



Measuring local liveability

Using a new 20-Minute Neighbourhood Scorecard developed by the Australian Urban Observatory



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Around the world city makers are looking for ways to create more vibrant, healthy, sustainable and liveable local communities where daily necessities can be found close to residents' homes. This idea has been embraced by planners across the globe from Paris, where the 15-minute city concept has been implemented, to Singapore, where the 2040 master plan included goals for 20-minute towns and a 45-minute city and Sydney where the 30-minute city has been embraced.

Plan Melbourne 2017-50

Here in Australia, Plan Melbourne 2017-2050 is the long-term planning strategy guiding growth across Melbourne for 35 years, developed by the Victorian Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP), and guided by the principle of 20-minute neighbourhoods:

"The 20-minute neighbourhood is all about 'living locally'—giving people the ability to meet most of their daily needs within a 20-minute walk from home, with safe cycling and local transport options." (Plan Melbourne, 2017, p.114)

The 20-minute neighbourhood is a hallmark of Plan Melbourne according to *Direction 5 — Create a city of 20-minute neighbourhoods* and provide outcome measures that are a framework to support delivery of more inclusive, vibrant and healthy neighbourhoods:

- be safe, accessible and well connected for pedestrians and cyclists to optimise active transport;
- offer high-quality public realm and open spaces;
- provide services and destinations that support local living;
- facilitate access to quality public transport that connects people to jobs and higher-order services;
- deliver housing/population at densities that make local services and transport viable; and
- facilitate thriving local economies.

AUO Liveability Framework

20-Minute Neighbourhood 800m Walkable Catchment

The measure of 20-minute neighbourhoods is based on an 800 metre walkable catchment from home with a 10 minute walk to a local destination and a 10 minute walk back. This 800m distance that a 20-minute neighbourhood is based on is also consistent with previous research that has found that most people are not willing to walk further than 800m-1km to meet their daily needs locally.

Using the Australian Urban Observatory to measure 20-Minute Neighbourhoods

The Australian Urban Observatory (AUO) has developed a 20-Minute Neighbourhood Scorecard to assist local planners to understand strengths and weaknesses as they plan for more locally connected and liveable suburbs and neighbourhoods across their municipalities.

AUO indicators can be used for a range of purposes including infrastructure planning, policy development, public health profiles, health and wellbeing planning, strategic planning, neighbourhood liveability assessments, design guidelines, monitoring and evaluation checklists, community engagement, stakeholder engagement, shared measurement for collective impact, advocacy and health promotion.

The AUO 20-Minute Neighbourhood Scorecard is based on liveability indicators currently available in the AUO and includes measures to support the understanding of DELWP's 20-Minute Neighbourhood hallmarks.

Safe, accessible and well connected for pedestrians and cyclists to optimise active transport

- AUO Walkability for Transport Index
- Average number of street intersections within 1600m

Provide services and destinations that support local living

- Average distance to closest activity centre
- Average number of daily living destinations within 1600m
- Average distance to closest supermarket
- Social Infrastructure Index
- Distance to closest General Practitioner
- Health and Social Services Infrastructure within 1000m
- Early years and education infrastructure within 800 / 1600m
- Average distance to closest public open space
- Average distance to closest public open space larger than 1.5ha
- Average distance to closest playground
- Community and sport infrastructure within 1200m
- Percentage living within 400 of public open space of 1.5ha

Facilitate access to quality public transport that connects people to jobs and higher-order services

- Average distance to closest public transport stop
- Average distance to closest public transport with a regular service





Deliver housing/population at densities that make local services and transport viable

- Percentage of households in the bottom 40% of household incomes spending more than 30% of income on housing
- Percentage of dwellings that are government owned or community housing
- Average number of dwellings within 1600m

Facilitate thriving local economies

- Percentage of employed persons living and working in the same SA₃

Results for all of these indicators can be viewed for Local Government Areas, suburbs or the very local neighbourhood level (Statistical Area Level 1).

Downloads, links and weblinks

The AUO 20-Minute Neighbourhood Scorecard can be downloaded via the AUO website on the Guidance Notes page – auo.org.au/guidance-notes. Access to indicator results to populate Scorecard can be accessed by logging in to the AUO portal at auo.org.au, viewing the results on the map or downloading the indicator results using the (orange) data download tab on the right side menu.

Examples of the use and application of AUO indicators can be explored via our Knowledge Sharing document which can be downloaded via the AUO website using the QR Code.



Further information is also available in the informal 20-Minute Neighbourhood Checklist Tool produced by the Victorian Government Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning which can be accessed via the QR Code.



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