

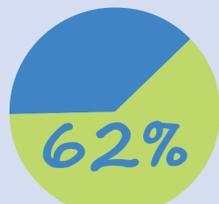
# Parks and recreation agencies are creating *Safe Routes to Parks* to facilitate safe access to parks for all people<sup>1</sup>

## Walking Offers Big Benefits

Walkers are approximately

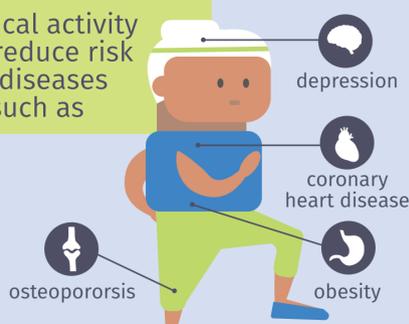
# 3x

more likely to meet physical activity recommendations than non-walkers.<sup>2</sup>



of adults reported walking at least 10 minutes a week for leisure or transportation.<sup>2</sup>

Physical activity can reduce risk of diseases such as



as well as stroke, Type 2 Diabetes and some cancers.<sup>3</sup>

Walking is the **most popular aerobic activity**<sup>4</sup>

## Parks Promote Walking

People living within a **10-minute** walking distance of a park

have higher levels of physical activity and lower rates of obesity.<sup>5</sup>



**Group walking**

in nature can significantly lower depression, stress and enhance mental well-being.<sup>6</sup>

## Five Essential Elements to Safe Routes to Parks

When people can safely walk to parks, it provides more opportunity for physical activity and greater access to open space.



**Safety**

Safety elements (e.g., lighting, traffic) must be included for pedestrian routes.



**Convenience**

Walking routes to parks should be no longer than a 10-minute walk.



**Access & Design**

Proper design, signage, ADA compliance, and multiple entry points benefit all users.



**Conditions**

Sidewalks and trails should be inviting, comfortable, and safe for all users.



**The Park**

Facilities, amenities and programs at the park should reflect the needs of the community.

## Safe Routes Get People Walking

Physical activity on trails is more frequent if they are **well-maintained**.<sup>7</sup>

Trails maintained in excellent condition had **73% more users** than those in poor condition.<sup>8</sup>

Older adults frequently report that access to **well-maintained green space and sidewalks** encourage more walking for leisure and transportation.<sup>11</sup>

In Lincoln, Nebraska, for every \$1 invested in multi-use trail development and maintenance, **an average of \$3.00 was saved** in direct medical costs.<sup>10</sup>

**Traffic calming** and presence of playgrounds and recreation areas were consistently associated with **more walking and less pedestrian injury**.<sup>9</sup>

## Addressing Walkability in Your Community



**Assess Park Usage**

Conduct observation studies or local needs assessments to determine if residents are using the park.



**Conduct a Walkability Audit**

Identify walking routes that are well-maintained and those that require improvement.



**Engage the Community**

Gather feedback from residents on what improvements are needed for them to feel safe walking to parks.

*Safe Routes to Parks is a vital component in creating more walkable communities and a sustainable future.*



[www.nrpa.org/Walking](http://www.nrpa.org/Walking)

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