healthy Community Design Resource*

*Complete Streets: A Guide for Vermont Communities*