How walkable is the area where you work or live? Walkability, the term used to evaluate the ease of walking in a location, is an important item to be considered in deciding where you live. Communities with inadequate walkable structures such as sidewalks, proper lighting, and bicycle paths have higher rates of chronic diseases like heart disease and diabetes.

Communities that encourage walking or biking have a greener footprint and healthier options. Access to bike paths and sidewalks allow citizens to decide whether they bike or walk to work. Increasing lighting in these areas and cleaning up communities can also help decrease crime.

Benefits to walkable structures:

- Safer bike and walking options
- Increased exercise in the community
- Alternative transportation options
- Greener lifestyle
- Free access to exercise tools
- Makes healthier options easy
- Savings in gas prices

Check out a website that calculates your neighborhood walk score based on availability of public transit, road metrics, and availability of nearby amenities. Cities or zip codes can be entered in the search to determine your walk score. To find out your walk score go to: http://www.walkscore.com/ [2]

Resources:

- Website: America Walks [4]
The Council of State Governments
Sharing Capitol Ideas.

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