

Public Places

Creating accessible public spaces can provide the rationale for a range of solutions to foster health and livability. Making towns and neighborhood centers more navigable for walkers and bikers may promote physical and social activity. Healthy places are valued by and accessible to everyone in a community: parks for recreation and relaxation; streets and sidewalks where neighbors meet and stroll; farmers markets with fresh produce to encourage local shopping. These public places must be situated so people can conveniently reach them on foot or by public transit. Psychologically, a thriving public space promotes the social integration and security that make neighborhoods safer and healthier. They are critical to livable cities and healthy communities.

Case Studies

- [Central Park, New York NY](#)
 - Central Park has long been a focal point of New York City serving as a successful public space for over seventy-five years to city residents.
- [Golden Gate Park, San Francisco, CA](#)
 - Each year millions of San Franciscans and visitors engage in the splendor and opportunities afforded by Golden Gate Park.
- [Eastern Market, Washington DC](#)
 - Serving as a hub for commercial and residential activities in the nation's capital, Eastern Market is a prime example of a successful permanent public space.
- [Dane County Farmers Market, Madison, WI.](#)
 - Established on a seasonal basis the Dane County Farmers Market provides the residents of Madison, Wisconsin with healthy food choices.

Other Resources

- [This Is Smart Growth](#)
 - This publication illustrates how communities use Smart Growth techniques to improve the quality of development. The publication features 40 places around the country where good development has improved residents' quality of life.
- [The Project for Public Spaces](#)
 - An organization dedicated to fostering public places that sustain communities.