ACSM AMERICAN FITNESS INDEX®

Actively Moving America to Better Health

2025 Data in Action: Calling for Change in America's 100 Largest Cities

ACSM | AMERICAN COLLEGE OF SPORTS MEDICINE®

Elevance Health | Foundation

July 22, 2025

Dear Partner in Promoting Fitness and Health:

We are pleased to share the results of the 2025 ACSM American Fitness Index®. For 18 years, Elevance Health Foundation has partnered with the American College of Sports Medicine® (ACSM) to deliver this vital resource to help facilitate better overall health. The Fitness Index has become a trusted and influential tool, helping communities understand and address the physical, behavioral and social drivers of health, equipping advocates and city leaders with data and insights needed to inspire meaningful change.

This year's Fitness Index reflects noteworthy progress toward our shared goals. At a high level, 94 of the 100 largest U.S. cities and their residents reported improved aerobic activity levels. The overall data show an average increase of 9% in residents meeting the aerobic activity guidelines. Cities also reported a significant increase in residents meeting aerobic and strength activity guidelines, with 89 of 100 cities averaging a 7.6% increase. These are more than just numbers, they represent healthier environments and more opportunities for residents to thrive.

Ranking the 100 largest cities in the United States, the Fitness Index data is based on more than 30 fitness indicators. The Fitness Index is always evolving and includes new indicators – such as trail miles and splashpads – and an update to measuring tennis courts, including Pickleball and dual-use courts. These fitness indicators provide each city with a detailed view of where they are succeeding and where improvements can help ensure they are creating the best environment for health and fitness. Similarly, the Fitness Index shares *personal* health indicators, empowering individuals to assess what changes they can make and take charge of their personal health journeys.

We congratulate the city of Arlington, Virginia, and its residents for being the 2025 Fittest City in America. Their ongoing commitment to ensuring the health, fitness and vitality of their community is exemplary. We also recognize the efforts and successes of Washington, D.C., Seattle, Washington, San Francisco, California and Denver, Colorado for rounding out this year's top five fittest cities. Equally noteworthy are the cities whose residents reported the largest increases in aerobic activity levels – Plano, Texas, and Fort Wayne, Indiana. We also commend the city of Richmond, Virginia, for reporting the largest increase in residents meeting aerobic and strength activity guidelines (18.8%).

The Elevance Health Foundation deeply values our collaboration with ACSM and the opportunity to leverage these insights and tailor efforts to address specific community needs. For 18 years, we have shared a mutual vision to improve lives. The Elevance Health Foundation is collaborating with communities to address social drivers of health, including the critical issue of food insecurity, while ACSM is intently focused on extending and enriching lives through the power of movement. The Fitness Index connects these aspirations by providing the tangible data and resources that bring them to life.

While we are grateful for the progress we have seen in this year's Fitness Index, challenges do remain. We encourage you to review the full report and see where your community ranks and how it compares to the fittest cities. Use the data and resources to advocate locally for change. Together, we can and will make a difference.

Visit AmericanFitnessIndex.org to learn more.

Sincerely,

Shantanu Agrawal, MD
Chief Health Officer, Elevance Health

Get Active, Cities! Be the Change With the American Fitness Index

The American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM) wants to help everyone be healthier and more physically active. The ACSM American Fitness Index (Fitness Index) measures how well the 100 largest U.S. cities support healthy, active lifestyles. Cities with the highest Fitness Index 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: These cities have fewer strengths and resources to support healthy living.

But it's not just about rankings! The Fitness Index offers three ways city leaders and residents can make a difference:

1. **Fuel Your Knowledge:** The Fitness Index provides data on a composite of health behaviors, chronic diseases, and community assets based on the most recent data available. Armed with this knowledge, residents can advocate for local initiatives and policy changes in their own communities.

2. **Celebrate Success & Inspire Action:** The Fitness Index celebrates strides that the ranked cities have made toward promoting a culture of health and fitness. It's a source of inspiration for city leaders and residents alike, motivating them to pursue even greater achievements.

3. **Join the Movement:** The Fitness Index provides cities with tools and resources to help city leaders and residents assess their communities' health and fitness landscape and then work together to advocate for positive changes.

Why is this relevant to you? Because your voice matters. The Fitness Index aligns with ACSM's vision to extend and enrich lives through the power of movement. After all, healthy living starts where we live, learn, work, and play. By getting involved in grassroots advocacy, you can help create a city that encourages and supports a healthy, active life!

Be the Change

What We Found & What You Can Do

Similar to last year, the top four cities retained their seats in 2025. Congratulations to Arlington, Virginia; Washington, DC; Seattle, Washington; and San Francisco, California, for your ongoing success as healthy, active cities! The full rankings, methodology, data sources, and ranges can be found at https://americanfitnessindex.org/.

The overall data show a 9% increase on average in residents meeting the aerobic activity guidelines: 59.9% in 2025 up from 50.9% previously reported by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). In fact, for 94 of the 100 largest U.S. cities, residents reported improved aerobic activity levels; the largest increases were reported in Plano, Texas, and Fort Wayne, Indiana.

Cities also reported a significant increase in residents meeting aerobic and strength activity guidelines. Of the 100 cities measured, 89 averaged a 7.6% increase, with the largest increase observed in Richmond, Virginia (18.8%).

The percentage of individuals meeting aerobic and strength activity guidelines was previously reported in the 2019 BRFSS survey. The changes observed reflect data collected four years ago, highlighting the increase since that period. The upward trend among the largest 100 cities shows a growing commitment from residents to maintaining an active lifestyle and improving overall health through increased aerobic and strength activities.

Other notable improvements were seen in decreased rates of smoking (73 cities had a 2.6% decrease, on average). In addition, there was an increase in funding for parks; 64 cities reported an average increase of $48 per capita. Among these cities, seven had a per capita increase of over $100.
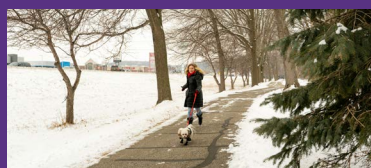
Top 10 Cities Overall

1. Arlington, VA
2. Washington, D.C.
3. Seattle, WA
4. San Francisco, CA
5. Denver, CO
6. Minneapolis, MN
7. Madison, WI
8. Atlanta, GA
9. Sacramento, CA
10. San Diego, CA

New in 2025

The Fitness Index Advisory Board added two indicators, trail miles* and splashpads, and updated the indicator for tennis courts to include pickleball courts and dual-use courts. These new indicators reflect the importance of community assets that meet the evolving needs and demands of residents. Splashpads and pickleball courts expand physical activity opportunities across the lifespan and may be lower cost to build and operate than alternatives like swimming pools and additional courts. Trail miles represent not just recreational activity opportunities but also a community's ability to engage in active transportation like walking or biking to work or school.

Top 10 Cities for New Indicators

Trail Miles/ 100,000 residents		Splashpads/ 100,000 residents		Tennis/Pickleball Courts/ 20,000 residents	
Washington, DC	235.3	Boston, MA	12.6	Richmond, VA	13.9
Irvine, CA	187.9	Cleveland, OH	12.4	Norfolk, VA	12.1
Scottsdale, AZ	111.4	Pittsburgh, PA	9.8	Louisville, KY	11.8
Henderson, NV	90.5	Chicago, IL	8.9	St. Louis, MO	9.3
Pittsburgh, PA	67.9	Tulsa, OK	8.4	Omaha, NE	9.2
Spokane, WA	66.9	Spokane, WA	8.2	Arlington, VA	9.0
Minneapolis, MN	61.5	New York, NY	6.8	Boise, ID	8.7
Colorado Springs, CO	58.6	Philadelphia, PA	6.7	Atlanta, GA	8.4
Tampa, FL	52.1	Louisville, KY	6.2	Winston-Salem, NC	8.3
Raleigh, NC	52.0	Henderson, NV	5.9	Honolulu, HI	7.7

*Trail miles were not included in the ranking calculation for cities that did not report data to Trust for Public Land or where the Fitness Index team was not able to independently collect data.

Slow Progress

Of the 10 indicators that the Fitness Index highlighted last year, three changed meaningfully in an unhealthy direction — air quality, food insecurity, and reports of excellent or very good health — each getting slightly worse. Declines in air quality can be attributed to wildfires and droughts. In addition to U.S. wildfires, smoke from wildfires across several Canadian provinces traveled south and impacted millions of people in the Northeast and Great Lakes regions in 2024. All but one city in the Fitness Index had an increase in their food insecurity percentage. While food insecurity has many causal factors, this may be a result of the expiration of the expanded Child Tax Credit and the end of other COVID-era programs supporting access to food. This led to an increase in food insufficiency among families with children.

Highlighted Indicators

2025	2024	
47.9	47.9	Walk Score
52.3	52.3	Bike Score
47.8	63.9	% of days with good air quality
72.3	71.4	% residents within a 10-minute walk to a park
12.9	10.4	% with food insecurity
14.4	14.3	% consuming 3+ vegetables/ day
29.5	29.4	% consuming 2+ fruits/ day
44.9	44.7	% with poor mental health in the previous month
37.9	37.7	% with poor physical health in the previous month
47.8	50.1	% in excellent or very good health

Making Cities Healthier: A Call to Action

To make our communities healthy and strong, we need to continue advocating for changes that support physical activity. This sustained effort is key to making lasting improvements since change can be slow, as we see in the highlighted indicators above. We all have a part in ensuring fair access to opportunities to live healthy lifestyles, including both physical and mental health.

Creating a healthier community requires all of us working together. By supporting policies and funding that promote well-being for everyone, we can build stronger, more active communities where everyone has the opportunity to thrive. We must get more people involved, including local government, businesses, nonprofit groups, and residents. This fosters policy development and implementation as well as other actions that genuinely reflect the community's voice and yield equitable and impactful health outcomes.

The Fitness Index serves as a critical asset in this process, providing data and information that empowers advocates and city officials alike. Advocates can leverage these insights to refine their strategies and champion policies that address specific community needs.

City officials can utilize the Fitness Index as a data-driven baseline to measure progress and make informed decisions to further improve residents' health. These data also provide a framework for ongoing evaluation, enabling cities to monitor their progress and celebrate their achievements in building healthier and more vibrant communities.

The Fitness Index shows that cities all over the country are working hard to help residents be healthy and active. By working together and leveraging data-driven insights, we can make America a healthier place for residents of all cities.

Below are policy, program, and funding opportunities that can support our shared mission to create healthy, physically active cities.

Community Design for Physical Activity & Active Transportation	Access to Healthy Foods	Mental Health
Advocate for urban planning policies and funding that prioritizes public green spaces, parks, recreational areas, sidewalks, and protected bike lanes.	Advocate for policies that promote access to healthy foods, particularly in underserved communities.	Advocate for policies that enhance access to community-based mental health services.
Develop new parks and recreation centers that prioritize equitable access across different income and demographic groups, including requiring green spaces in new developments.	Implement zoning regulations and financial incentives that encourage grocery stores and farmers markets to locate in areas with limited access to fresh produce.	Increase funding for mental health clinics, integrating mental health services into primary care settings.
Improve existing facilities to ensure they are safe, well-maintained, and offer diverse opportunities for physical activity.	Issue vouchers or coupons redeemable at farmers markets or grocery stores for purchasing fresh produce.	Implement school-based mental health programs that provide comprehensive mental health services to students in their local schools.
Advocate for policies like Complete Streets that prioritize and invest in active transportation infrastructure, focus on connectivity, and increase safety via bike lanes, pedestrian-friendly pathways, public transportation, etc.	Organize community gardens that enable residents to grow their own fruits and vegetables, reducing cost and improving food access.	Provide training for community members, including teachers and employers, on recognizing and addressing mental health concerns, promoting awareness, and destigmatizing mental health issues.
Support public transit systems by increasing accessibility, affordability, and service frequency.	Adopt food service guidelines that create a healthy food environment, such as increasing healthier offerings in food service venues, including nutritional guidelines in organizational policies, and helping food pantries provide healthier options.	Promote physical activity and healthy eating benefits and efficacy to mental health.
Conduct a walk/movement audit in coordination with schools to create safe routes to school.	Expand nutrition education and outreach to equip families with the tools to make healthy food choices.	Develop and fund mobile crisis units to respond to mental health emergencies in the community.

A Call to Action

Rankings Grid

Explore the city comparison tool to access the rankings, scores, data, and methods, and to discover how your city can help residents lead a healthy, active lifestyle: https://americanfitnessindex.org/.

2024-2025 TREND	OVERALL RANK		PERSONAL HEALTH RANK	COMMUNITY + ENVIRONMENT RANK
→	1	Arlington, VA	1	1
→	2	Washington, D.C.	5	4
→	3	Seattle, WA	3	9
→	4	San Francisco, CA	2	19
↗	5	Denver, CO	7	7
→	6	Minneapolis, MN	11.5	2
↘	7	Madison, WI	9	10
→	8	Atlanta, GA	13	12
↗	9	Sacramento, CA	10	30
↗	10	San Diego, CA	4	51
↗	11	Chicago, IL	19	11
↘	12	Irvine, CA	17	25
↗	13	Boston, MA	23	16
↗	14	Plano, TX	15	34
↗	15	San Jose, CA	8	62
↗	16	Lincoln, NE	26	27
↗	17	Boise, ID	31	21
↘	18	St. Paul, MN	56	5
→	19	Oakland, CA	18	38
↘	20	Pittsburgh, PA	63	3
↗	21	Austin, TX	11.5	53
↗	22	Chula Vista, CA	6	83
↘	23	Portland, OR	32	32
↗	24	Buffalo, NY	47.5	17
→	25	Albuquerque, NM	44	20
↘	26	Spokane, WA	52	14
↗	27	Aurora, CO	14	60
↗	28	Jersey City, NJ	16	56
↗	29	Newark, NJ	21	47
↘	30	Honolulu, HI	30	36

2024-2025 TREND	OVERALL RANK		PERSONAL HEALTH RANK	COMMUNITY + ENVIRONMENT RANK
↗	31	Norfolk, VA	53	23
↗	32	Omaha, NE	55	22
↘	33	New York, NY	27	40.5
↘	34	St. Petersburg, FL	58	28
↗	35	Cincinnati, OH	76	6
↗	36	Cleveland, OH	68	13
↘	37	Colorado Springs, CO	33	43
↗	38	Fremont, CA	25	55
↘	39	Miami, FL	49	37
↘	40	Richmond, VA	74	18
↗	41	Tampa, FL	71	24
↗	42	Long Beach, CA	46	44
↘	43	Anchorage, AK	37	52
↘	44	Raleigh, NC	50	45
↗	45	Orlando, FL	62	35
↗	46	Dallas, TX	36	57
↘	47	Milwaukee, WI	81	8
↗	48	Scottsdale, AZ	34	58
↗	49	Houston, TX	22	81
↘	50	Santa Ana, CA	24	82
↗	51	Columbus, OH	61	40.5
↘	52	Lexington, KY	28	73
↗	53	Philadelphia, PA	79	15
↗	54	Reno, NV	47.5	59
↗	55	Winston-Salem, NC	35	67
↗	56	Glendale, AZ	45	63
↘	57	Anaheim, CA	20	94
↗	58	Chandler, AZ	42	72
↗	59	Mesa, AZ	41	74
↘	60	Tucson, AZ	72	42

2025 Rankings

2024-2025 TREND	OVERALL RANK		PERSONAL HEALTH RANK	COMMUNITY + ENVIRONMENT RANK
↘	61	Charlotte, NC	29	88
↘	62	New Orleans, LA	78	31
↗	63	Phoenix, AZ	39	84
↘	64	Riverside, CA	54	71
↘	65	Los Angeles, CA	40	86
↘	66	Durham, NC	38	87
↘	67	Baltimore, MD	86	33
→	68	Jacksonville, FL	75	50
↗	69	Fresno, CA	59	75
↘	70	Laredo, TX	70	61
↘	71	Nashville, TN	60	76
↘	72	St. Louis, MO	93	26
↘	73	Stockton, CA	64	69
↗	74	Gilbert, AZ	43	95
↘	75	Garland, TX	51	93
↗	76	Chesapeake, VA	73	70
↗	77	Fort Wayne, IN	67	78
↗	78	Toledo, OH	97	29
↘	79	Virginia Beach, VA	84	46
↘	80	Fort Worth, TX	57	97

2024-2025 TREND	OVERALL RANK		PERSONAL HEALTH RANK	COMMUNITY + ENVIRONMENT RANK
↗	81	Henderson, NV	85	48
→	82	Kansas City, MO	92	39
↗	83	Arlington, TX	65	91
↘	84	Irving, TX	69	89
↘	85	El Paso, TX	77	77
↗	86	Corpus Christi, TX	80	65
↗	87	Las Vegas, NV	87	68
↗	88	Louisville, KY	91	64
↘	89	Greensboro, NC	89	66
↗	90	Tulsa, OK	98	49
↗	91	Bakersfield, CA	82	90
↗	92	Indianapolis, IN	83	92
↗	93	Port St. Lucie, FL	66	100
↘	94	San Antonio, TX	90	85
↘	95	Detroit, MI	100	54
↗	96	Wichita, KS	95	79
↗	97	Memphis, TN	96	80
↘	98	North Las Vegas, NV	88	99
↘	99	Lubbock, TX	94	98
→	100	Oklahoma City, OK	99	96

🔑 KEY

		1ST QUARTILE
		2ND QUARTILE
		3RD QUARTILE
		4TH QUARTILE

→ ↗ ↘ CHANGE IN OVERALL RANK COMPARED TO 2024

Data Sources

The Fitness Index uses a variety of data sources to calculate the annual scores and rankings.
· 2023 American Community Survey — U.S. Census
· 2021-2023 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, County Data — CDC
· 2023 Environmental Protection Agency
· 2022 Map the Meal Gap — Feeding America®
· 2022 National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
· 2024 Smart Growth America/ National Complete Streets Coalition
· 2024 Trust for the Public Land — City Park Facts and ParkScore®
· 2024 Walk Score® and Bike Score®