

# INVESTIGATING SMART NEIGHBORHOOD DESIGN FOR PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES; A CASE STUDY OF SOUTH ATLANTA NEIGHBORHOOD, GEORGIA

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## 1. **ABSTRACT**

*Despite an increased awareness of the importance of physical activity (PA) and its associated health benefits, minority neighborhoods of color fare poorly in access to outdoor spaces conducive to a healthy lifestyle. Literature shows that residents in such neighborhoods are amongst the most predisposed to most chronic diseases (Wang et al., 2008). Few research studies pointed out correlations between smart growth principles and health benefits, economic development, and sustainable living (Daniels, 2001). This research investigates the condition of South Atlanta neighborhood and its impact on residents' level of PA. Specifically, the research examines habits and patterns of PA of the residents, as well as their preference of designed outdoor spaces that align with smart growth principles (SGP). Neighborhood observation and behavioral mapping were conducted in February 2020. Using quantitative and qualitative questions, an online survey was posted to the neighborhood Facebook page requesting residents' responses. The survey was sent several times for one week in April 2020 to elicit more participation. According to 21 respondents who participated in the study, more people are willing to lead physically active lives if their neighborhood design encourages it. Additionally, safety and social destinations were identified as primary factors determining how residents engage in PA in the outdoor space. In summary, the study shows clear possible physical and mental health benefits for South Atlanta neighborhood residents by being more physically active and that SGP offers possible benefits for improved quality of life.*

### 1.1 **Keywords:**

Smart, neighborhood, design, physical activity