



BUILT ENVIRONMENT FOR PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

The built environment includes the settings and structures around us, the spaces where we live, play, learn, and work. Growing evidence demonstrates the relationship between features of the built environment and health; the built environment can contribute to disease and injury or promote good health and habits.^{1,2}

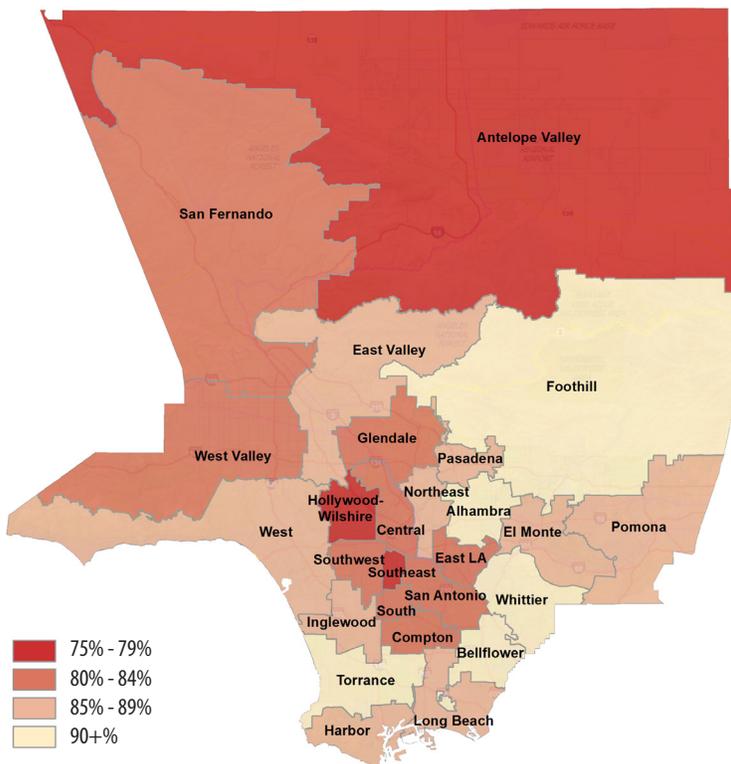
Characteristics of the community or neighborhood that discourage physical activity, such as unsafe walking paths or lack of parks, can increase the risk for obesity, diabetes, and other chronic health conditions.^{3,4,5} Conversely, built environments that allow people to engage in physical activity, including walkable sidewalks, safe bike paths, parks, and open space, improve health and well-being.⁶

To assess perceptions of the built environment among our local population, the 2011 Los Angeles County Health Survey asked adults (18+ years old) about the environments in which they live, walk, and exercise.

Neighborhood Resources for Physical Activity

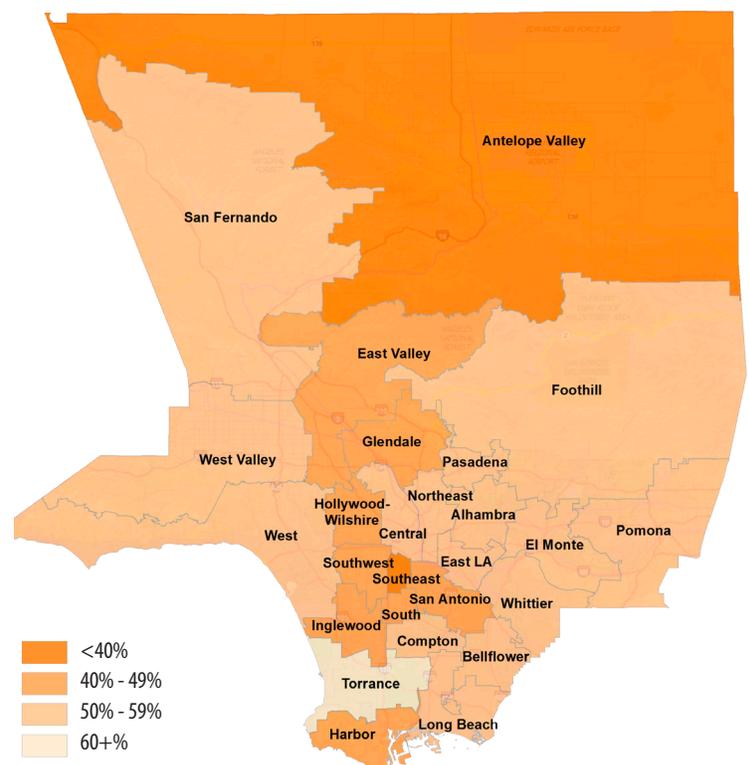
- 52% percent of adults in the County reported they use walking paths, parks, playgrounds or sports fields in their neighborhood, 34% of adults do not use these resources, and 14% reported that their neighborhood does not have these facilities.

Figure 1: Percent of Adults Who Reported That They Have Parks, Playgrounds, or Sports Fields in Their Neighborhood, by Health District, LACHS 2011



- The presence of walking paths, parks, playgrounds, or sports fields varied geographically, with Antelope Valley, Hollywood/Wilshire, and Southeast Health Districts having the lowest percent of residents reporting resources for outdoor physical activity (Figure 1).
- Use of walking paths, parks, playgrounds or sports fields varied by Health District, with the Torrance Health District having the highest use of these facilities, and the Southeast and Antelope Valley Health Districts having the lowest use (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Percent of Adults Who Used Walking Paths, Parks, Playgrounds, or Sports Fields in Their Neighborhood, by Health District, LACHS 2011



LA Health

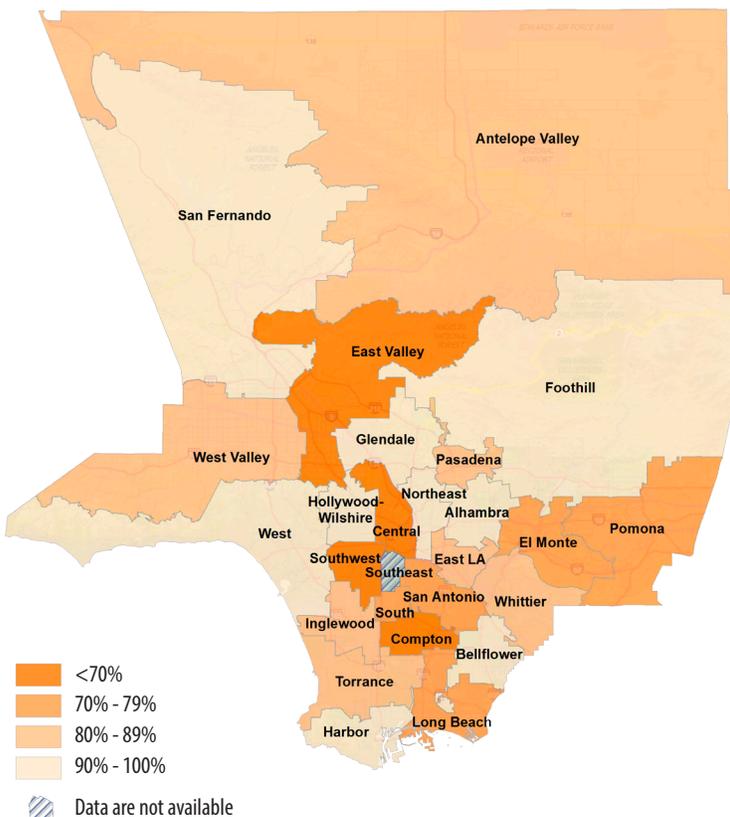
DATA SNAPSHOT



Perceived Safety of Neighborhood

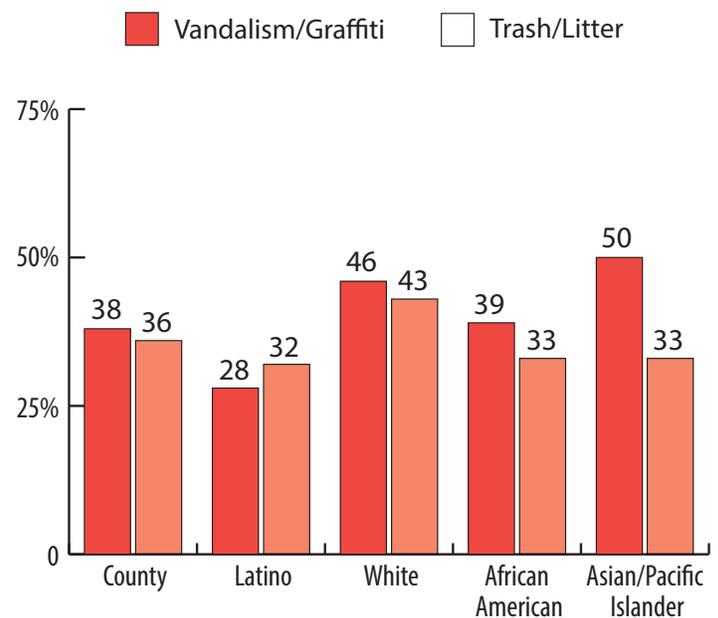
- Among those who reported using walking paths, parks, playgrounds, or sports fields in their neighborhood, 91% reported they were safe to use. However, among those who did not use these places, 81% reported they were safe, while 9% did not know if they were safe.
- Overall, 84% of adults in the County reported that they perceived their neighborhood to be safe from crime. Perceived neighborhood safety from crime varied geographically by Health District (Figure 3).
- 69% of adults reported that there was adequate lighting around buildings and on streets, and that the streets and sidewalks were well-maintained in their neighborhood.
- Only 62% of residents living in poverty reported having well-maintained streets and sidewalks, and adequate lighting in their neighborhood, compared to 71% of residents with higher household incomes.

Figure 3: Percent of Adults Who Perceived Their Neighborhood to be Safe from Crime, by Health District, LACHS 2011



- Graffiti, vandalism, trash or litter on the streets can deter residents from walking and engaging in other healthy forms of exercise.
 - A higher percentage of Asians/Pacific Islanders (50%) and whites (46%) reported no vandalism or graffiti in their neighborhood compared to 39% of African Americans and 28% of Latinos (Figure 4).
 - More whites (43%) reported that their neighborhood did not have trash and litter on the streets or properties compared to 33% of Asians/Pacific Islanders, 33% of African Americans, and 32% of Latinos.

Figure 4: Percent of Adults Who Reported No Vandalism/ Graffiti or Trash/Litter in their Neighborhood, by Race/Ethnicity, LACHS 2011



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3. Sallis JF, Saelens BE, Frank LD, Conway TL, Slymen DJ, Cain KL, Chapman JE, Kerr J. Neighborhood Built Environment and Income: Examining Multiple Health Outcomes. Soc Sci Med. 2009; 68:1285-93.
4. Mujahid MS, Diez Roux AV, Shen M, Gowda D, Sa' nchez B, Shea S, Jacobs DR, Jackson SA. Relation between Neighborhood Environments and Obesity in the Multi-Ethnic Study of Atherosclerosis. Am J Epidemiol 2008;167:1349-1357.
5. Sallis JF, Floyd MF, Rodríguez DA, Saelens BE. Role of Built Environments in Physical Activity, Obesity, and Cardiovascular Disease. Circulation. 2012;125:729-737.
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