


## THE CONTRIBUTION of URBAN DESIGN to the WELL-BEING of SOCIETY and ACTIVE LIVING

### Kentsel Tasarımın Toplumun Refahına ve Aktif Yaşamaya Katkıları

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#### ÖZ

Kentsel tasarım, kentsel alanlarda arazi kullanımı, ulaşım ve yapı çevre gibi somut çevreyi yaratma ve etkileme sürecidir. İyi yapılandırılmış bir kentsel çevre, hareketi günlük rutinin içerisine dâhil eden, fiziksel aktiviteyi artırabilen ve toplum sağlığına faydalı bir yaşam tarzı olan aktif yaşamı teşvik etme şansına sahiptir. Ancak kentleşme, aktif yaşama veya sosyalleşmeye uygun olmayan yapı çevrelerin artmasına neden olmuş, bu da halk sağlığı üzerinde olumsuz etkilere yol açmıştır. Buna karşılık yönetimdeki kişiler, mimarlar, kentsel tasarımcılar ve yetkililer, çevre dostu büyümeyi ve sosyal refahı teşvik eden kentsel tasarım çözümlerini araştırmaktadır. Kentsel tasarımın şehirlerin somut çevresi üzerindeki etkisi küçümsenemez. Kentsel tasarım, binaları ve ulaşımı tasarlamının yanı sıra, sosyal etkileşimi kolaylaştıran, sağlıklı yaşamı teşvik eden ve tüm toplumun refahını artıran kamusal alanları şekillendirir. Kentsel tasarım, toplum sağlığını teşvik eden ve aktif bir yaşam tarzını kolaylaştıran ortamlar inşa etmeye katkı sağlar. Bu makale kentsel tasarımın toplumsal refah ve aktif yaşam üzerindeki etkisini eleştirel bir şekilde değerlendirmeyi amaçlamaktadır.

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#### ABSTRACT

Urban design is the process of creating and influencing the tangible environment such as land use, transportation, and the built environment in urban areas. A well-structured urban environment has the opportunity to promote active living, a lifestyle that incorporates movement into the daily routine, can increase physical activity, and is beneficial to public health. However, urbanization has led to an increase in built environments that are unsuitable for active living or socialization, leading to negative effects on public health. In response, government officials, architects, urban designers and officials are exploring urban design solutions that promote environmentally friendly growth and social well-being. The impact of urban design on the concrete environment of cities cannot be underestimated. In addition to designing buildings and transportation, urban design shapes public spaces that facilitate social interaction, promote healthy living, and improve the well-being of the entire community. Urban design contributes to building environments that promote community health and facilitate an active lifestyle. This article aims to critically evaluate the impact of urban design on social well-being and active living.

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REVIEW ARTICLE / DERLEME MAKALESİ

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Each urban area has a unique personality and space for expansion, making them diverse and distinct. Urban planning must therefore be tailored to the particular features of every town, its environs, and its location. Each endeavour must be customized to the environment, objective, and location. The objective is to create a vibrant and lively urban environment for the benefit of society, as opposed to a dull and inert one ([Chow et al., 2016](#)). This strategy may lead to the expansion of a populous city. Even though regional and local objectives should be considered, construction and design should be primarily based on the nature and skills of the specific location. It is essential to create an ambiance that is open, adaptable, and inviting, keeping note of the general character of the location, to establish an active and energized city with attractive athletics and mobility spaces. The success of an endeavour is contingent upon its execution, location, and objective. To ensure that the setting, design, and implementation are optimal for every task and function, it is necessary to investigate the circumstances in depth.

According to [Zhang and Qian \(2024\)](#), acknowledge that urban green spaces hold significance beyond their aesthetic appeal; they are essential for a city's resilience to ecological, social, and economic disruptions. By embracing this perspective, cities can foster environments where green and blue spaces actively enhance the overall well-being of urban residents, rather than existing as isolated patches of nature. Nevertheless research shows that urban green and blue spaces (parks, greenway paths, forests, rivers, lakes) improve the physical and mental health of the population, the time required to spend in these spaces to achieve those benefits, the type and quality of these spaces are still unclear ([Hunter et al., 2023](#)). Urban blue and green spaces are part of the urban ecosystem. In addition to the important benefits they provide such as air filtering, oxygen supply, water purification, pollination and carbon storage, they also have benefits such as encouraging physical activity, ensuring social cohesion, and improving the health and well-being of the population ([Sunita et al., 2023](#); [Tate et al., 2024](#)).

Urban planning should include creating urban areas that can accommodate new categories of sports and recreation while incorporating both autonomous and controlled activities into the existing urban framework. The number of sport and movement options accessible at street level increases the possibility of participation and the creation of different types of active lives in the urban environment. This challenge must be resolved with techniques that also allow for the optimal incorporation of new activities and movement types. Integrating open urban spaces with natural or cultural green and blue spaces, offering active and passive recreation

opportunities in public parks, and participating in activities such as spending time outdoors and on walking trails are examples of innovative activities that are naturally incorporated into urban spaces at various levels. In this study the contribution of urban design to the welfare of the society and active living has been evaluated from different perspectives.

### **1.1. Brief Explanation of the Urban Design**

In general, urban design entails examining, organizing, and shaping urban forms and spaces to develop new cities or redesign existing ones based on the needs of their residents ([Zhang et al., 2024](#)). Urban design is the practice of efficiently arranging cities, villages, and other urban areas. The goal is to maximize the performance, sustainability, and allure of urban spaces. This can be accomplished through strategies such as the creation of safe and readily available pedestrian routes, the provision of verdant areas for leisure and relaxation, and the design of houses that complement their environs ([Godbey et al., 2005](#)). Effective urban design ought to encourage physical activity, well-being, and involvement in society while assuring the economic development of the urban area. People can exist in healthy, environmentally friendly, and liveable environments with careful urban planning.

### **1.2 The Importance of Urban Design in Shaping the Physical Environment**

Urban design is essential to the formation of the physical surroundings. It refers to a design approach that takes into account the layout, organization, and interconnection of a city's resources, such as transportation networks, structures, gathering places, and natural resources. Effective urban design concepts can enhance people's perception of well-being by promoting visual appeal and creating a pleasant environment ([Nguyen et al., 2021](#)). As it impacts elements such as accommodation, transportation, and having access to daily necessities, urban design may encourage healthier living practices. The development of walking and biking neighbourhoods is one of the primary advantages of effective urban design. By constructing footpaths and bike lanes, urban planners promote active transportation, thereby increasing the likelihood that residents will be physically active and involved in their community. This strategy promotes improved health outcomes, such as a decrease in diabetes, heart disease, and various lifestyle-related ailments. Moreover, urban planning can enhance social well-being by offering people access to greenery and social places. This not only facilitates social interaction but also provides a feeling of sharing and belonging ([Weijs-Perrée et al., 2021](#)).

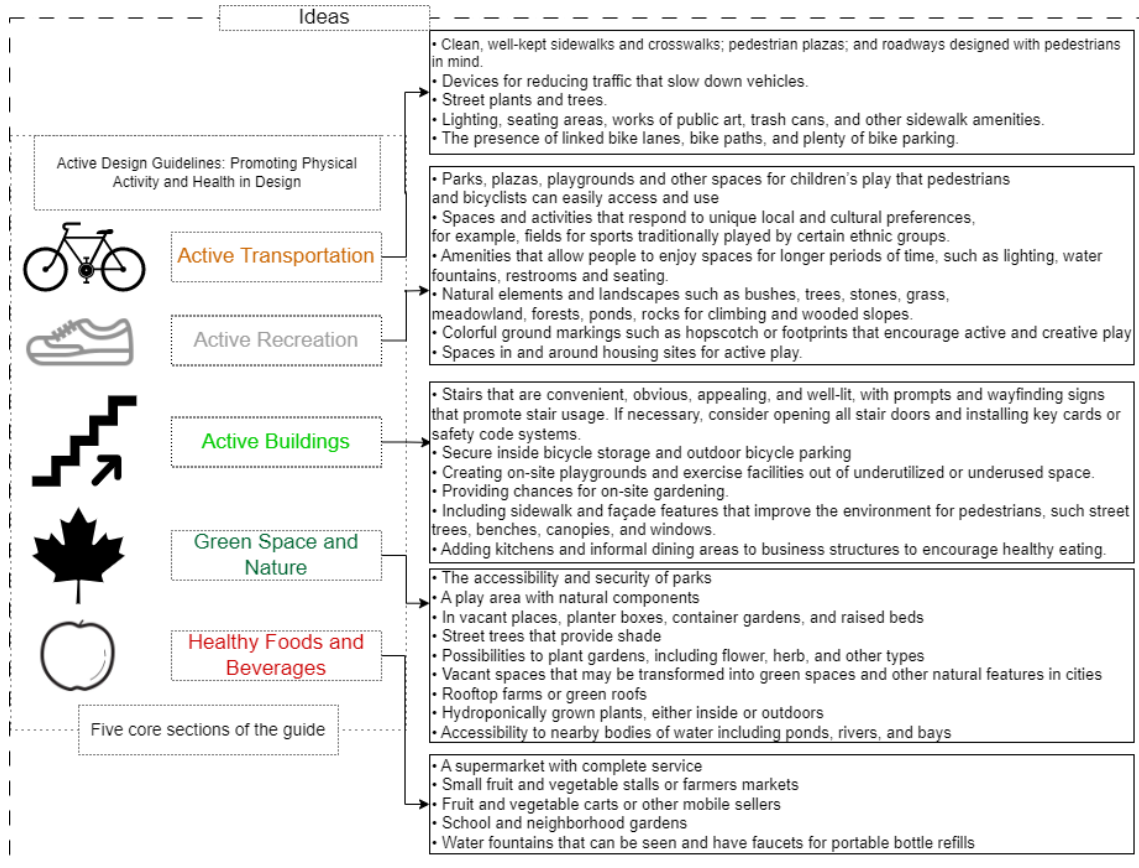
Urban design is a crucial element in the formation of an environment. Its principles facilitate the development of viable and sustainable neighbourhoods, and its objectives promote

health, fitness, and interaction among people. Urban planning, therefore, has to focus on urban design as a means of augmenting the standard of life for urban residents. It enables cities to improve the general well-being of their residents, while also enhancing the environment and boosting the economy, by increasing the availability of essential amenities and public transportation.

## **2. THE IMPACT OF URBAN DESIGN ON PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND HEALTH**

Physical activity and well-being are substantially influenced by urban design. Studies have demonstrated a correlation between well-organized urban environments that promote biking, walking, and transit use and increased physical activity, and improved health outcomes. It has also been demonstrated that the utilization of greenery, like parks and playgrounds, increases physical activity and improves mental health ([Burke et al., 2009](#); [Vegaraju and Amiri, 2024](#)). In contrast, inadequately planned urban environments which prioritize vehicular use and hazardous pedestrian facilities have been linked to lower levels of physical activity, higher rates of obesity, and chronic diseases. Ideas on how we can add active design to cities are given under five main headings and sub-items in [Figure 1](#). These are active transport, recreation and buildings, green buildings and nature, and finally healthy food and beverages. Active transportation (walking and cycling); can be achieved with safe bicycle and pedestrian paths, elements that force vehicle traffic to slow down, night lighting, the presence of urban furniture such as garbage bins and benches, bicycle parking areas, and street afforestation that makes the activity more enjoyable. Active recreation; can be reached with activities that meet cultural demands, accessible green areas for cyclists and pedestrians, lighting, water feature, seating areas, natural elements (stones, gravel, grass, rocks, etc.), colourful surface materials, and playgrounds close to settlements. Active buildings can be reached with elements that encourage the use of stairs, bicycle parking areas inside and around the building, walking areas around the building, kitchens that encourage healthy eating, hobby gardening opportunities and exercise areas. Green space and nature can be included in active design with elements such as accessibility and safety of parks, flower gardens, and roof gardens, parks consisting of natural elements, street afforestation, and the inclusion of the water element into the area. Healthy food and beverages can be included in active design by planning in the area with farmers' markets, mobile vendors offering fresh vegetables and fruits, school and neighbourhood gardens, and water fountains.

In general, urban design possesses the potential to influence activity levels as well as wellness outcomes, and urban planners must prioritize advancing the practice of active living (Carlson et al., 2011).



**Figure 1.** How can we make cities places where people can improve their social health and wellbeing? (Original, 2024)

**Şekil 1.** Şehirleri insanların sosyal sağlıklarını ve refahlarını geliştirebilecekleri yerler haline nasıl getirebiliriz? (Orjinal, 2024)

## 2.1. How Walkability, Bike-Friendliness and Public Transit Systems Can Encourage People To Be More Active

Countries and cities globally are now spending on facilities and design solutions that promote mobility, encourage cycling and provide reliable public transport. It has been stated in many scientific studies that (Abraham et al., 2010; Luka, 2023; Li et al., 2024) the walkability of streets, the simplicity of cycling and active transport (walking and cycling) are important factors of an active and healthy lifestyle. Cities such as Amsterdam and Copenhagen are renowned for their extensive bicycle networks, which enable residents to travel comfortably to work, parks, and other locations. Typically, these networks include separated bike lanes, abundant biking parking spaces, and bicycle-friendly signals for traffic (Godbey et al., 2005).

Similarly, walkability involves designing public spaces such as parks, streets, and footpaths to encourage strolling. This may include secure crosswalks, adequate illumination, shady areas, and seating. Moreover, a high-quality public transportation system can promote an active lifestyle by facilitating links across communities, workplace centres, and facilities. In congested urban areas, public transportation can help reduce automobile usage, thereby reducing greenhouse gas emissions and air pollution. Accessibility to safe and high-quality sidewalks, bike lanes, and public transportation may additionally decrease social and economic disparities and strengthen community cohesion. Adding walkability, bike-friendliness, and transit options into the urban design can promote more sustainable, equitable, and habitable cities while encouraging people to lead more active and healthful lifestyles ([Dobson & Gilroy, 2009](#)).

## **2.2. Contributing to Health and Well-Being through Sport and Physical Activity**

The architecture and design of our homes and places of employment have a substantial effect on our ability to remain well-rounded and active. A place surrounded by urban green and blue spaces can help every individual discover an environment where they can be active. According to [World Health Organization \(2024\)](#), according to recent statistics from throughout the world, 81% of adolescents and 1 in 3 adults do not get enough physical activity. If we wish to address this urgent issue, we must ensure that the sites where people devote their time encourage more physical activity. This is how Active Design, an innovative collection of aesthetic principles intended to promote increased movement through proper layout and planning, is presented. A collection of planning and construction guidelines known as "Active Design" encourages physical activity. Walking to the shop or making a photocopy are examples of how active design incorporates physical activity into a building, landscape, or urban planning ([Wikipedia, 2024](#)).

With a focus on increasing physical activity through activity and sporting activities, the ten principles of Active Design have a powerful tool for fostering close and ongoing collaboration among the design and health industries. By adopting an active lifestyle, individuals can work together to carry out the "All People Active, All Day" initiative's guiding principles and encourage architects and planners to design environments that make physical activity an effortless and enjoyable part of daily life. A concise overview of Active Design examines new methods to promote a lifestyle transition toward one that is healthier and more active by examining the form and arrangement of our living environments ([Dobson & Gilroy, 2009](#)).

Effective design should make it simpler and more alluring for people to choose to be physically active, thereby enhancing the standard of existence within neighbourhoods and building.

### **3. THE TEN CONCEPTS OF ACTIVE ARCHITECTURE**

By taking from the method of urban design and actual-life instances that encourage settings that provide people and communities the best chance of living healthy and active lives. The Active Design Concepts apply similarly to the planning of novel locations and the improvement of present places and may be used for a wide range of growth types across a wide range of situations. Even while not all Active Design concepts will be applicable or acceptable in all situations and places, implementing as many of them as feasible will help maximize chances for active and healthy living.

#### **3.1. Activity for All**

The significance of having accessible and welcoming places that encourage physical exercise for all societal age groups and demographic groupings. To do this, obstacles related to cost, accessibility, and culture must be removed, especially for disadvantaged populations who may find it difficult to access opportunities for physical activity. To provide an example for young people's lives and encourage intergenerational exercise, the research emphasizes the need of establishing physical activity habits in the early years. Given the population's tendency to become older and the advantages of regular physical exercise for health and well-being, also how crucial it is to provide older people's suitable chances for physical activity. The section underlines the need of providing opportunities for action for people of all ages and demographics, without placing any restrictions on who may use sports facilities and public areas. The significance of ensuring that everybody, even those having impairments, can participate in physical exercise. To guarantee that everyone may engage equally in everyday activities, especially in sporting venues and public areas, inclusive design concepts ought to be applied. To address recognized disparities and promote increased involvement from certain groups, specific interventions could be needed. The proper Active Design measures should be used in the correct locations at appropriate times and solutions should be tailored to the requirements of the surrounding communities. To prevent disputes and take into consideration the requirements of susceptible pedestrians, every action should be well thought out. To encourage physical exercise, a variety of institutions, including companies and employment centres, may also promote active transport options.

The following are suggestions for excellent practices in promoting active living in all neighbourhoods:

- To promote physical exercise, provide a variety of local recreational, sporting, and play areas.
- Manage buildings and outdoor areas to promote a variety of activities for people of diverse sexes, ages, and cultural backgrounds.
- Encourage elderly persons to participate by providing facilities and opportunities for leisurely activities.
- Increase chances for physical exercise in less fortunate communities or those where specific health problems are known to exist.
- To reach every member of society and to focus on difficult-to-reach groups, use a variety of promotion activities and tactics that are focused on peers.
- Provide all facilities with high-quality water fountains, public restrooms, and adequate changing areas.
- Encourage neighbourhood organizations to create and maintain play areas, expand the amount of secure outdoor play areas, and provide chances for kids with and without disabilities to play together.

### **3.2. Walkable Neighbourhoods**

The advantages of developing walkable neighbourhoods where houses, educational institutions, social centers, work places, parks, and sporting venues are all placed near together. This encourages active transportation and lessens dependency on private vehicles, making it simpler for individuals to maintain a healthy lifestyle by biking and walking. Areas should be planned to emphasize walking and biking, with important amenities placed nearby for ease of access.

- Wider pathways in high streets should provide adequate room for users to sit down and go about without feeling crowded.
- It is necessary to design a linear park with recreational pathways for active travel, sitting places, play areas, and lovely planting.



- The location of playgrounds and recreational spaces should be near enough to the neighbourhood to allow for simple access on foot.

To promote walkable neighbourhoods, it is crucial that various land uses such as residences, schools, retail, community centers, and open spaces are within 1 km of each other. However, there should be a greater variety of recreational opportunities and different land uses in areas that can be reached by bicycle within a 5 km radius. In this way, homogeneous and uniform land uses should be avoided in large areas that can be reached by bicycle or public transport. This strategy can create a network of interconnected walking and cycling routes between neighbourhoods and contribute to a more enjoyable time for students and employees walking to school and workplaces.

### **3.3. Linked Pathways for Walking and Biking**

By providing paths for walking and biking that are direct, integrated, safe, and well-maintained that link all points of interest, the goal is to emphasize active transport. The routes' quality and consistency have a direct influence on how appealing they are for pedestrians and cyclists alike. To promote walking and biking, obstructions to their movement should be carefully removed, and networks for both modes of transportation should be integrated. Both expert and novice cyclists have distinct needs, but both want safe routes that are well-marked, well-signposted, and given priority over private vehicles. In addition to encouraging active transportation, creating a linked and secure network of biking and walking paths also opens up leisure options. These possibilities may be institutionalized by creating specified routes of a certain length utilizing signs, like the greenling running routes.

A hierarchy of mobility should include wheelchair users and pedestrians at the top of the list, followed by bicycles, public transportation, then private automobiles, to encourage active travel. To offer accessibility for all sorts of walkers and reduce confrontations with cycling, pedestrian paths should be planned and maintained. Buses and railways should be preferred over private automobiles. Since bicycle transportation is environmentally friendly, its route should be planned as an alternative to walking paths. Accessible and safe routes and locations should be created for private cars, but the important advantages provided by public transportation should not be ignored.

- Activity may be done on footways that serve many functions. These changes may be made more obvious using signage.

- Leisure routes are walking, cycling, and dog-walking trails that may be utilized for a variety of purposes.

- Dedicated bike lanes with curb demarcation should be installed to increase cycling safety.

- The layout of the streets may be changed to make cycling and walking more accessible. Creating "shared surface" streets, where people and cars share the same area, is one way to do this.

- Master plans should be supported by linked paths for walking and biking.

- There are several ways to create a pleasant atmosphere for walking and biking.

### **3.4. Colocation of Facilities within Communities**

Combining commercial and recreational spaces and other related uses in one location to encourage connected trips and increase physical exercise opportunities can benefit all segments of society. This produces a variety of activities and opportunities that reduce the number of journeys required, increase business for nearby organizations and encourage social communication. This mixed-use area can connect to walking and cycling networks, making it easier to reach points of interest for active transportation. Additionally, locating sports facilities next to other common places such as healthcare facilities can also increase the chance of physical exercise.

- Sharing space community activities services: a prime instance would be an indoor swimming pool and fitness center next to an all-weather playing field and a playground in a nearby leisure zone.

- The traditional centers of towns, cities, and villages provide examples of the shared space of users and the advantages of connected excursions made by active transportation.

- Services for the community, such as a primary school, stores, houses, and a community center, can be co-located.

Key uses like schools, businesses, workplaces, and houses should be concentrated in local surroundings to encourage connected excursions and create dynamic hubs. The creation of welcoming public places with seats, multipurpose landscaping, and visually appealing public areas should be prioritized. To promote social contact, co-located facilities should be designated focal points of walking and cycling networks. Sports facilities should be placed in conspicuous

areas of the neighbourhood so that people are aware of them and may use them as hubs for social interaction.

### **3.5. A System of Open Spaces with Many Uses**

The city should develop a network of multipurpose open spaces to encourage a variety of activities, such as sports, relaxation, and play. Additionally, these areas have to include fertile landscapes, woodlands, and sustainable drainage systems. Cities, towns, and villages are supported by a network of green and blue spaces that also offers venues for both official and informal activities. To properly use resources, it highlights the need for multi-use of open space. Green and blue areas and connections to current networks must be included in new construction. It should provide access to recreational routes through parks and forests and include areas for rest, play and entertainment.

### **3.6. Durable Roads and Public Spaces of High Quality**

A wider variety of users and community activities, including markets, public art, outdoor concerts, sporting events, and other pop-up events that promote physical activity, should be supported by excellent roads and outdoor areas. The scale, purpose, layout, and style of outdoor spaces must all be considered to draw in a variety of users, provide high-quality areas that may serve as valuable community resources, and help to establish a sense of place. The need to prioritize the function of streets as "places" beyond their function as "movement corridors", to prioritize pedestrians and cyclists over cars, and to support everyday uses such as children playing on the roads should be taken into account.

- Roads may be redesigned to provide better access for bicyclists and pedestrians while keeping automobiles through lanes.
- A good public area may provide people room to linger, fostering liveliness.
- More space for active movement is provided by widened walkways while keeping automobile access.
- High-quality outdoor areas offer a venue for social events and gatherings for everyone.

It is important to create public spaces that can host various celebrations and events and at the same time guarantee safe access for all users, especially vulnerable pedestrians. The design of streets should be straightforward, taking into account community and stakeholder comments and new public areas should be adaptive to shifting trends. All open spaces and roadways must

be constructed with sturdy, high-quality materials, and sidewalk arrangements must not result in congestion or impediments.

### **3.7. Acceptable Architecture**

Appropriate infrastructure needs to be provided to promote sport and physical exercise in a variety of situations, such as workplaces, gyms and public spaces. It is crucial to address both general and specific design issues to encourage active lifestyle choices. Infrastructure such as public restrooms, water fountains, storage, seating, Wi-Fi access, and showers can influence users' decisions about what physical activity to engage in. Cafes and other retail outlets can also encourage use of the spaces. For users, especially the elderly, the provision of seating areas, public amenities and changing rooms can create an environment that is both attractive and safe.

People may be more likely to utilize a facility or area for sports and physical exercise if there is quick, dependable Wi-Fi connectivity. To encourage handicapped individuals to utilize the area, storage and charging stations for wheelchairs and mobility scooters are also essential. The presence of excellent baths, storage spaces, and changing areas at work may promote physical exercise, sports, and active travel at lunchtime. To help people move simply and securely between public and private places, accessible signage and a robust navigation system should be used in all locations. There should be a designated area and facilities reserved for dogs to prevent conflicts with other users of the open space.

### **3.8. Active Structures**

The public's levels of physical activity may be significantly impacted by the interior and exterior architecture of buildings. Buildings should be planned with chances for physical exercise in mind, such as encouraging taking advantage of steps, providing areas for sporting events, and providing safe bike parking and amenities for active transportation.

- Architectural features like prominent stairs with alternate step-free access may improve the look of buildings and activity levels.

- Stylish bicycle parking that blends in with the architecture of the building; covered parking that protects bikes; and active building frontages that give views and increase security can be designed.

- Staircases may provide a noticeable and appealing Active Design element.

- Business center with an integrated ramp for bicycles can be designed.

- Standing desks may aid in reducing workplace sedentary behaviour.

Buildings should be linked to biking and walking paths, with these forms of transportation being given preference over automobiles, to encourage physical activity. Elevators should be discouraged in favour of stairways that are roomy, clean, and appealing. Ingenious architectural elements like feature stairs and bike access ramps may help promote exercise, as can the inclusion of sports facilities in bigger structures. Aside from providing employees with showers and lockers, buildings should also provide bikers with the necessary amenities, such as safe bike parking at the entrance of the structure. Parking for pushchairs might encourage parents and kids to stroll. Workplaces should also have the proper wheelchair accessibility features.

### **3.9. Supervisors, Servicing, Observation, and Assessment**

Continuous administration, maintenance, and viability should be taken into account while designing playgrounds and public areas. To determine the effectiveness of Active Design activities and to guide future efforts, evaluation and tracking should be done. For an activity to be safe and entertaining as well as to provide an appealing image, high-quality management and upkeep of public areas and amenities are essential. Plans for new buildings or areas should take long-term maintenance plans into account and establish financing sources for effective administration. To foster a feeling of ownership and kinship between places and the local community, communities should be engaged in the continuous administration of facilities.

Management and maintenance are of great importance in the development and maintenance of sports facilities and public areas. The need for long-term management plans needs to be emphasized to ensure that these areas are well-maintained, safe and flexible enough to meet changing demands. Collaboration between stakeholders and the neighbourhood community is essential for effective management and maintenance. Local people should be consulted to learn about the needs and objectives of the community, as well as to encourage community use of the facility.

### **3.10 Support of the Activity and Local Organizations**

Regional organizations and participants, such as local communities, council members, companies, and larger organizations are crucial to the success of any effort to promote active living. Partnerships inside and across organizations are crucial to maintaining activity and resources. Social attitudes regarding physical exercise also need to alter. The sentence also

implies that social media and technology may be utilized to keep tabs on individual performance, spread information, and promote participation in public places.

In all of their roles and policies, governments and partners should give priority to encouraging sport and physical exercise. To include the community, facility managers should promote the usage of public areas and plan activities. Local populations should be aware of the sports and physical exercise opportunities around them as well as the health advantages of doing so. To advertise facilities, draw customers, and foster collaborative communities, social media, cutting-edge technology, and online platforms should be used. Local groups, communities, and the broader community should honour and encourage volunteers and residents.

#### **4. THE ROLE OF URBAN DESIGN IN PROMOTING SOCIAL INTERACTION AND REDUCING SOCIAL ISOLATION**

Urban design plays a crucial role in fostering social interaction and decreasing social isolation. A city with wide open spaces, attractive avenues, and readily available public transit may motivate citizens to interact, socialize, and join together. Urban design can generate human-friendly spaces that encourage active living, such as biking and walking instead of driving or participating in community gatherings. For example, open parks and plazas enable residents to participate in different events such as athletics, picnicking, concerts, and festivals. With benches, shelter, and comfortable illumination, pedestrian-friendly streetscapes can serve as informal social centers where people can appreciate nature and interact with their neighbors ([Weijs-Perrée et al., 2021](#)). Urban design can also improve social interaction by fostering diversity, inclusiveness, and a sense of community. Mixed-use projects that merge dwellings, businesses, and public facilities, for instance, may promote a feeling of location and being part of something, making it simpler for neighbours to socialize and get to know one another. Likewise, public art, murals, and cultural events can provide opportunities for individuals to appreciate and celebrate the diversity of their perspectives and values. The urban design possesses an inherent ability to influence social dynamics through the provision of physical facilities and open spaces that facilitate social interaction, enhance the well-being of the community, and cultivate a feeling of community and social cohesion. Thus, an efficient urban environment can increase social value, which corresponds to the social connections, standards, and trust that are developed among citizens, thereby enhancing their standard of living and urban sustainability.

## 5. CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, urban design plays a crucial role in fostering an environment that promotes healthy living and enhances societal well-being. The quality of life enjoyed by urban residents is determined by the design elements used in the built environment. A community with navigable streets, secure bike paths, and easily accessible public transportation networks encourages residents to be physically active, thereby promoting a healthy lifestyle. The urban design also improves access to natural and communal spaces conducive to leisure activities that foster social interactions and personal bonds. The aesthetic value of a well-designed urban landscape reduces tension and improves mental health. The provision of public spaces and parks for people of all ages facilitates social gatherings and promotes social cohesion as a whole. Community gardens, urban forests, and green roofs promote sustainable living while reducing the urban heat island effect and enhancing air quality. An optimal urban environment should be accessible to everyone, regardless of physical ability or socioeconomic status, because it plays a crucial role in promoting equity and inclusion. When designing an urban environment, the need for diversity, sustainability, and safety of the community, as well as its effects on the larger environment, should be taken into account. Urban design policymakers must ensure that their plans adhere to these tenets while advancing the public interest. In this way, urban designers can make positive and meaningful contributions to the lives of urban residents by fostering their well-being.

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