

# The Launch of the Adelaide Urban Liveability Score Card

## Introduction

**On 20 September 2022 the Adelaide's Healthy and Sustainable City Indicators Report and Score Card was launched at a Symposium convened by the Active Living Coalition, the Centre for Health in All Policies and Urban Planning UniSA. This policy brief summarises the symposiums discussion and shares key messages on Adelaide's liveability.**

Urban design and infrastructure planning play a key role in the creation of liveable suburbs and towns and can deliver healthy and sustainable communities. Access to active transport options like cycling, walking and public transport, proximity to services such as shops, green space and other amenities are important features of a healthy urban environment, be it in Adelaide or our regions. Many professionals are increasingly interested in healthy cities, with over 600 people having completed the University SA Planning for Healthy Cities Course in the last decade.

Planning for healthy communities is, however, often not central in the minds of urban planners and developers when planning and building our communities. The focus tends to be more on economic, built and infrastructure considerations, with health a second order priority, if considered at all.

To increase the focus on health within planning and development decisions, the Global Healthy and Sustainable Indicators Collaboration has created Healthy Liveable Cities Indicators Adelaide Score Card. The Score Card provides the data to track progress, and influence future planning and development decisions on Adelaide's Liveability.

Adelaide is one of 25 cities included in The Global Healthy and Sustainable Indicators Collaboration<sup>1</sup> which has been published in the Second Lancet Series on Urban Design, Transport and Health<sup>2</sup>.



<sup>1</sup> [healthysustainablecities.org/25cities/](https://healthysustainablecities.org/25cities/)

<sup>2</sup> [thelancet.com/series/urban-design-2022](https://thelancet.com/series/urban-design-2022)

## The Symposium

The Symposium was opened by the Hon Nick Champion, Minister for Trade and investment, Housing and Urban Development and Planning. This was followed by presentations from the research team, Distinguished Professor Billie Giles-Corti, RMIT; Dr Meanie Lowe University of Melbourne; and Mr Carl Higgs, RMIT. The three experts shared the key findings from their research and implications for Adelaide. The Panel discussion with senior policy professionals from government and the not-for-profit sector further explored the implications and solutions.

## The Adelaide Score Card Key Findings

**Based on World Health Indicators comparing metropolitan Adelaide as part of analysis of 25 global cities, the index identifies that more work needs to be done**

### Healthy and Sustainable City Indicators Report Conclusion

The availability of urban and transport policies supporting health and sustainability in Adelaide is above average compared with other cities studied. However, the quality of those policies is below average.

Adelaide does not appear to have transport planning policies incorporating health-focussed actions or air pollution policies related to transport or land use planning. Nor does it require health impact assessment of transport and land use interventions.

Adelaide's targets for walking and cycling participation and public transport use are too low to be consistent with healthy cities evidence. Hence, relative to the 25 cities in this international study, the vast majority of neighbourhoods in Adelaide have low walkability.

In terms of thresholds to achieve WHO targets to increase physical activity, no neighbourhoods in Adelaide achieve population density thresholds and only 13% achieve street connectivity thresholds. Only 54% of residents have nearby access to public transport stops with regular services.

The majority of residents have some public open space within 500m. However, this drops to only 58% who have access to larger public open space, and access is spatially patterned.

Compared with the other cities studied, the proportion of the population in Adelaide with access within 500m to a food market, convenience store and, to a lesser extent, public transport stop with a regular service is below average.

## Key Messages from Forum and Participants

At the launch event on 20 September, the research was presented. Symposium participants were invited to reflect on the research findings and panel discussion and consider what steps Adelaide could take to improve liveability.

Key takeaways include:

1. Whilst Adelaide is liveable, when compared to other global cities and World Health Standards, more work needs to be done.



2. The community values being in close proximity to green space, work and amenities, and living within neighbourhoods that enable better health.
3. Adelaide is densifying, but the increased density is not delivering the health and liveability benefits. Infill development is reducing liveability ... loss of tree canopy, less walkable neighbourhoods due increasing numbers of crossovers, issues with car parking etc
4. Defining 'liveability' more clearly and adopting related targets to track and monitor progress is critical. The 30 Year Plan for Greater Adelaide does this to some extent; however, it needs to be updated, with more ambitious targets and developed as a whole of government plan, not just seen as belonging to planning agencies.
5. Increased policy alignment across urban development, infrastructure and transport planning with the liveability definition and measures is critical.
6. The Symposium discussed at length the question - how can we bring the Adelaide community along, to ensure we move to delightful density done well. This is critical.
7. This included discussing how can we support sophisticated community conversations about density and canvas the different futures available. One future may be continuing to deliver dreadful density, another may be what our communities will look like if we move to delivering delightful density.
8. Communities are sometimes more open to incremental rather than transformational changes
9. Important for professionals to collectively work together, be brave, offer solutions, and translate great ideas into action

### Next Steps

**The ALC has examined these problems and has a range of suggested solutions. The Coalition, CHiAPRT and UniSA invites further discussion on these solutions.**

For more information on the symposium and to access the presentations, visit [communityplaceplanning.com/active-living](https://communityplaceplanning.com/active-living) or contact David Bailey, Senior Project Officer, SA Active Living Coalition [david.bailey@walkingsa.org.au](mailto:david.bailey@walkingsa.org.au)

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