



## Summary of Community Preventive Services Task Force Recommendation \*

The Community Preventive Services Task Force (CPSTF) finds insufficient evidence to determine whether park, trail, and greenway infrastructure improvements increase physical activity when they are implemented alone. CPSTF finds, however, that the economic benefits exceed the cost of these interventions.

CPSTF recommends [park, trail, and greenway infrastructure interventions combined with additional interventions](#).



## Major Findings \*

The CPSTF finding is based on evidence from a systematic review of 17 studies (search period through July 2020). Evidence showed interventions led to the following:

- Inconsistent effects on physical activity (15 studies)
- A median increase of 32.1% in the use of the park, trail, or greenway improvements (9 studies)

The CPSTF economic finding is based on evidence from a systematic review of 8 studies (search period through March 2022). Evidence showed a median benefit-to-cost ratio of 3.1 (7 studies) for park, trail, and greenway infrastructure interventions when implemented alone.

## What are Park, Trail, and Greenway Infrastructure Interventions? \*

These interventions improve the built and natural environments by creating or enhancing one of the following public locations for physical activity, relaxation, social interaction, and enjoyment.

- Parks—designated public areas that often combine greenery with paths, facilities for physical activity and recreation, and places for relaxation and social interaction.
- Trails and Greenways—routes for walking, hiking, or cycling in urban, suburban, or rural areas (e.g., “rails to trails” conversion projects). These may involve street conversions that provide opportunities for walking and cycling (most often in urban areas).

## Why is This Important? \*

- Physical activity has immediate benefits, such as reducing anxiety and improving sleep.<sup>1</sup>
- Regular physical activity can produce long-term health benefits, including the prevention or reduction of risk for more than 20 chronic diseases like heart disease, some cancers, stroke, and type 2 diabetes.<sup>1</sup>
- Overall, 11.1% of aggregate healthcare expenditures are associated with inadequate physical activity (i.e., inactive and insufficiently active levels).<sup>2</sup>
- To attain substantial health benefits, federal [physical activity guidelines](#) recommend adults perform at least 150 minutes a week of moderate-intensity physical activity.<sup>3</sup>

### Learn More

**\*Read a complete summary of the systematic review and CPSTF finding.**

[www.thecommunityguide.org/findings/physical-activity-park-trail-greenway-infrastructure-interventions-implemented-alone](http://www.thecommunityguide.org/findings/physical-activity-park-trail-greenway-infrastructure-interventions-implemented-alone)

**CDC, Division of Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Obesity**  
[www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpao](http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpao)

**Active People, Healthy Nation<sup>SM</sup>**  
[www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity/activepeoplehealthynation/index.html](http://www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity/activepeoplehealthynation/index.html)

<sup>1</sup>CDC, Division of Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Obesity. Benefits of physical activity. Atlanta (GA): 2021. Accessed 12/22/21. Available from URL: <https://www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity/basics/pa-health/index.htm>.

<sup>2</sup>Carlson SA, Fulton JE, Pratt M, Yang Z, Adams K. Inadequate physical activity and health care expenditures in the United States. *Progress in Cardiovascular Diseases* 2015;57(4):315-23.

<sup>3</sup>U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. *Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans*, 2nd edition. Washington (DC): 2018. Access 1/3/22. Available from URL: [https://health.gov/sites/default/files/2019-09/Physical\\_Activity\\_Guidelines\\_2nd\\_edition.pdf](https://health.gov/sites/default/files/2019-09/Physical_Activity_Guidelines_2nd_edition.pdf).