

# HEALTH, LIVABILITY & BUILT ENVIRONMENT

WHAT'S NEXT FOR NASHVILLE?



## DID YOU KNOW?

- » Livability is the sum of factors that add up to a community's quality of life – including the built and natural environments; economic prosperity; social stability and equity; educational opportunity; and the availability of cultural activities, entertainment, and recreation.
- » Good health means not only the absence of disease or infirmity, but a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being.
- » Smoking, poor diet, and lack of physical activity are major contributors to the top diseases that are causing us to die prematurely.
- » The Healthy Nashville Leadership Council periodically undertakes a community health assessment — a process akin to a comprehensive medical exam for the whole community.
- » Neighborhoods are often separated by socioeconomic status, and areas with high levels of poverty often experience poorer health.
- » The design of a neighborhood significantly influences the quality of life and health for the residents who spend most of their time there.
- » Daily exercise helps prevent weight gain; releases tension, stress and anxiety; improves depression; promotes better sleep; and may delay or prevent chronic illnesses.

**33%** of Nashville adults are **obese**

**33%** of Nashville adults are **overweight**

 obesity rates are higher where there is less access to alternative transportation

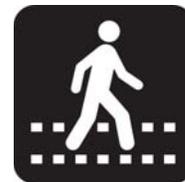


walking or biking to school has healthy effects for our youth

Census Tracts	Death per 100,000
Healthiest 25%	277 persons or lower
Sickest 25%	660 persons or higher

## How healthy is Tennessee?

The 2011 America's Health Rankings puts Tennessee in 39th place out of 50 states.



**30 Minutes** or more of daily physical activity is recommended for adults

## Coming together

Nashvillians are finding new ways to come together to solve this problem.



NASHVILLENEXT.NET

This background report is one of several developed to provide input to the NashvilleNext planning process and provide a starting point for broader community discussion. Any final policies and recommendations endorsed by the NashvilleNext Steering Committee for the consideration of the Metropolitan Planning Commission will be the result of the entire planning process and upcoming community engagement and discussion. This is a brief summary of the Health, Livability and the Built Environment background report. The reader is encouraged to read the entire report at [www.nashvillenext.net](http://www.nashvillenext.net)



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This background report discusses six “built environment factors” that play a role in impacting our health and the livability of our communities: Neighborhood Design and Development; Transportation; Walkability (Pedestrians/Bicyclists); Housing; Food Resources; and Green Space.

Growth is “smart” when it provides us with more choices, greater opportunities, a thriving natural environment, and good returns on public investments. There are ten accepted principles that define smart growth:

- » Mix land uses.
- » Take advantage of compact building design.
- » Create a range of housing opportunities and choices.
- » Create walkable neighborhoods.
- » Foster distinctive, attractive communities with a strong sense of place.
- » Preserve open space, farmland, natural beauty, and critical environmental areas.
- » Strengthen and direct development towards existing communities.
- » Provide a variety of transportation choices.
- » Make development decisions predictable, fair, and cost effective.
- » Encourage community and stakeholder collaboration in development decisions.

The report explores the city’s ongoing initiatives to shape the built environment to create a healthy and livable Nashville. Metro departments’ ongoing efforts include: providing design guidance and requirements for development projects; working with neighborhoods and developers to redevelop properties along corridors to encourage mixed use and a variety of housing types; fostering additional modes of travel besides automobiles; opening more bus routes; acquiring additional land for parks, greenways, and conservation; building more green; efficiently using infrastructure; and encouraging more physical activity, healthy eating, and active lifestyles.

The report also includes ideas for further discussion: deciding where additional development can occur to support the city’s continuing growth; exploring more tools to encourage mixed use centers that provide services, employment, housing, and transportation choice; discussing additional housing types that provide options in neighborhoods and aging in place choices; exploring tools that encourage more infill development; and discussing more tools to encourage more healthy, local food production.

