WHAT MAKES A NEIGHBORHOOD
Walkable?

WALKDENVER

Density – Generally, the higher the concentration of residents, jobs, and shops within a given area, the more walkable that area is.

Mixed Uses - People walk more if they have a proper balance of uses (housing shopping, work, recreation, etc.) within walking distance of each other.

Active Street Levels – Buildings that form an attractive, transparent (windowed), and engaging "street wall" with lots of shops, restaurants, and other "active" ground-floor uses encourage walking.

Traffic calming – Measures like raised crosswalks, traffic circles, and narrower lanes make drivers slow down and be more alert, thereby enhancing pedestrian and driver safety.

Transit – Walkability and transit go hand in hand. Transit vastly extends the range of people's walks, and it performs best in dense, walkable neighborhoods.

Trees – In addition to their environmental and economic benefits, trees help create pleasant, attractive streetscapes and serve as a barrier between pedestrians and traffic.

Parking – Allowing parking supply and prices to be determined by market demand (rather than excessive parking requirements) promotes walking, discourages driving, and creates more inviting pedestrian environments.

Sidewalks – The most walkable neighborhoods have wide, well maintained sidewalks, preferably detached from the street curb and enhanced by amenities like benches, landscaping and pedestrian-scale lighting.

Crosswalks – Frequent and well-marked crosswalks increase pedestrian safety and convenience.

THE BENEFITS OF
Walkability

✚ Health

Having shops and services within walking distance of one's residence has been found to be the **single best predictor of not being obese.**

Living in walkable neighborhoods is associated with **higher life expectancies**, lower blood pressures, lower heart disease risk, lower diabetes risk, and even **increased civic engagement** and **creativity**!

Residents of walkable neighborhoods perform **35-45 minutes more moderate physical activity** per week and are much **less likely to be overweight** than those who live in less walkable environments.

$ Economy

A neighborhood with good walkability, on average, **generates 80 percent more retail sales** compared with a neighborhood with fair walkability, holding household income levels constant.

Economic output is positively correlated with **density and mix of land uses**, and is negatively correlated with vehicle miles traveled (a measure of how much people drive).

A study using WalkScore, a website that measures walkability, found every 1-point increase in WalkScore was associated with a **$500 to $3,000 increase in property values**, depending on the market.

🍃 Environment

Dense, mixed use, walkable neighborhoods are far **more energy and water efficient** than sprawling, auto-oriented neighborhoods.

Automobile use is the **single greatest contributor to a household's total carbon footprint**. Increasing walkability reduces dependence on automobiles, thereby reducing our contribution to climate change.

Fifty-four percent of trips in the Front Range are 3 miles or less. If all of these trips were made by walking or biking, we would collectively emit **1,770,141 fewer tons of greenhouse gases**.

= Equity

Walkability can significantly reduce living costs. Households in communities with more mixed land uses and more multi-modal transportation systems **spend 50% less on transportation** than households in automobile-dependent neighborhoods.

One third of the population does not or cannot drive an automobile and therefore relies on other transportation modes. Walking is the most affordable and accessible transportation option – after all, **people are pedestrians by design!**

Sources:
Health - Stein (2004), Riggs & Gilderbloom (2015), Speck (2012), Sallis, et al. (2004)
Economy - CEOs for Cities (2009), Brookings Institution (2012), Speck (2012)
Environment - Troy (2012), RTD, DRCOG
Equity - McCann (2000), Federal Highway Administration (2011)

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