

AIA's 10 Principles for Livable Communities

1. Design on a Human Scale

Compact, pedestrian-friendly communities allow residents to walk to shops, services, cultural resources, and jobs and can reduce traffic congestion and benefit people's health.



Good sidewalks create an environment where people feel comfortable walking.

2. Provide Choices

People want variety in housing, shopping, recreation, transportation, and employment. Variety creates lively neighborhoods and accommodates residents in different stages of their lives.



Farmers' markets bring a community together, provide healthy food, and support the local economy.

3. Encourage Mixed-Use Development

Integrating different land uses and varied building types creates vibrant, pedestrian-friendly, diverse communities.



First-floor retail and commercial uses, like this restaurant at the base of an office building, contribute to street life.

4. Preserve Urban Centers

Restoring, revitalizing, and infilling urban centers take advantage of existing streets, services, and buildings and avoid the need for new infrastructure. This helps to curb sprawl and promote stability for city neighborhoods.



A former auto shop is converted to a neighborhood supermarket.

5. Vary Transportation Options

Giving people the option of walking, biking, and using public transit, in addition to driving, reduces traffic congestion, protects the environment, and encourages physical activity.



Bike lanes and sidewalks are important elements of transportation infrastructure.

6. Build Vibrant Public Spaces

Citizens need welcoming, well-defined public places to stimulate face-to-face interaction, collectively celebrate and mourn, encourage civic participation, admire public art, and gather for public events.



A small canal flows through the Lurie Garden at Chicago's Millennium Park.

7. Create a Neighborhood Identity

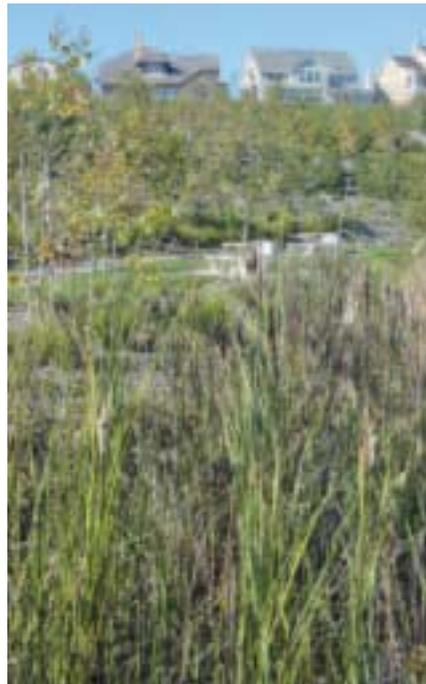
A "sense of place" gives neighborhoods a unique character, enhances the walking environment, and creates pride in the community.



The arch in Washington Square Park in New York City makes this an instantly recognizable place.

8. Protect Environmental Resources

A well-designed balance of nature and development preserves natural systems, protects waterways from pollution, reduces air pollution, and protects property values.



Wetlands help control storm water runoff in Ladera Ranch, California.

9. Conserve Landscapes

Open space, farms, and wildlife habitat are essential for environmental, recreational, and cultural reasons.



The Bay Trail waterfront promenade along Chrissy Field in San Francisco.

10. Design Matters

Design excellence is the foundation of successful and healthy communities.



Frank Gehry's amphitheater at Chicago's Millennium Park.