USVI Walkability Action Institute

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Post-institute webinar

August 2017

WAI participants completing an ambitious walk audit near the hospital, St. Croix .

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The 2017 USVI Walkability Institute is made possible through a partnership with TEPHINET, a program of The Task Force for Global Health (TFGH), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and the USVI Department of Health (USVIDOH). Its contents are the sole responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the views of The Task Force for Global Health, Inc., TEPHINET, or the CDC.

Topics:

- The goal: from projects to policy!
- Epi-Aid data – using it to make the case.
- Discuss island action plans.
- Next steps, further TA.

St. Thomas walk audit

Environment: settings supporting active transportation!

Destinations

Network

Safety & Access

Site Design

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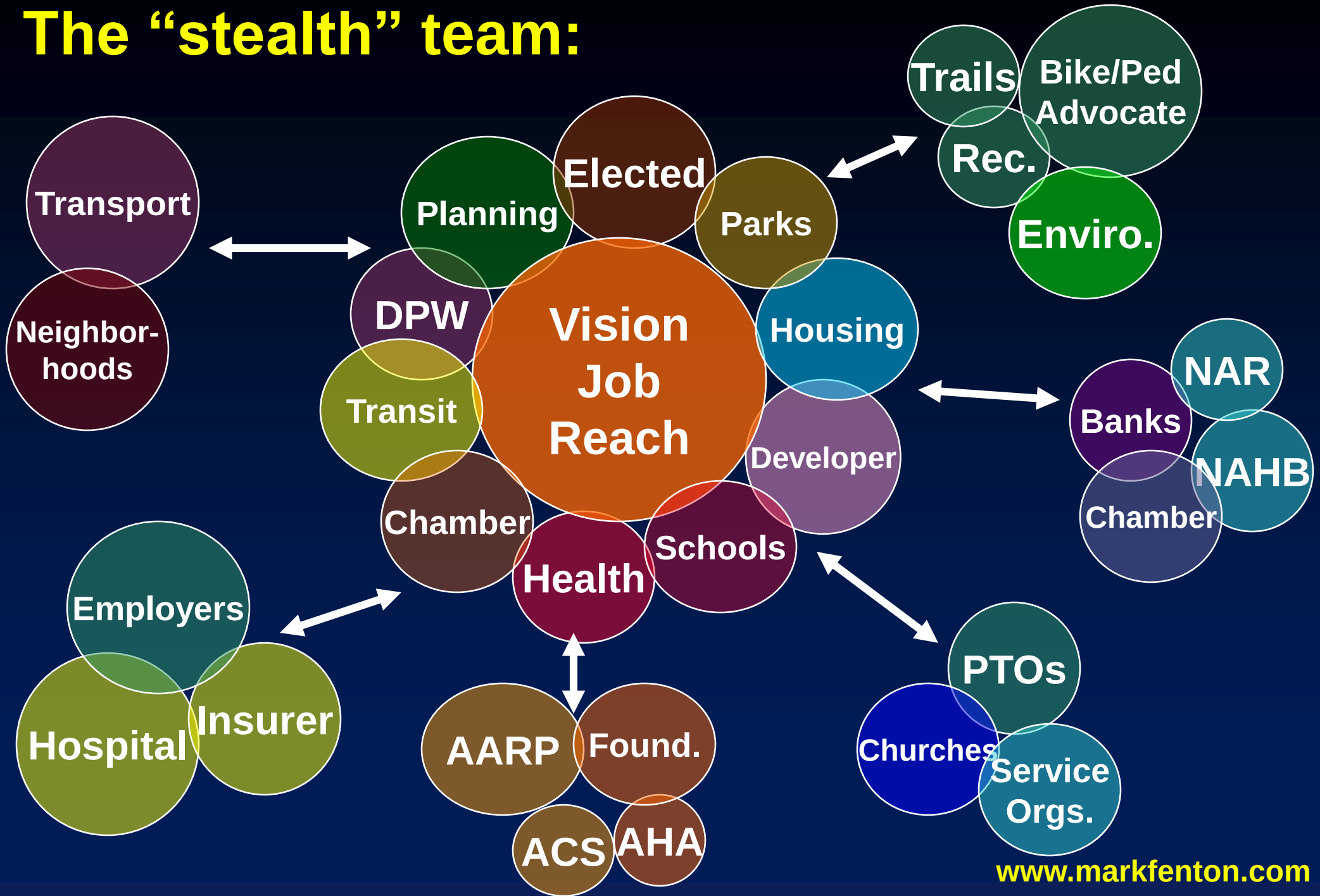
The “stealth” team:



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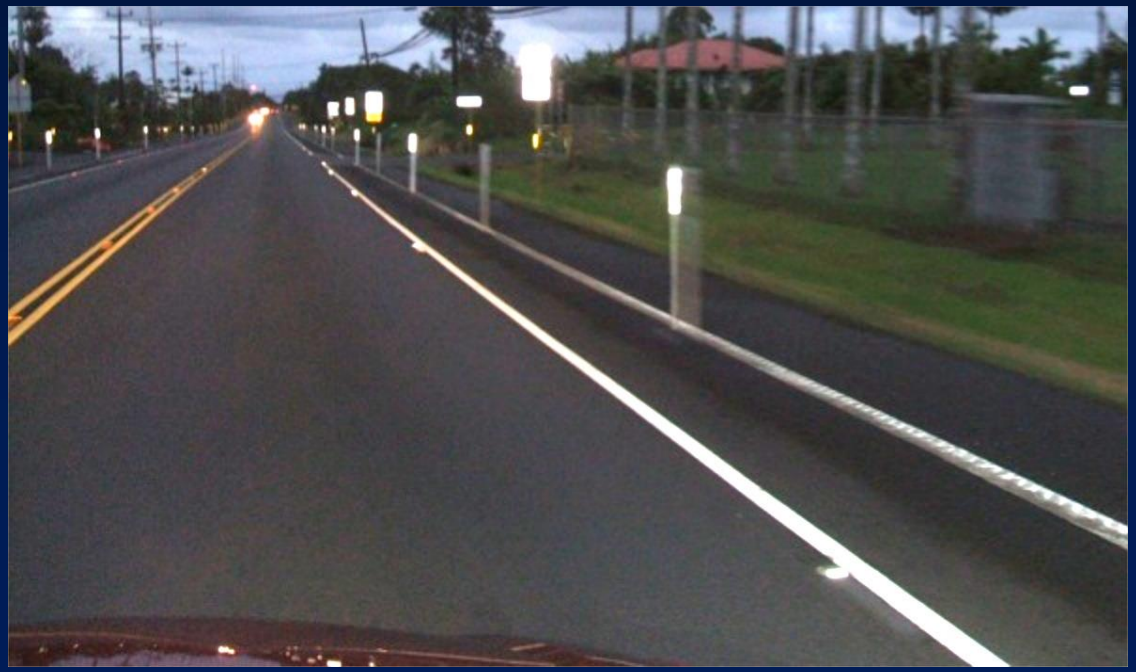
Trials, pilots & demonstration projects build momentum.

Curb stops & planters

Goal: Policies & practices that make these designs the standard!



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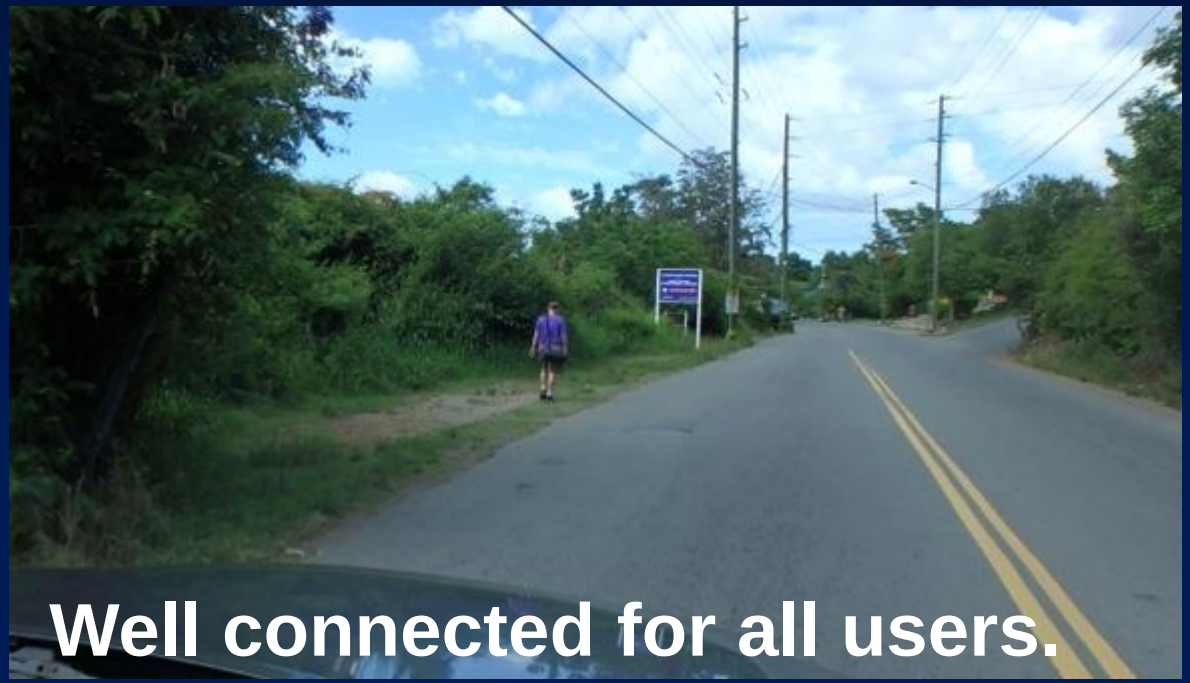
The big “policy” ideas . . .

- Create villages, centers.
- Connect them with Complete Streets & *transportation* trails.
- Design details to be safe, functional, and inviting for pedestrians (& cyclists) of all ages, abilities, incomes.

Development close to existing centers & services.

Safe, accessible, & inviting for everyone.



Well connected for all users.

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Questions for each action plan:

- Are you convening the stealth team?
- Will the demo project make a difference?
- What are the bigger **policy** & **practice** goals?
- Are the plan & demo project moving you toward those goals?

A common challenge

Availability of Street-Level Supports for Walking — US Virgin Islands, 2016

Emily Ussery, PhD, MPH

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Physical Activity and Health Branch

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Questions

1. What purposes can walkability audits serve?

2. What was the goal of the USVI walkability audit?

3. How did we choose which streets to audit? Why did we do it this way?

4. How can data from the USVI walkability audit be used…and what are its limitations?

What purposes can walkability audits serve?

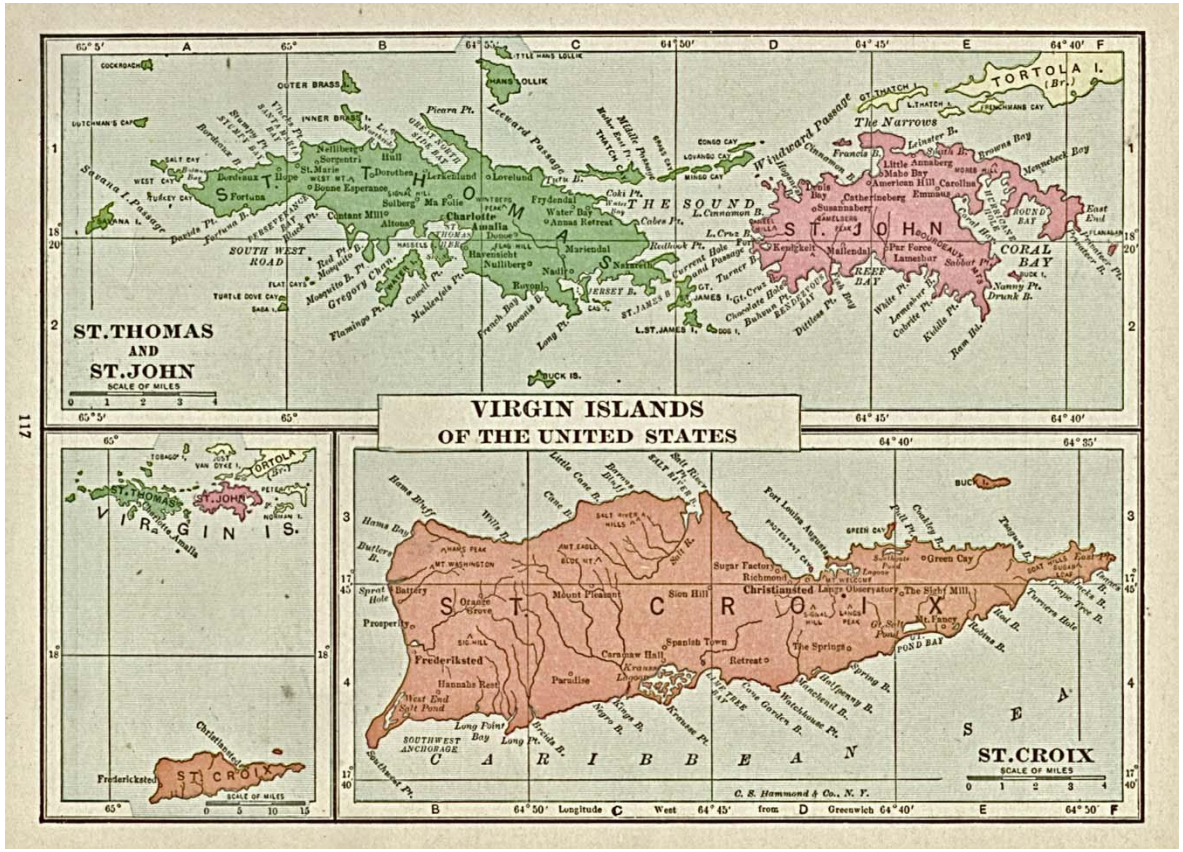
- **Planning tool** to identify and characterize specific problem areas in a community

- **Advocacy tool** to raise awareness among community stakeholders and promote community engagement

- **Surveillance tool** to systematically assess the prevalence of built environment features in a defined area

What was the goal of the USVI walkability audit?

- To collect data on community design features to describe the walkability of streets <u>across the USVI</u>



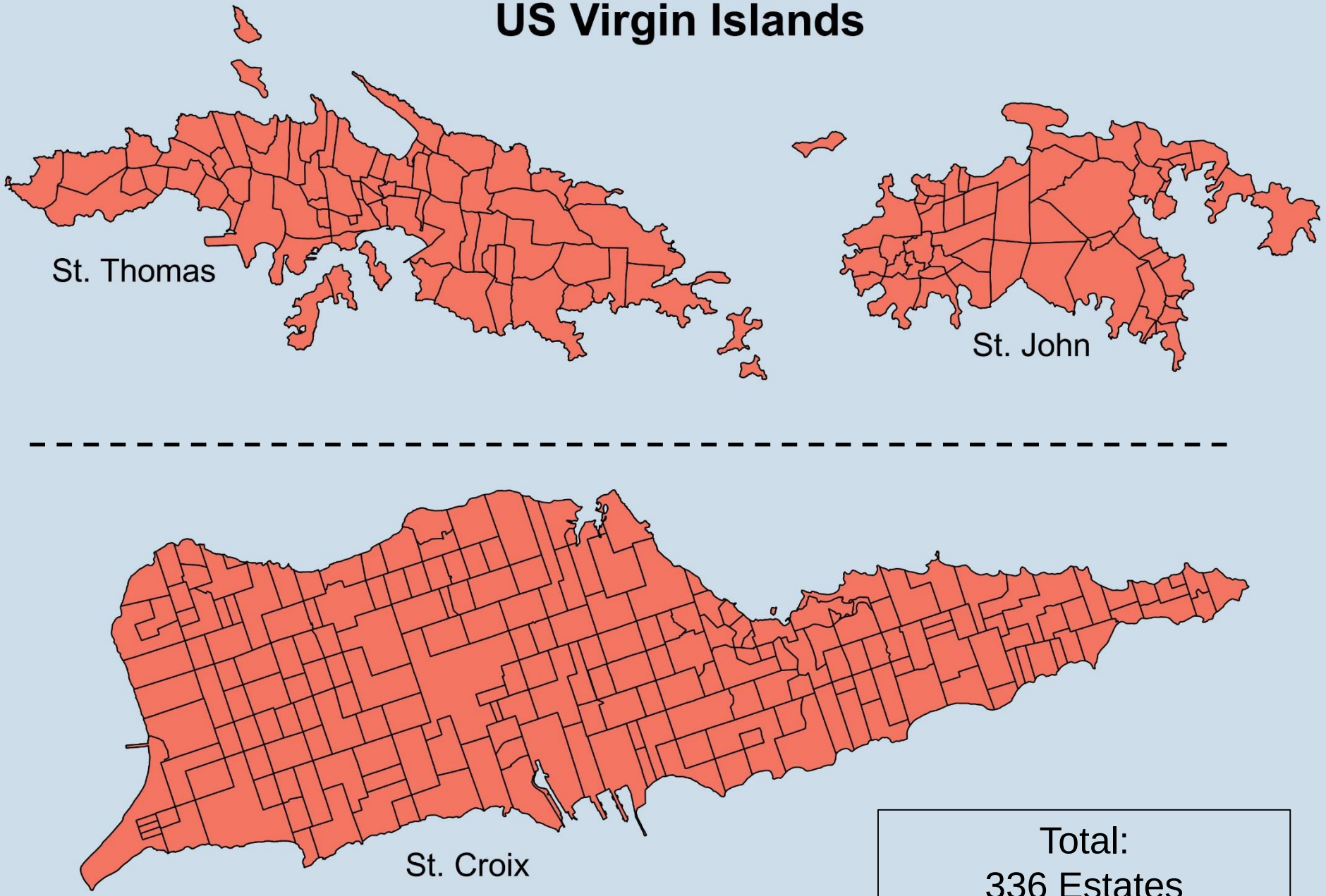
How did we choose which streets to audit? Why did we do it this way?

"50% of American adults get enough physical activity…"

BRFSS
Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System

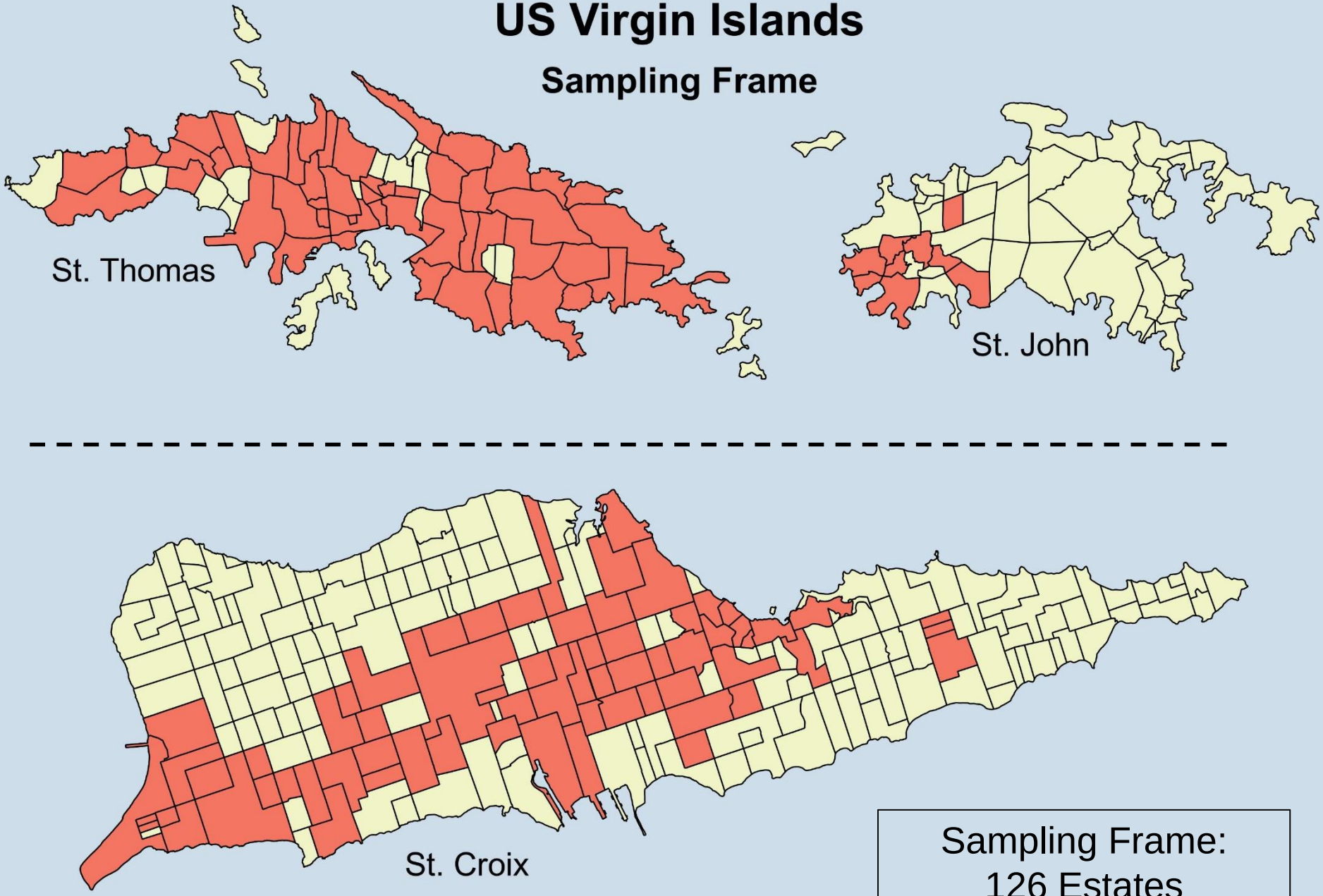
What percentage of street length in the USVI has sidewalks?

US Virgin Islands

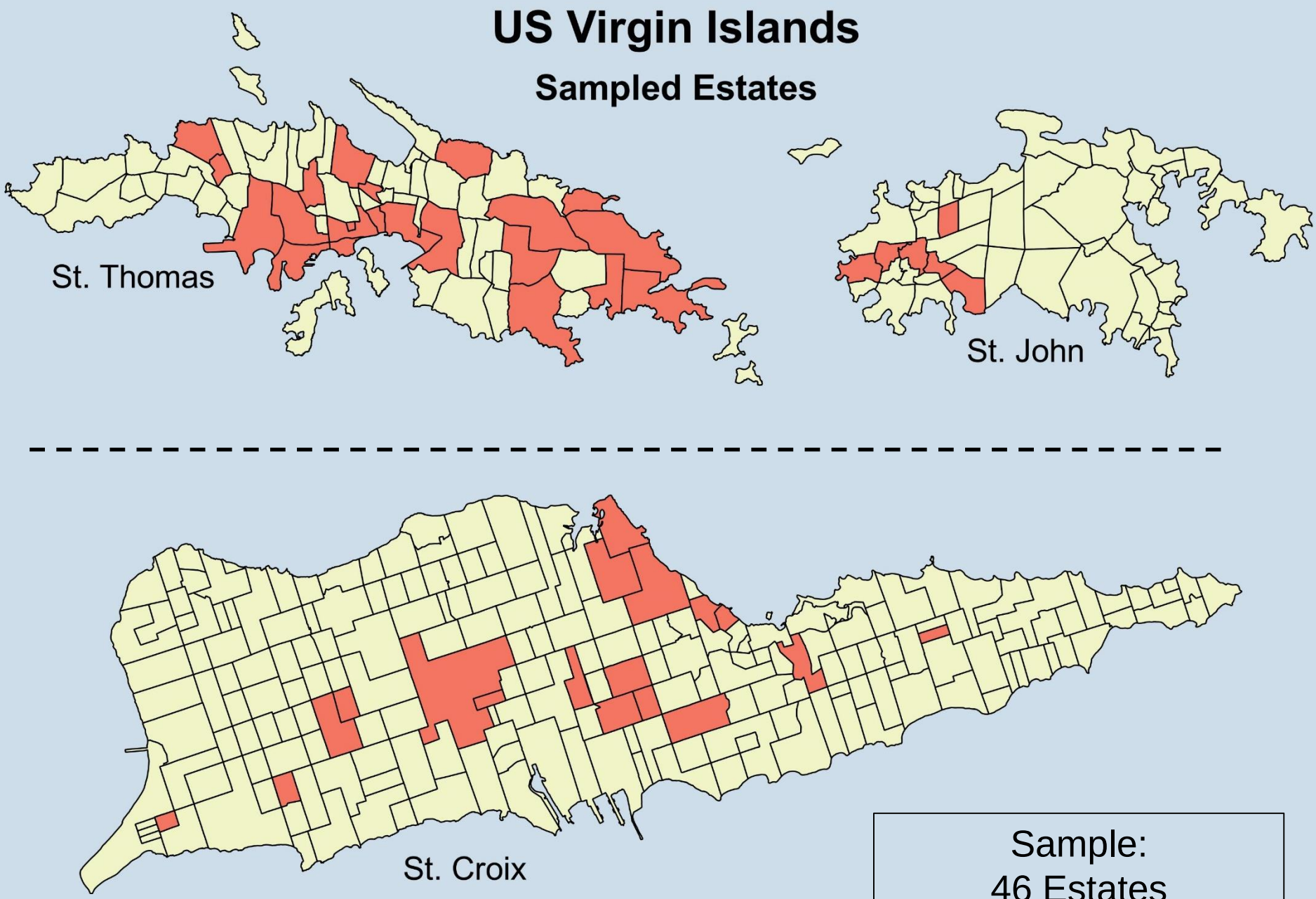


US Virgin Islands

Sampling Frame

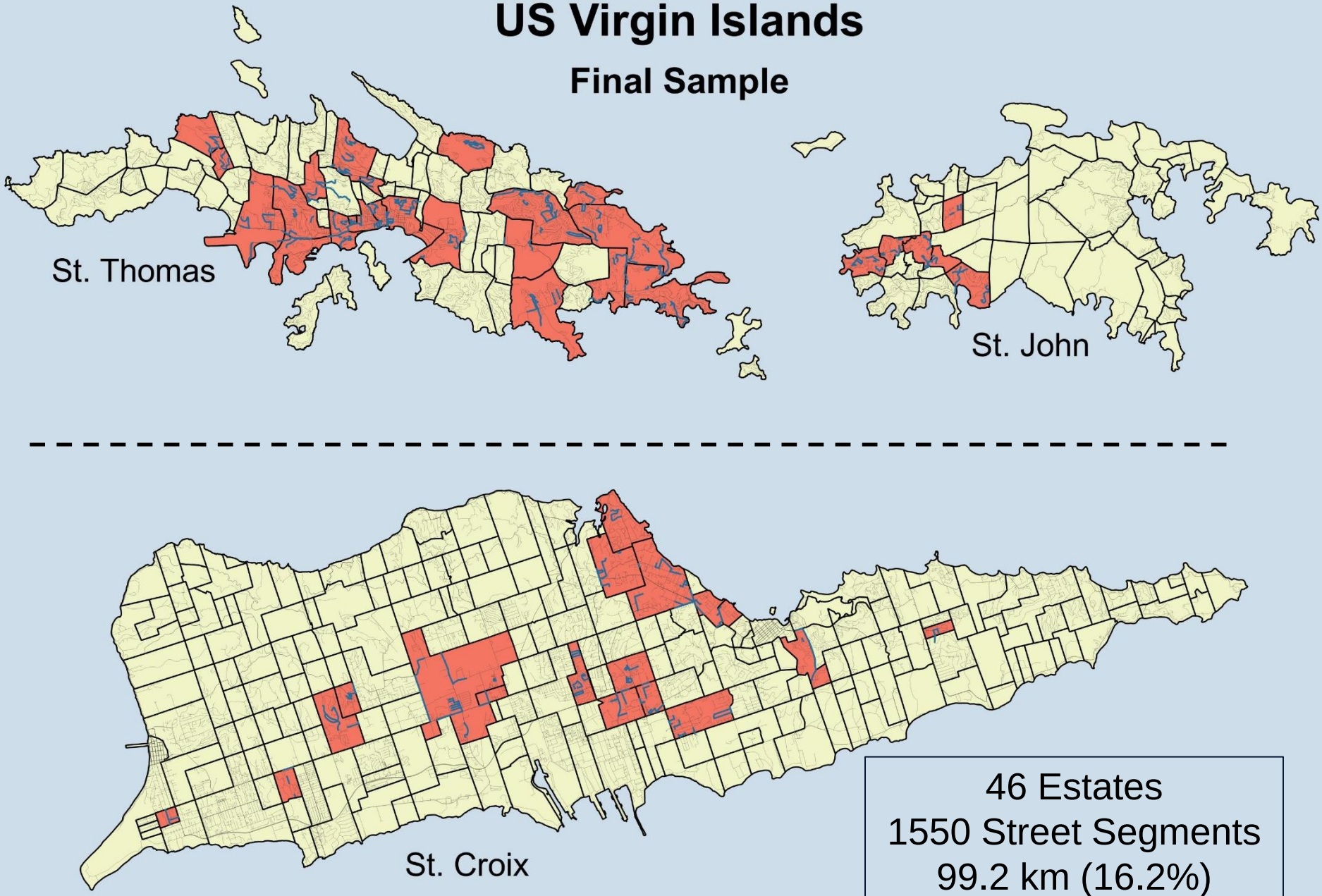


Sampling Frame:
126 Estates


US Virgin Islands
Sampled Estates
St. Thomas
St. John
St. Croix
Sample:
46 Estates

US Virgin Islands

Final Sample



46 Estates
1550 Street Segments
99.2 km (16.2%)

How can data from the USVI walkability audit be used…and what are its limitations?

- Potential uses
  - Identify overarching needs in the territory
  - Prioritize strategies for improving walkability
  - Highlight existing positive features
  - Provide baseline estimates that can be used to monitor change

- Limitations
  - Cannot identify specific sites for improvement
  - No gold standard or defined benchmark for each measure

How can data from the USVI walkability audit be used…and what are its limitations?

Audit results	Potential uses…	Cannot tell us…
3.2% of street length in the USVI has **mixed land use** (residential and commercial).	Consider zoning practices that encourage mixed use development.	20% of street length in the USVI should have mixed used development.
23.9% of street length in the USVI has **speed bumps**, but other traffic calming features are rare.	Highlights existing traffic calming measures, but other more effective approaches could be used to enhance pedestrian safety.	Charlotte Amalie has no traffic calming features and would be an ideal location for a traffic circle.
6.1% of street crossings in the USVI have **marked crosswalks.**	Consider Complete Streets approaches that design streets and crossings so they are safe and accessible for all users, including pedestrians.	Five Points intersection on St. Croix needs more visible crosswalks.

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Availability of Street-Level Supports for Walking – US Virgin Islands, 2016

A report for the US Virgin Islands Department of Health

**By the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention,
Physical Activity and Health Branch**

Availability of Street-Level Supports for Walking — US Virgin Islands, 2016
REPORT SUMMARY

What was the purpose of this project?
To assess the prevalence of community and street-scale design features that promote walking among streets in the US Virgin Islands (USVI).

An example of a road without sidewalks observed during on-the-ground assessments in the US Virgin Islands.

Why is this project important?
Chronic diseases and physical inactivity are significant public health concerns in the USVI. In 2010, 1 in 3 adults in the USVI were physically inactive, which is higher than in most other states and territories. Physical activity can be supported through community and street-scale design features that promote walking where people live, work, and play.

How was this project performed?
The USVI Department of Health (DOH) requested assistance from the CDC to conduct an observational audit of streets in May 2016 to measure street-level supports for and barriers to physical activity. To complete the on-the-ground assessment, 26 staff members from the USVI DOH were trained on the audit method. A total of 46 estates were randomly selected across the territory, and a sample of 1,114 street segments were assessed. This represented 15.9% of total street length.

What were the key findings?
- 88.6% of street length had no sidewalk
  - A continuous sidewalk was present on 4.3% of street length
  - A non-continuous sidewalk was present on 7.0% of street length
- 78.2% of street length had no walkable destinations (e.g. shops, restaurants, parks)
- 46.7% of street length had no lighting
  - 50.8% had some lighting
  - 2.4% had ample lighting
- Only 4.8% of street length had a public bus stop present
- Only 3.1% of street length had a mix of residential and commercial land use

A pedestrian-friendly area on St. Thomas with walkable destinations and ample street lighting.

An example of a continuous sidewalk along the Christiansted Bypass.

National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion
Division of Nutrition, Physical Activity, & Obesity

Thank you!

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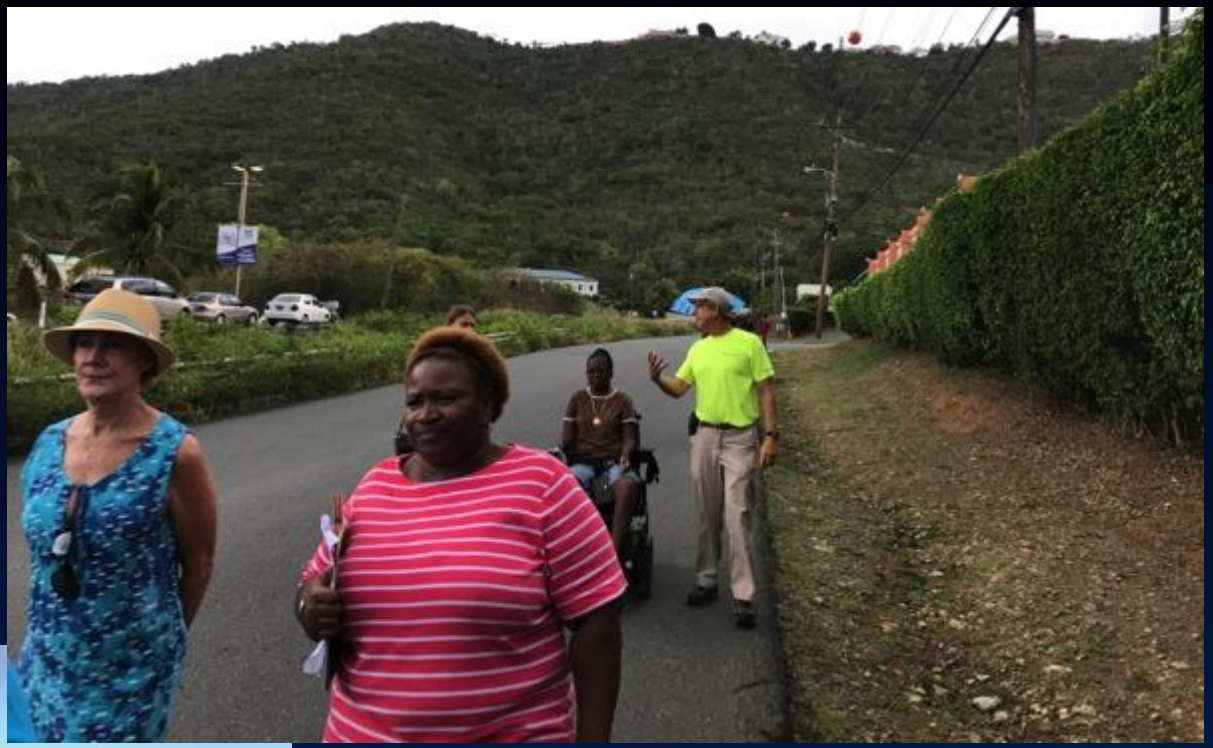
For more information, contact CDC
1-800-CDC-INFO (232-4636)
TTY: 1-888-232-6348 www.cdc.gov

The findings and conclusions in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official position of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

St. Croix
Demo project area.

St. Thomas
Demo project area.



St. John: Fish Fry Road area

The challenges – finding the balance between nature & infrastructure, cost & reality, now vs. later, etc.

But you can do it!