2020 SUMMARY REPORT

ACSM AMERICAN FITNESS INDEX®

Actively Moving America to Better Health

ACSM American Fitness Index®

Anthem® Foundation

AMERICAN COLLEGE of SPORTS MEDICINE® LEADING THE WAY

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I INVITE YOU ALL TO HELP ME CREATE A FUTURE WHERE COMMUNITIES ARE BUILT SO PEOPLE CAN MORE EASILY MAKE HEALTHY CHOICES, AND WHERE BUSINESSES INVEST IN THOSE COMMUNITIES AS A WAY OF ACHIEVING A HEALTHIER WORKFORCE AND A HEALTHIER BOTTOM LINE.

– VADM JEROME M. ADAMS, M.D., M.P.H., 20TH U.S. SURGEON GENERAL

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REPORT AUTHORS

Gretchen S. Patch, M.P.H., Director, Strategic Health Programs, American College of Sports Medicine

Jessica M. Coffing, M.P.H., Principal, J. Coffing and Associates, LLC

Terrell W. Zollinger, Dr.P.H., Professor Emeritus, Indiana University Richard M. Fairbanks School of Public Health; Associate, J. Coffing and Associates, LLC

Derek A. Zollinger, M.S., Data Analyst, J. Coffing and Associates, LLC

Barbara E. Ainsworth, Ph.D., M.P.H., FACSM, FNAK, Regents' Professor Emeritus, Arizona State University

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Chair: Barbara E. Ainsworth, Ph.D., M.P.H., FACSM, FNAK, Arizona State University, Emeritus

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NiCole R. Keith, Ph.D., FACSM, Indiana University, Regenstrief Institute, Inc.

Alvin L. Morton, III, M.S., University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Amanda E. Paluch, Ph.D., University of Massachusetts Amherst

Angela D. Smith, M.D., FACSM, Nemours/Alfred I. duPont Hospital for Children

Walter R. Thompson, Ph.D., FACSM, Georgia State University

Carol E. Torgan, Ph.D., FACSM, National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases, NIH

Stella L. Volpe, Ph.D., R.D.N., ACSM-CEP, FACSM, Drexel University

Kathleen B. Watson, Ph.D., U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Melicia C. Whitt-Glover, Ph.D., FACSM, Gramercy Research Group

In memoriam: Jane C. Hurley, Ph.D., was an ACSM member and served as a member of the American Fitness Index Advisory Board. Dr. Hurley's professional life was devoted to making walking and cycling for recreation and transportation better, easier, and safer.

This report and the data used in the analysis were developed in late 2019 and early 2020 before the COVID-19 pandemic.

Questions and comments on the ACSM American Fitness Index or this report should be directed to the American College of Sports Medicine at afi@acsm.org.

Anthem Foundation

July 14, 2020

Dear Partner in Promoting Fitness and Health:

This year has presented great challenges for each of us and the communities that we call home. Despite the challenges we face as a nation, we are reminded of the strong resolve of our country and the value that we place on good health.

The Anthem Foundation and the American College of Sports Medicine have been working together to address the social determinants that help create healthier communities since 2007. The ACSM American Fitness Index®, funded by the Anthem Foundation, is arguably the most credible and reliable assessment of individual and community fitness in the country. The research-backed Fitness Index not only assesses the fitness of communities, it also provides actionable data and resources that cities can use to make improvements that lead to better health and disease prevention.

The 2020 Fitness Index evaluated America's 100 largest cities using 33 health behaviors, chronic diseases, and community infrastructure indicators. For the third year in a row, Arlington, Virginia's balance of healthy behaviors and community infrastructure earned it the title of America's Fittest City. Arlington ranked in the top 10 cities for 19 of the 33 indicators in the 2020 Fitness Index, with two indicators ranked #1, including lowest rate of adults with obesity and highest rate of residents meeting aerobic and strength activity guidelines. We congratulate the city of Arlington for its impressive commitment to health, fitness, and overall wellness on behalf of its residents.

As the sponsor, we thank you for your interest in the ACSM American Fitness Index. We encourage you to use and share this year's rankings and report to help improve the health of your community and its residents. To learn more, please visit AmericanFitnessIndex.org.

Yours in health,

Gail K. Boudreaux
President and CEO
Anthem, Inc.

NEED FOR ACTION

Avoiding sedentary behaviors and engaging in regular physical activity are two of the most important ways people can improve and maintain their health.[1-4] While a significant proportion of Americans are active, less than 25% of adults meet national physical activity guidelines and 40% have obesity.[2,5] **With the health care costs of physical inactivity exceeding $117 billion yearly, increasing physical activity has never been more important to the nation's health and economic outcomes.**[2,6]

PHYSICAL HEALTH

For children and adolescents, regular physical activity can decrease body fat and improve bone health, cardiorespiratory fitness, and muscular strength. For adults, regular exercise can reduce the risk of premature death, heart disease, stroke, high blood pressure, type 2 diabetes, breast cancer, colon cancer, and the risk of falls.[1-4]

MENTAL AND SOCIAL HEALTH

Beyond physical health benefits, regular exercise and physical activity also provide mental and social health benefits including decreasing the risk of depression in adults and reducing depression symptoms and stress in young people.[7-11] An active lifestyle also improves cognitive function and delays cognitive decline. Designing spaces with parks, green spaces, trails, and bike lanes can not only increase physical activity, but also increase a sense of neighborhood cohesion and improve public perception of a city.[12-16]

ECONOMIC HEALTH

Physical activity isn't only good for personal health, it's good for a city's bottom line. There is strong evidence of significant economic benefits from local policies and city planning that support physical activity, walkability, and bikeability. Well-designed cities experience increased home values, retail activity, as well as business and job growth.[15, 17-18]

Increasingly, public health research shows that to improve health and fitness, prevent disease and disability, and enhance quality of life for all Americans through physical activity, we must create a culture that integrates physical activity into our daily lives.[2,4]

EXERCISE

A form of physical activity that is planned, structured, repetitive, and performed with the goal of improving health or fitness. All exercise is physical activity, but not all physical activity is exercise.

PHYSICAL FITNESS

The ability to carry out daily tasks with vigor and alertness, without undue fatigue, and with ample energy to enjoy leisure-time pursuits and respond to emergencies. Physical fitness includes several components: cardiorespiratory fitness (endurance or aerobic power), musculoskeletal fitness, flexibility, balance, and speed of movement.

SEDENTARY BEHAVIOR

Any waking behavior characterized by a low level of energy expenditure (less than or equal to 1.5 METs) while sitting, reclining, or lying.

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Any bodily movement produced by the contraction of skeletal muscle that increases energy expenditure above a basal level.

Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans, 2nd edition[7]

ACSM AMERICAN FITNESS INDEX APPROACH

"The ACSM American Fitness Index highlights a community's personal health, recreational and non-motorized transportation opportunities to inform advocates and city planners of ways to enhance the health and well-being of its residents and visitors."

—BARBARA E. AINSWORTH, PHD, MPH, FACSM, the 55th President of the American College of Sports Medicine (2011-2012), current chair of the ACSM American Fitness Index Advisory Board, and Regents' professor Emeritus at Arizona State University

The ACSM American Fitness Index (Fitness Index) celebrates healthy, active lifestyles and encourages city leaders to enact policies and make system changes to promote these behaviors. The Fitness Index focuses on three strategies to support this effort:

1. **INFORM:** Demonstrate the health, social, and economic benefits of physical activity as well as the policies and infrastructure that promote healthy behaviors.

   The Fitness Index, in partnership with the Anthem Foundation, ranks the 100 largest cities in the United States on a composite of health behaviors, chronic diseases, and city infrastructure. These rankings give city leaders the necessary information to improve their residents' health through local policies and system changes.

2. **ENGAGE:** Inspire city leaders and residents to recognize and celebrate the factors that contribute to their city's culture of health and fitness.

   The Fitness Index has a strong history of widely sharing the annual rankings, as well as success stories from cities making healthy changes through strategic dissemination and communication. Using traditional and social media, it is estimated that the Fitness Index reaches 355 million people annually to recognize achievements as well as stimulate local action and advocacy based on the most recent scientific data available.

3. **BUILD:** Expand local capacity and partnerships to implement policy and infrastructure changes to enable physically active lifestyles for all residents.

   The Fitness Index is more than an annual ranking of cities. Since 2011, the Fitness Index has provided direct assistance and support to cities needing help to improve their residents' health. This tailored support helps city leaders identify opportunities for improvement and to create plans for implementing changes.

   City leaders can access Fitness Index infographics and resources like the Community Action Guide. These tools allow any city, regardless of whether it is in the Fitness Index rankings, to assess its local health and fitness to develop and implement plans for improvement.

The Fitness Index approach aligns with the American College of Sports Medicine's work to address health and fitness through research and education. After all, the journey to a healthier future begins where we live, learn, work, and play. The Fitness Index indicators address social and physical environments that promote good health for all.[19]

2020 RANKINGS

The 2020 ACSM American Fitness Index ranked Arlington, VA as the fittest city in America for the third year in a row. Cities with the highest scores are considered to have strong *community* fitness, a concept analogous to individuals having strong *personal* fitness. Cities that rank near the top of the Fitness Index have more strengths and resources that support healthy living and fewer challenges that hinder it. The opposite is true for cities near the bottom of the rankings.

The Fitness Index results acknowledge that not all cities have the same resources, and some of the differences between cities can make it harder for residents to be healthy. Explore the city comparison tool for access to all of the rankings, scores, and data and to learn what your city can do to help residents lead a healthy, active lifestyle: www.americanfitnessindex.org/rankings.

Read how cities are using the Fitness Index findings to track and focus their efforts to achieve a healthier and more active population.

2020 RANKINGS

2019-2020 TREND	OVERALL RANK		PERSONAL HEALTH RANK	COMMUNITY + ENVIRONMENT RANK
→	1	Arlington, VA	1	3
→	2	Seattle, WA	3	12
→	3	Minneapolis, MN	5	2
↗	4	Madison, WI	2	20
↘	5	San Francisco, CA	4	18
→	6	Washington, D.C.	16	4
↗	7	Irvine, CA	9	24
↗	8	Denver, CO	8	33
↗	9	Boise, ID	13	26
↗	10	Boston, MA	25	14
↗	11	San Diego, CA	7	39
↘	12	St. Paul, MN	34	1
↗	13	Chicago, IL	27.5	10
↘	14	Oakland, CA	15	30
↘	15	San Jose, CA	6	47
↘	16	Portland, OR	30	16
↗	17	Honolulu, HI	22	32
↗	18	Atlanta, GA	26	27
↘	19	Lincoln, NE	29	29
→	20	Sacramento, CA	40	19
↗	21	New York, NY	27.5	35
↘	22	Pittsburgh, PA	55	6
↗	23	Milwaukee, WI	60	5
↗	24	Albuquerque, NM	36	36
↗	25	Buffalo, NY	64	7
↗	26	Chula Vista, CA	12	67
↘	27	Santa Ana, CA	11	74
↘	28	Virginia Beach, VA	23	48.5
↘	29	Long Beach, CA	31	41
↘	30	St. Petersburg, FL	58	17

2019-2020 TREND	OVERALL RANK		PERSONAL HEALTH RANK	COMMUNITY + ENVIRONMENT RANK
↗	31	Austin, TX	21	55
↗	32	Aurora, CO	17	68
↗	33	Colorado Springs, CO	18	65
↘	34	Durham, NC	14	77
↗	35	Anaheim, CA	10	89
↘	36	Raleigh, NC	24	57
↗	37	Anchorage, AK	19	64
↗	38	Norfolk, VA	70	11
↗	39	Jersey City, NJ	35	46
↘	40	Fremont, CA	20	63
↘	41	Newark, NJ	38	42
↗	42	Omaha, NE	61	25
↘	43	Orlando, FL	52	34
↘	44	Los Angeles, CA	32	58
↗	45	Tampa, FL	62.5	28
↘	46	Richmond, VA	67	23
↘	47	Miami, FL	57	31
↘	48	Plano, TX	49	43
↗	49	Lubbock, TX	33	61
↗	50	New Orleans, LA	72	21
↗	51	Cincinnati, OH	74	22
↗	52	Philadelphia, PA	83	8
↘	53	Baltimore, MD	78	15
↗	54	Glendale, AZ	48	54
↘	55	Reno, NV	39	66
↗	56	Dallas, TX	53	50
↗	57	Cleveland, OH	89	13
↘	58	Tucson, AZ	68	44
↘	59	Riverside, CA	41	80
↘	60	Greensboro, NC	50	62

2020 RANKINGS

2019-2020 TREND	OVERALL RANK		PERSONAL HEALTH RANK	COMMUNITY + ENVIRONMENT RANK
↘	61	Nashville, TN	42	81
↘	62	Hialeah, FL	69	45
↗	63	Chandler, AZ	43	84
↗	64	Scottsdale, AZ	44	88
↘	65	Stockton, CA	62.5	60
↗	66	Garland, TX	51	85
↗	67	Charlotte, NC	37	97
↘	68	Mesa, AZ	45	94
↗	69	Houston, TX	56	78
↗	70	Winston-Salem, NC	59	79
→	71	Phoenix, AZ	47	95
↘	72	St. Louis, MO	98	9
↗	73	Irving, TX	65	69
↘	74	Columbus, OH	75	51
↗	75	Chesapeake, VA	66	72
↘	76	Fresno, CA	54	90
↘	77	El Paso, TX	71	59
↗	78	Baton Rouge, LA	90	37
↘	79	Kansas City, MO	88	40
↗	80	Gilbert, AZ	46	100

2019-2020 TREND	OVERALL RANK		PERSONAL HEALTH RANK	COMMUNITY + ENVIRONMENT RANK
↗	81	Toledo, OH	94	38
↘	82	Jacksonville, FL	84	52
↘	83	Laredo, TX	86	53
↘	84	San Antonio, TX	73	86
↗	85	Corpus Christi, TX	92	48.5
↘	86	Lexington, KY	76	76
↗	87	Henderson, NV	82	75
↘	88	Las Vegas, NV	81	82
↗	89	Louisville, KY	80	83
↘	90	Fort Worth, TX	77	93
↘	91	Wichita, KS	87	87
↘	92	Fort Wayne, IN	93	73
↘	93	Arlington, TX	79	96
↗	94	Indianapolis, IN	91	92
↘	95	Detroit, MI	99	56
↘	96	Memphis, TN	96	71
↗	97	Tulsa, OK	97	70
↗	98	North Las Vegas, NV	85	98
↘	99	Bakersfield, CA	100	91
→	100	Oklahoma City, OK	95	99

KEY

- IST QUARTILE
- 2ND QUARTILE
- 3RD QUARTILE
- 4TH QUARTILE

→ ↗ ↘ CHANGE IN OVERALL RANK COMPARED TO 2019

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Good health starts in our homes, schools, and communities. That's why the Fitness Index looks at both personal health behaviors, meaning what we're doing individually to get and stay healthy, as well as the built environment, like parks, playgrounds, and recreation centers that help us do so.

Arlington, VA's balance of both healthy behaviors and community assets earned them the #1 overall rank in the 2020 ACSM American Fitness Index with a score of 84.3 out of a possible 100. Arlington also ranked #1 in the personal health sub-score but fell to #3 in the community/environment sub-score. At the individual indicator level, Arlington ranked among the top 10 cities for 19 of the 33 indicators in the Fitness Index, with two indicators ranked #1:

- Lowest rate of adults with obesity
- Highest rate of residents meeting aerobic and strength activity guidelines

Cities in all parts of the country made it into the top 25 fittest cities, including some that experience weather extremes like Minneapolis, MN (#3), Madison, WI (#4) and Denver, CO (#8). These cities use a combination of approaches to make year-round physical activity accessible for their residents regardless of the weather.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

MOVERS AND SHAKERS: COMPARING 2019 TO 2020

Overall Rankings

Comparisons of the rankings and indicators from 2019 to 2020 revealed many cities and their residents are moving toward healthy lifestyles. The biggest movers climbed the overall rankings by 15 or more spots in 2020 including Buffalo, NY, Toledo, OH, and Anchorage, AK.

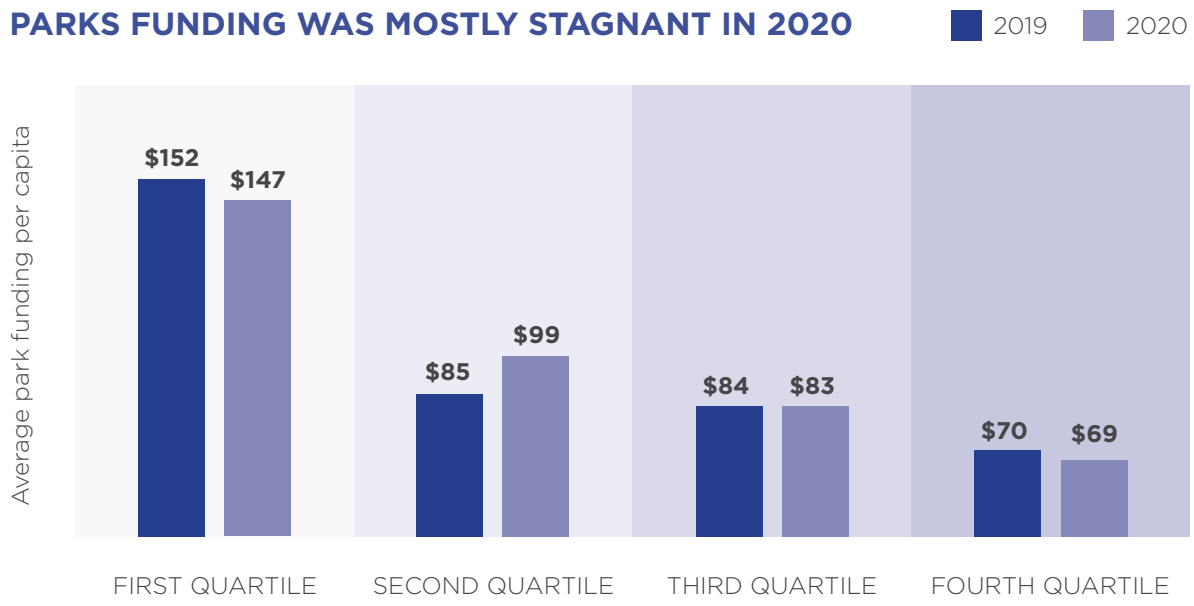
Of the most improved cities, Buffalo, rose from #41.5 in 2019 to #25 overall in 2020. Buffalo residents increased their rates of exercising and biking or walking for transportation and decreased smoking rates. Buffalo's community assets also improved with Bike Score (bikeability) and parks within a 10-minute walk (park proximity), and park expenditures all going up.

Indicator Level

Across all 100 cities, indicators improved on average for the rate of residents exercising and smoking, parks within a 10-minute walk, park funding, and Bike Score compared to 2019.

Taking a closer look at parks within a 10-minute walk, cities had a 5% improvement in park proximity. However, cities ranked in the top 25 and bottom 25 overall had the greatest improvements, up 4.5% and 5.2% respectively. Congratulations to residents and city officials in Boston, MA, and San Francisco, CA, the only two cities with 100% of residents living within a 10-minute walk to a park.

The 2020 Fitness Index continued to monitor changes to policy and funding indicators. There was less than 2% improvement to park funding per capita compared to 2019. Local park and recreation funding has not kept pace with estimated funding needs after the Great Recession of 2008-2008 despite benefits to the economy, health, and quality of life.[20] Parks and recreation centers are not luxuries; they are essential public assets that have real impacts on creating and maintaining safe, healthy neighborhoods.[21]



SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

DEEPER DIVE

All Americans should have the opportunity to make choices that allow them to live a long, healthy life, regardless of their income, education, or ethnic background. With four out of five Americans living in an urban environment, it is critical for cities to plan, build, and maintain community assets that allow residents to be physically active in their daily lives.

On average, only 22% of adults in the 100 largest cities met the guidelines for both aerobic and strength activities. Adults need at least 150 minutes a week of moderate-intensity activity, about 22 minutes per day, for substantial health benefits.[7] One way to achieve this goal is to walk, bike, or roll (skateboarding, skating, self-propelled scooters) for transportation, not just for exercise.[22,23]

12-15 ADDITIONAL MINUTES OF ACTIVITY PER DAY WHEN ADULTS WALK OR BIKE FOR TRANSPORTATION[22]

16 ADDITIONAL MINUTES OF ACTIVITY PER DAY WHEN CHILDREN WALK OR BIKE TO SCHOOL[23]

Across all 100 cities, only 4.5% of residents walk or bike to work and 7% use public transit which typically begins or ends with walking or biking. Boston, MA, Jersey City, NJ, New York, NY, San Francisco, CA, and Washington, D.C. reported the largest percentages of residents walking or biking to work and using public transportation.

WALK OR BIKE TO WORK

OVERALL RANK	
1.	Boston, MA
2.	Washington, D.C.
3.	San Francisco, CA
4.	Seattle, WA
5.	Madison, WI
6.	Pittsburgh, PA
7.	Minneapolis, MN
8.	Portland, OR
9.	New York, NY
10.	Philadelphia, PA

USE PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

OVERALL RANK	
1.	New York, NY
2.	Jersey City, NJ
3.	Washington, D.C.
4.	San Francisco, CA
5.	Boston, MA
6.	Arlington, VA
7.	Chicago, IL
8.	Philadelphia, PA
9.	Newark, NJ
10.	Oakland, CA

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

City officials have significant opportunities to impact walking and biking through local policies, planning, and funding. Walking and biking projects make communities and neighborhoods more livable by ensuring all people can get safely where they need to go—work, school, the library, grocery stores, or parks. Walking and biking also help people feel more attached to their neighbors, which improves quality of life.

There are numerous health and economic benefits in cities with sidewalks that connect to parks, public transportation, and schools; roads that include designated and protected bike lanes; and streets that accommodate all people.

ECONOMIC

- Investing in the way a neighborhood designs its sidewalks, streets, bike lanes, parks, and buildings can benefit the local economy.[24]
- Every dollar invested in building trails for walking and biking saves nearly three dollars in healthcare costs.[25]
- Millions of dollars in costs from collisions and injuries between cars and people walking or biking could be avoided by adding sidewalks, bike lanes, and other neighborhood improvements that allow people to get where they need to go safely.[26]

HEALTH

- When middle-aged and older adults live in neighborhoods with easy access to parks and recreation centers, they are more likely to stay active as they get older.[27]
- Neighborhoods that combine different approaches to make it easier to be active, such as walking and biking paths and access to a park, can lead to residents being more physically active.[28]
- People who live in neighborhoods with higher Walk Scores are more likely to meet the recommended amount of physical activity by walking.[29]

Adapted from: Voices for Health Kids, www.VoicesforHealthyKids.org.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The Fitness Index includes four indicators that assess infrastructure connectivity: Bike Score, Walk Score, parks within a 10-minute walk, and strong Complete Streets policies. Boston, MA, Chicago, IL, New York, NY, San Francisco, CA, and Seattle, WA excel at providing services and resources to support people walking and riding bicycles. These five cities rank in the top ten for connectivity indicators and all have a Complete Streets policy to help create communities where the choice to be active every day is easier and safer.

BIKE SCORE

OVERALL RANK	
1.	Minneapolis, MN
2.	Portland, OR
3.	Chicago, IL
4.	Denver, CO
5.	San Francisco, CA
6.	Arlington, VA
7.	Boston, MA
8.	Seattle, WA
9.	Jersey City, NJ
10.	New York, NY

WALK SCORE

OVERALL RANK	
1.	New York, NY
2.	Jersey City, NJ
3.	San Francisco, CA
4.	Boston, MA
5.	Newark, NJ
6.	Miami, FL
7.	Philadelphia, PA
8.	Chicago, IL
9.	Washington, D.C.
10.	Seattle, WA

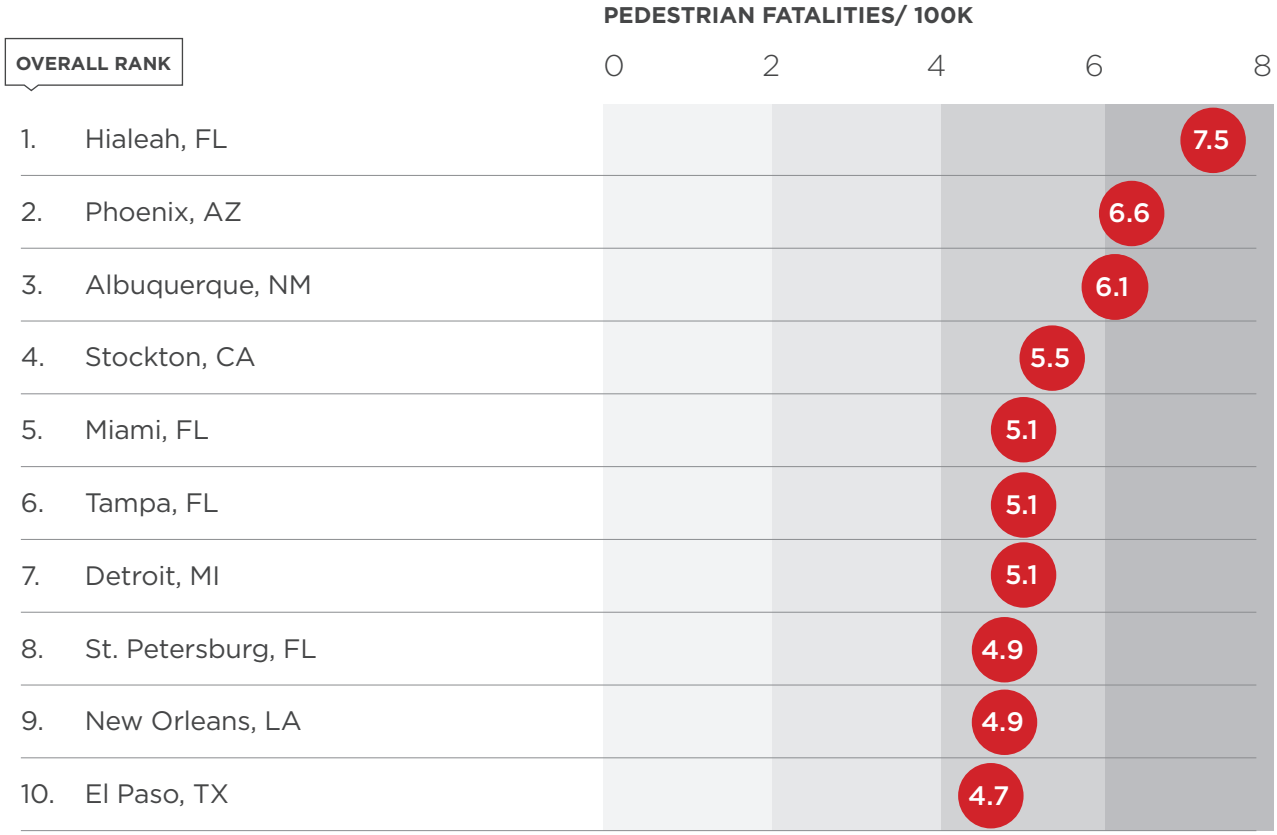
PARKS WITHIN 10-MINUTE WALK

OVERALL RANK	
1.	Boston, MA San Francisco, CA
3.	New York, NY
4.	Arlington, VA Chicago, IL St. Paul, MN Washington, D.C.
8.	Minneapolis, MN Seattle, WA
10.	Philadelphia, PA St. Louis, MO

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Neighborhoods with slower car speed limits, connected by sidewalks, protected bike lanes, lighting, and benches are essential for reducing pedestrian fatalities. Safety, both real and perceived, can impact how often residents walk or bike in their neighborhoods. The 10 deadliest cities for pedestrians averaged 5.5 pedestrian deaths per 100,000 residents while the 10 safest cities averaged 0.6 fatalities per 100,000 residents.

DEADLIEST CITIES



"Between 2008 and 2017, **drivers struck and killed 49,340 people** who were walking on streets all across the United States. That's more than 13 people per day, or one person every hour and 46 minutes. **It's the equivalent of a jumbo jet full of people crashing—with no survivors—every single month."** [30]

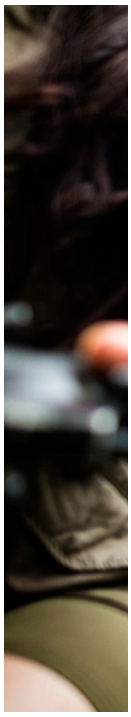
2019 Dangerous by Design report

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

PUTTING IT INTO PRACTICE

The Fitness Index findings highlight that, while cities across the country are making changes, there is still a need for local solutions that make walking and biking safe and convenient for all people. Best-practice solutions include a combination of activity-friendly routes that connect to everyday destinations.[31] For example, developing sidewalks and trails that connect downtown spaces to parks, residential buildings, museums, and retail will not only increase people walking and biking, but also raise property values and increase economic activity in the improvement zone.

City officials should not stop with just one successful project. Cities must evaluate the project, learn from it, and continue to make improvements. After all, the first step to attracting new residents and jobs is creating a higher quality of life, in which city and local governments are highly invested.



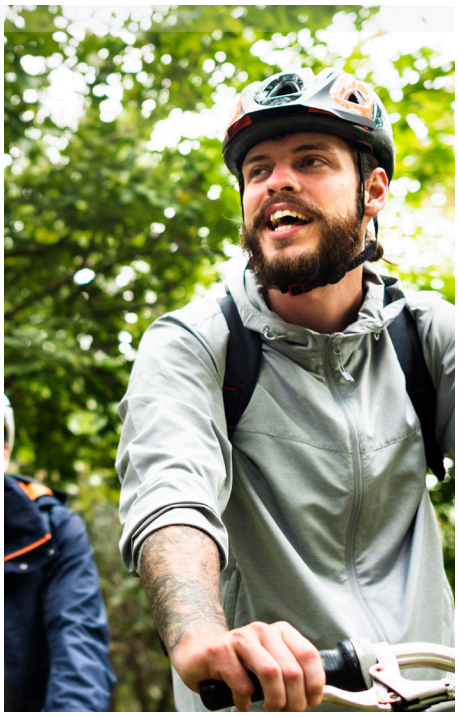
ACTIVITY-FRIENDLY ROUTES

- Street pattern design and connectivity
- Pedestrian infrastructure
- Bicycle infrastructure
- Public transit infrastructure and access

EVERYDAY DESTINATIONS

- Mixed land use
- Increased residential density
- Community or neighborhood proximity
- Parks and recreational facility access

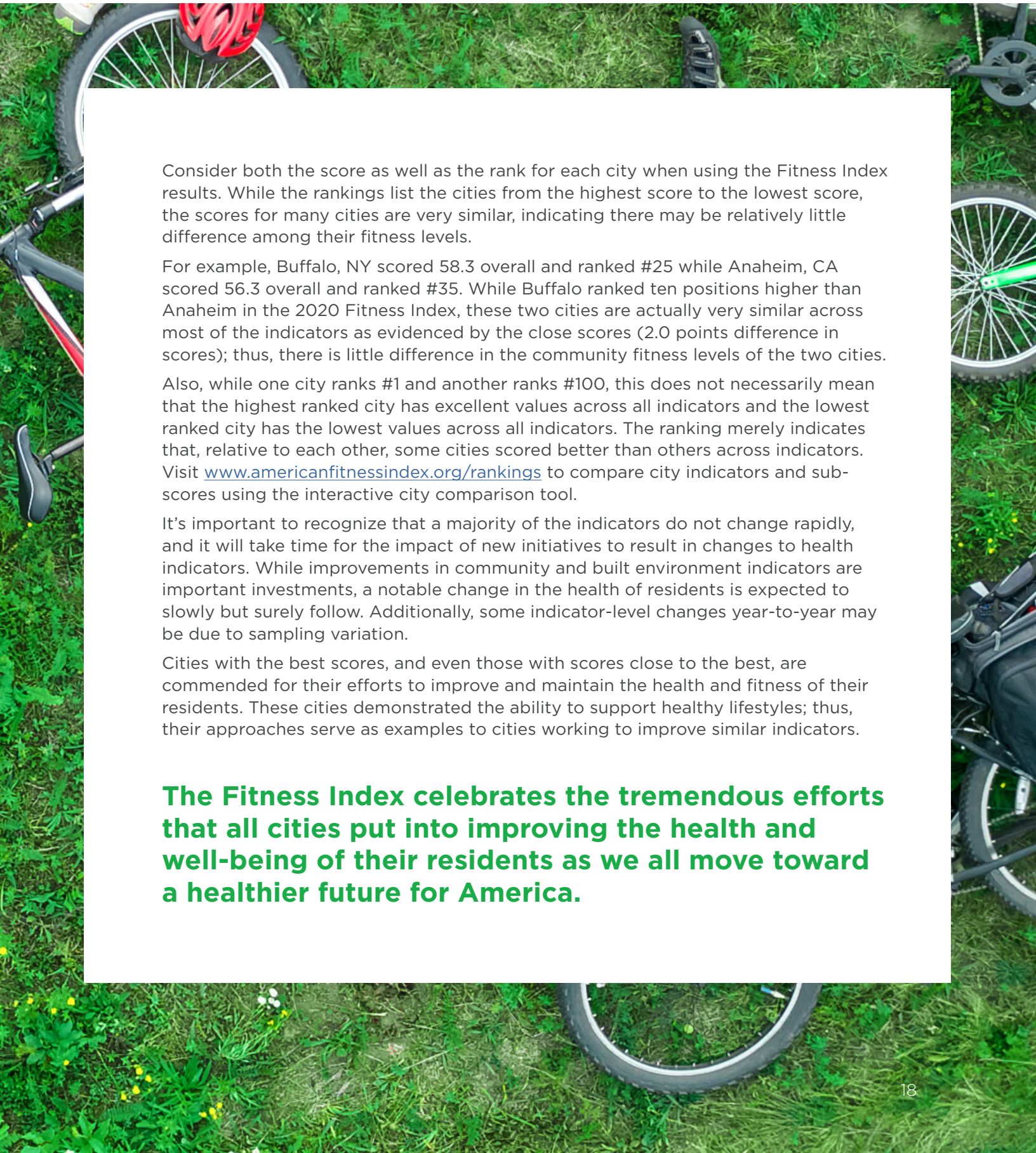
Adapted from: The Community Preventive Services Task Force's Built Environment Recommendation to Increase Physical Activity.[32]



"ACSM and the American Fitness Index strongly support walking, biking, and rolling for transportation and the adoption and implementation of Complete Streets policies, building networks of sidewalks, bicycle trails, and improving access to public parks and other amenities. Facilitating active transportation promotes equity, safety, and health and reduces harmful air pollution."

—JANET R. WOJCIK, PHD, FACSM, Winthrop University, chair of the ActivEarth Task Force

INTERPRETING THE RANKINGS



Consider both the score as well as the rank for each city when using the Fitness Index results. While the rankings list the cities from the highest score to the lowest score, the scores for many cities are very similar, indicating there may be relatively little difference among their fitness levels.

For example, Buffalo, NY scored 58.3 overall and ranked #25 while Anaheim, CA scored 56.3 overall and ranked #35. While Buffalo ranked ten positions higher than Anaheim in the 2020 Fitness Index, these two cities are actually very similar across most of the indicators as evidenced by the close scores (2.0 points difference in scores); thus, there is little difference in the community fitness levels of the two cities.

Also, while one city ranks #1 and another ranks #100, this does not necessarily mean that the highest ranked city has excellent values across all indicators and the lowest ranked city has the lowest values across all indicators. The ranking merely indicates that, relative to each other, some cities scored better than others across indicators. Visit www.americanfitnessindex.org/rankings to compare city indicators and sub-scores using the interactive city comparison tool.

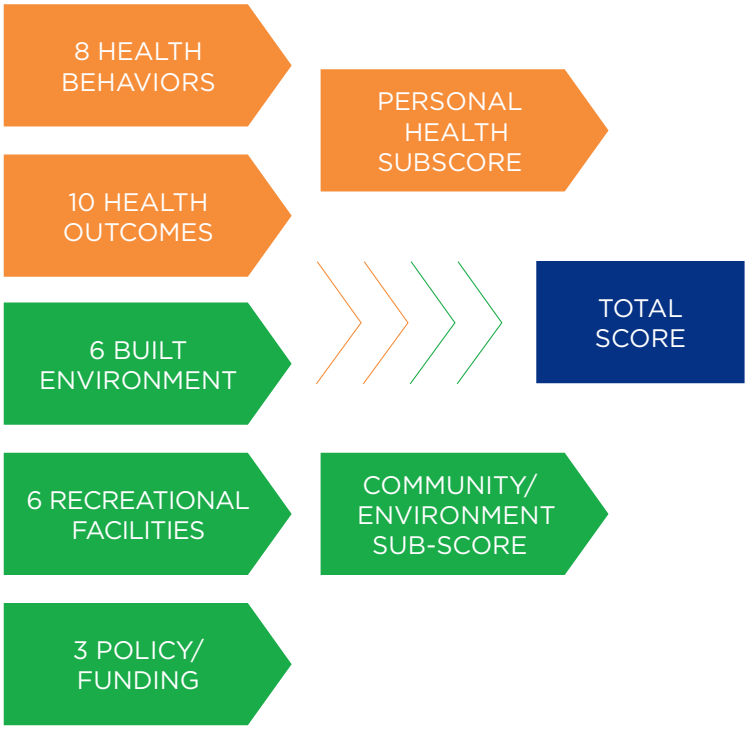
It's important to recognize that a majority of the indicators do not change rapidly, and it will take time for the impact of new initiatives to result in changes to health indicators. While improvements in community and built environment indicators are important investments, a notable change in the health of residents is expected to slowly but surely follow. Additionally, some indicator-level changes year-to-year may be due to sampling variation.

Cities with the best scores, and even those with scores close to the best, are commended for their efforts to improve and maintain the health and fitness of their residents. These cities demonstrated the ability to support healthy lifestyles; thus, their approaches serve as examples to cities working to improve similar indicators.

The Fitness Index celebrates the tremendous efforts that all cities put into improving the health and well-being of their residents as we all move toward a healthier future for America.

APPENDIX: METHODOLOGY

The Fitness Index's annual assessment of the 100 largest cities in the U.S. provides city officials with much needed data at the local level to help them make policy and funding decisions.



The Fitness Index was calculated using 33 indicators from reliable, publicly accessible, and up-to-date sources. Indicators were combined to create sub-scores for personal health and community and environment indicators. Individual indicators were weighted relative to their assessed impact on community fitness, converted to ranks, and combined using a mathematical formula as described in the methodology section on the website. A weighted average of the two sub-scores formed the total score, which was then ranked to show how the cities' fitness levels compared to each other.

The analysis included city-level data when available. All other indicator data were analyzed for the county(ies) where the city proper was located. Groups of counties were used when the city limits extend across county lines. For example, the city of Denver, CO is located only in Denver County; however, New York, NY is located in the five counties of Bronx, Kings, New York, Queens, and Richmond.

There was an insufficient number of BRFSS survey respondents in 2018 from Webb County where Laredo, TX, is located. To obtain the minimum amount of responses required by the CDC for data reporting for the 2020 Index, responses to combined 2017 & 2018 BRFSS surveys for Webb County.

No changes were made to the indicators, weights, or analysis in 2020. As a result, comparisons can be made at the city level for all data, scores, and rankings from 2019 and 2020. However, due to previous updates to the Fitness Index, comparisons of overall rank, score, and sub-scores prior to 2019 should be avoided.

For more information on the development of the Fitness Index, including indicator selection and counties included in the analysis, please visit: www.americanfitnessindex.org/methodology.

APPENDIX: METHODOLOGY

PERSONAL HEALTH INDICATORS

HEALTH BEHAVIORS

% exercising in the last 30 days
% meeting aerobic activity guidelines
% meeting aerobic & strength activity guidelines
% bicycling or walking to work
% using public transportation to work
% consuming 2+ fruits/day
% consuming 3+ vegetables/day
% smoking

HEALTH OUTCOMES

% in excellent or very good health
% physical health not good during the past 30 days
% mental health not good during the past 30 days
% with obesity
% with asthma
% with high blood pressure
% with angina or coronary heart disease
% with stroke
% with diabetes
Pedestrian fatality rate/ 100,000 residents

COMMUNITY/ ENVIRONMENT INDICATORS

BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Air quality index
Bike Score
Farmers markets/ 1,000,000 residents
Park units/ 10,000 residents
% within a 10-minute walk to a park
Walk Score

RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

Ball diamonds/ 10,000 residents
Basketball hoops/ 10,000 residents
Park playgrounds/ 10,000 residents
Recreational centers/ 20,000 residents
Swimming pools/ 100,000 residents
Tennis courts/ 10,000 residents

POLICY & FUNDING

Local Complete Streets policy
Park expenditure/ resident (adjusted)
Physical education requirement

APPENDIX: DATA SOURCES

The Fitness Index uses a variety of data sources to calculate the annual scores and rankings.

- 2018 American Community Survey - U.S. Census
- 2017 & 2018 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, County Data - CDC
- 2018 Environmental Protection Agency
- 2018 National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
- 2019 Smart Growth America/ National Complete Streets Coalition
- 2016 Shape of the Nation
- 2019 Trust for Public Land - City Park Facts
- 2018 Farmers Markets Directory and Geographic Data - USDA
- 2019 Walk Score and Bike Score

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ABOUT US

The American College of Sports Medicine is the largest sports medicine and exercise science organization in the world. More than 50,000 international, national and regional members are dedicated to advancing and integrating scientific research to provide educational and practical applications of exercise science and sports medicine. More details can be found at www.acsm.org.

ACSM is a global leader in promoting the benefits of physical activity and advocates for legislation that helps government and the health community make it a priority. ACSM encourages Congress to support continued funding of parks, trails, and safe routes to school, as well as the need for all Americans to meet the physical activity recommendations included in the National Physical Activity Guidelines, and the need for the guidelines to be regularly updated every 10 years.

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