

# LIVABLE COMMUNITIES

## WHAT MAKES A COMMUNITY LIVABLE?



A livable community is one in which healthy choices are the easiest, most attainable ones. Livable communities improve the health, wellness, and overall quality of life of its members.

Some examples of health and wellness opportunities that affect the overall livability of a community are the availability and variety of:

- quality health and other support services
- health promotion programs and activities
- nutritious food and food sources
- safe, accessible physical activity opportunities and environments
- affordable, strategically-located transportation options
- affordable, appropriate, varied housing
- entertainment, shopping, recreation, and cultural opportunities and venues

In inclusive livable communities, efforts are made in planning, action, and evaluation to ensure the livable components of the community are accessible and provide access to equitable health and wellness benefits to all individuals and groups within the community. Together, inclusive livable community components create lifestyle opportunities for individuals that promote independence, healthy relationships, social engagement and community involvement, physical and mental health, learning and growth, and increased overall well-being.

The following are just a few of several examples of inclusive livable community initiatives:

- Complete Streets that implicitly include measures to ensure access, use and safety of pedestrians who may have additional needs, such as those with disabilities, children, and the elderly
- Created and promoted walking, rolling, jogging and cycling routes that are maintained to a point that they can accommodate all users, regardless of ability level or assistive device
- Walking and running groups that plan, scout, utilize and evaluate routes to ensure accessibility for all potential members
- Food stores and farmers markets that feature ideal, accessible placement of healthy nutrition items and/or visible, knowledgeable assistants available to assist consumers with additional shopping needs
- Community gardens that feature inclusive features such as rollable ground and plants at specific heights to allow for all potential users to participate in gardening
- Playgrounds and other public recreation spaces that feature accessibility features such as ramps and rollable surfaces so all users and participants can use, enjoy, and benefit from them

NCHPAD provides outlines and recommendations for these and other programs throughout Building Inclusive Healthy Communities. If there are additional inclusive livable community opportunities or initiatives you are interested in seeing promoted or learning about, contact an information specialist and we will provide information and possibly create additional resources to be featured on the site.

## ADDITIONAL LIVABILITY AND LIVABLE COMMUNITY RESOURCES:

- [AARP Livable Communities](#)
- [Partners for Livable Communities](#)
- [Smart Growth America: Complete Streets Help Create Livable Communities](#)
- [Walkable and Livable Communities Institute](#)

