



WALKABLE SALT LAKE CITY



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

“ As we grow and our city becomes denser and more urbanized, we must ensure that our community is walkable and provides access to amenities that contribute to our quality of life.

- Plan Salt Lake (2015)

WHAT IS WALKABLE SLC?

Walkability is an important factor in promoting public health, reducing environmental impact, and supporting the local economy. One key variable in walkability is the proximity to essential amenities—people are more likely to walk when everyday services like grocery stores, schools, parks, and public transportation are close to where they live.

Walkable SLC is a data-driven mapping tool developed by SLC Planning to better understand and visualize the city's current access to amenities that support a high quality of life, like grocery stores, parks, and schools. By analyzing the access to amenities at a city-wide and neighborhood level, staff can identify areas that are more or less accessible than others. This approach supports planning efforts by highlighting areas where increased access to amenities may improve quality of life, promote alternative transit options, and reduce reliance on cars.

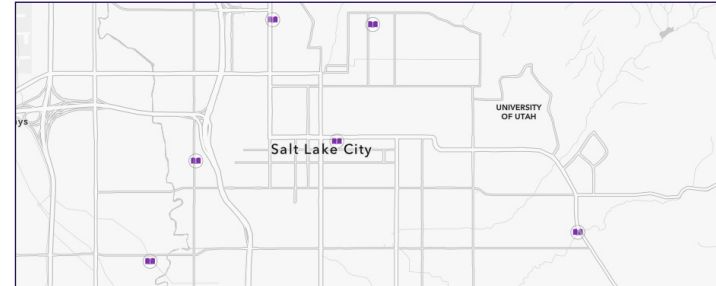
WALKABILITY MAP

HOW WAS THE WALKABILITY MAP CREATED?

The Walkability Heat Map identifies areas of the city with the greatest variety of amenity types within walking distance. The greater variety of amenities available in an area, the more walkable. Areas with a high variety of amenities are shown in bright yellow, while areas with less variety are represented in dark purple.

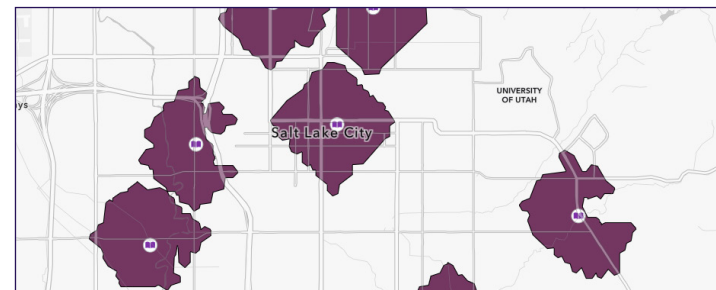
1. IDENTIFY AMENITY LOCATIONS

To determine the locations of existing amenities, our team collaborated with the City's business licensing division and analyzed zoning data. This process helped identify the precise locations of amenities like grocery stores, parks, schools, and other community resources to create a database cataloging amenities throughout the city.



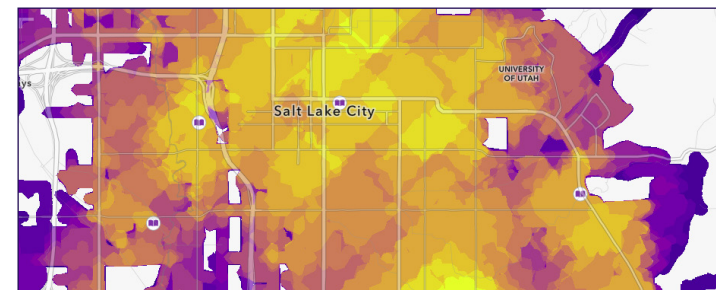
2. CREATE "WALKSHEDS"

Using the database of amenities, our team employed mapping software to visualize walking distances around each amenity. These "walksheds" represent the areas within which residents can easily walk to within 15 minutes to access a particular amenity.



3. OVERLAY WALKSHEDS

Once the walksheds were created for each amenity, our team combined them into a single layer on the map. This resulted in a heatmap that highlights areas, based on either city block or parcel, with the highest variety of accessible amenities providing a visual representation of where residents have the greatest access to services and resources.



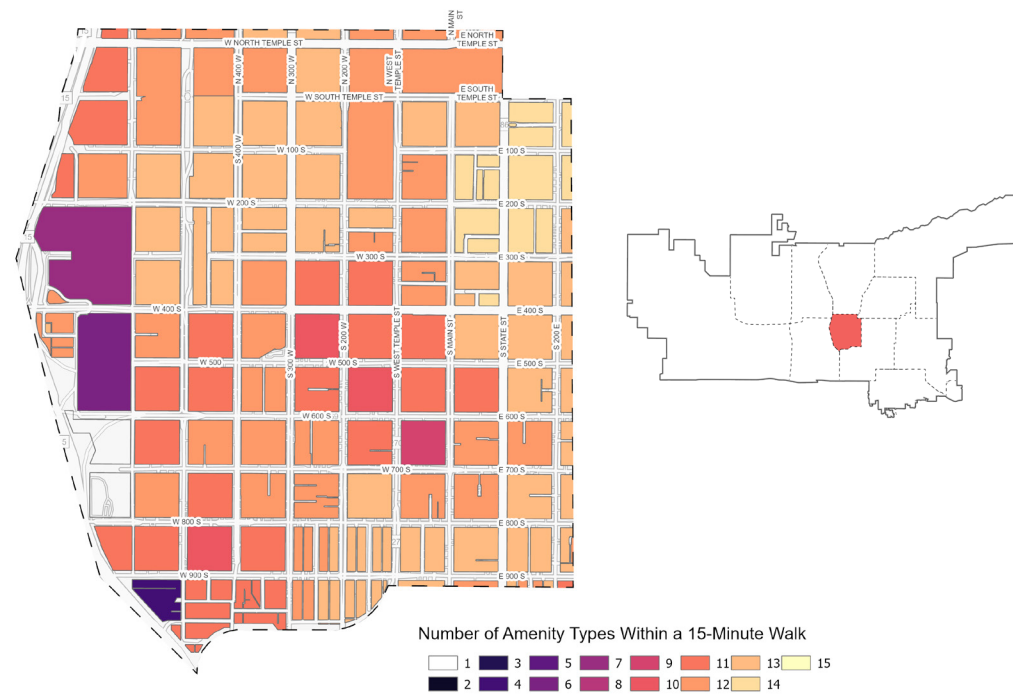
Walkability analysis is inherently complex, and multiple factors may influence the outcomes for any given neighborhood. While every effort has been made to utilize the most accurate and up-to-date data, the findings should be considered as general guidance rather than precise determinations. For additional information on each amenity category, see the "Identified Amenities" explanations at the end of this report.



Scan the QR code to visit the StoryMap.

View our website here:
www.bit.ly/4bfEQXQ

DOWNTOWN WALKABILITY ANALYSIS



PERCENTAGE REFERS TO TOTAL HOUSING UNITS WITH WALKABLE ACCESS TO AMENITIES



WALKABLE AMENITIES OVERVIEW

The majority of the Downtown Community's housing units are within a 15-minute walk of community amenities. There are only two amenities that are accessible to fewer than 50% of housing units within Downtown Salt Lake City: libraries and hospitals. These two amenities, in addition to schools, are the only amenities that are less accessible than the city-wide average.

Downtown Salt Lake City features some of the most walkable blocks in the entire city, with several amenities offered to 100% of housing units within a 15-minute walk. This includes childcare, offices, parks, recreation, restaurants, retail, and TRAX stops. The Downtown area also has the highest concentration of amenities in the city, making it a highly desirable location for residents.

Policies that support increasing residential density in Downtown Salt Lake City could further enhance accessibility to amenities, while also improving affordability. Higher residential density would expand the percentage of housing units within walking distance of essential services. It would also increase the demand for amenities that currently fall below the city-wide average, such as libraries, hospitals, and schools, helping to create a more vibrant and well-rounded community.

CRITICAL AMENITY GAPS

Downtown Salt Lake City has very few amenity gaps, with the most significant being access to hospitals. While several transit options are available to bring residents to hospitals near the University of Utah and beyond the city, a new downtown hospital has been proposed by Intermountain Health at approximately 800 South and State Street. This new facility would fill the gap for many downtown residents, improving access to hospital care within the core of the city.

HOUSING UNITS WITH WALKABLE ACCESS TO AMENITIES

Amenities	City-wide	Downtown	Difference
Bus Stops	98.3%	100.0%	+1.7%
Childcare	90.7%	100.0%	+9.2%
Grocery Stores	81.0%	96.8%	+15.8%
Healthcare	91.0%	99.8%	+8.8%
Hospitals	31.4%	0.0%	-31.4%
Libraries	41.1%	35.1%	-6.0%
Offices	96.7%	100.0%	+3.3%
Parks	98.7%	100.0%	+1.3%
Pharmacies	77.6%	94.6%	+16.9%
Recreation	90.6%	100.0%	+9.4%
Restaurants	96.0%	100.0%	+4.0%
Retail	94.6%	100.0%	+5.4%
Schools	93.9%	91.8%	-2.1%
Trails	82.1%	99.1%	+17.0%
TRAX Stops	52.4%	100.0%	+47.6%

As Downtown Salt Lake is, and should continue to be, one of the most walkable areas in Utah, the focus for the neighborhood should be on increasing the amount of housing available, both market-rate and affordable. Expanding the housing supply will support the growing demand for amenities and ensure that more people can live in proximity to the services and opportunities that Downtown offers.

AMENITIES | IDENTIFIED



HEALTHCARE

This category includes mental health clinics, orthodontists, medical clinics, dental clinics, therapists, nursing homes, and other similar healthcare amenities.



TRAILS

This category includes natural trails, such as the Bonneville Shoreline Trail, and urban trails, like Parley's Trail.



RESTAURANTS

This category includes full-service restaurants and fast-food locations. Bars and cafes were not included unless licensed as a restaurant.



HOSPITALS

Hospitals include the Redwood Health Center, Sugar House Health Center, LDS Hospital, Salt Lake Regional Medical Center, Intermountain Salt Lake Clinic, the Veterans Affairs Medical Center, Shriners Hospital for Children, Primary Children's Medical Center, the University of Utah Medical Center, and the Huntsman Cancer Institute



PARKS

This category includes public parks maintained by Salt Lake City, like Liberty Park, Fairmont Park, and the Jordan River Parkway. The category also includes parks maintained by Salt Lake County (Tanner Park), the State of Utah (This is the Place Park), and the University of Utah (Red Butte Garden).



GROCERY STORES

This category includes only those stores offering year-round fresh food. This includes grocery stores like Smith's or Rancho Market, supermarkets like Target and Walmart, and warehouse stores like Costco and Sam's Club.



PHARMACIES

This category includes all licensed pharmacies within city boundaries. Examples include hospital pharmacies, grocery store pharmacies, and retail pharmacies.



RECREATION

This category includes recreation and entertainment businesses outside of parks and trails, such as movie theatres, escape rooms, and museums. This also includes outdoor venues, such as tennis courts and the Tracy Aviary.



RETAIL

This category includes licensed retail goods businesses such as clothing and jewelry stores, sporting goods stores, and bookstores.

AMENITIES | IDENTIFIED



OFFICES

This category includes businesses dedicated to office-related uses. This includes a wide variety of office types, such as law firms, financial services, real estate offices, corporate headquarters, and other general office uses.



CHILD CARE

Daycares and childcare centers were mapped based on all licensed daycare facilities. These facilities range in size from a small home daycare to larger preschools. Examples include The Foothill Montessori of Salt Lake and Fun Time Child Care.



BUS STOPS

The bus stop data includes all UTA bus stops. Data includes all stops within city boundaries, mapped at their physical location on either side of the street.



LIBRARIES

This category includes all public libraries in the Salt Lake City Public Library System.



SCHOOLS

This category includes public and private elementary, middle, and high schools. The category does not include colleges, universities, or trade schools.



TRAX STOPS

This category includes all UTA Trax Stations.

