



Healthy Active by Design AITPM Lunch Bites

24 March 2025

Heart health

- Cardiovascular disease is a leading cause (one in four) of all deaths in Australia¹
 - > 50% of people in Aus have 3 or more risk factors
- Most cardiovascular disease risk factors are preventable²
- Four in five people in Australia do not get enough regular exercise³
- A key factor is that the built environment is not conducive to enable walking, cycling and use of public transport⁴
- Walking is the most popular form of physical activity for people living in Australia

References:

¹Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2022. Causes of Death 2021. <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/health/causes-death/causes-death-australia/latest-release>

² World Health Organisation, 2022, 'Physical Activity' Fact Sheet, accessed 29 November 2023, <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/physical-activity>

³Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2018. National Health Survey. First results, 2017-18, cat no. 4364.0.55.001. December

⁴McKoy, J., 2023, 'US Neighbourhood Walkability Influences Physical Activity, BMI Levels', published in Boston University School of

⁴ Chandrabose et. Al., 2022, 'Built Environments and Cardiovascular Health: Review and Implications' published in Journal of Cardiopulmonary Rehabilitation and Prevention, 1 November 2022, Issue 42 Vol 6, pp 416-422, <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/36342684/>



Transport and the built environment

- People who live in walkable communities are:
 - 1.5 times more likely to get enough physical activity¹
 - 58% more likely to have a healthy cardiovascular risk profile²
- Up to 30% of people who use public transport achieve 30 min or more of physical activity each day³
- People who live in leafy suburbs are more likely to be physically active⁴



References:
¹Monica L. Wang, Marie-Rachelle Narcisse, Pearl A. McElfish, 2022, 'Higher walkability associated with increased physical activity and reduced obesity among United States adults', published in *Obesity – A Research Journal*, 12 Dec 2022, Vol 31 Issue 2, pp553-564.
² Makram et. Al., 2023, 'Favourable Neighbourhood Walkability is Associated with Lower Burden of Cardiovascular Risk Factors Among Patients Within an Integrated Health System', <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0146280623000592>
³, 4Heart Foundation. Healthy Active by Design – Design Features - Movement networks <https://www.healthyactivebydesign.com.au/design-features/movement-networks>



An integrated, multidisciplinary approach

- Mixed land use
- Density
- Transport



Healthy Active by Design

- Eight design features 
- Two supporting modules
 - Healthy Active Ageing
 - Walkability in Less Advantaged Areas
- Introductory Training Resource
- Case studies
- Publications and policies
- International examples



Public Open Space – a network of walkable, appealing and public open spaces helps meet recreational, play and social needs.



Community Facilities – co-located and integrated facilities, such as schools and recreation facilities, maximise community interaction.



Buildings – design buildings and sites that specifically support increased levels of physical activity, whether incidental or deliberate and healthy food access.



Destinations – compact mixed-use neighbourhoods, which include employment, education, public transport and fresh food outlets, forge vibrant and active neighbourhoods.



Movement Networks – facilitate safe and convenient travel within neighbourhoods through an accessible, integrated and connected walking, cycling and public transport routes.



Housing Diversity – dwelling choices, through a range of housing and occupancy types, meet the needs of a diverse community throughout members' life stages.



Sense of Place – a sense of community emerges when residents have opportunities to meet and interact in places of interest in their local neighbourhood.

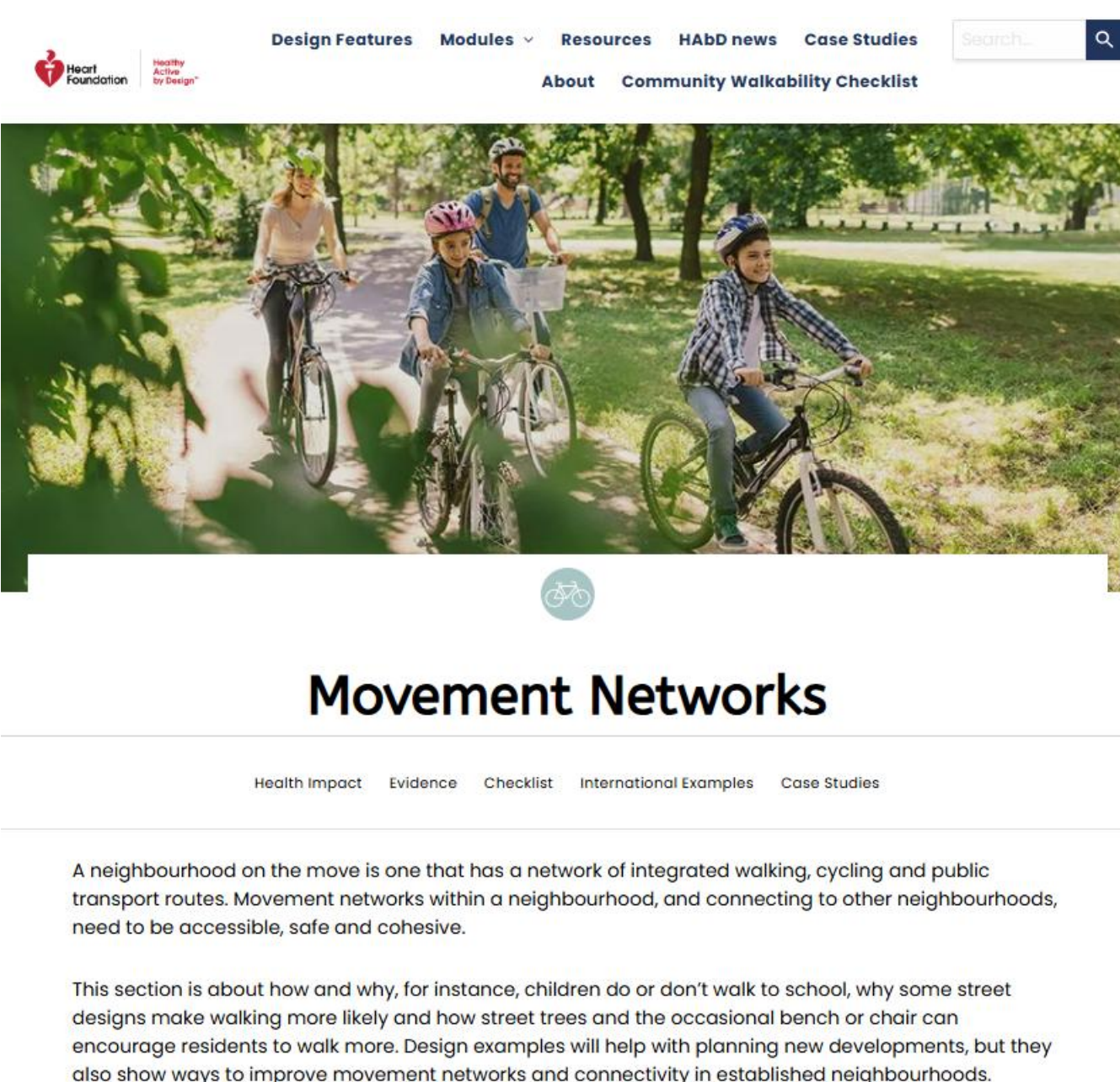


Healthy Food – planning for food demands focus on planning and design of food environments, retail and promotion; production space, transport infrastructure and availability of and access to healthy food outlets.



Design features - Overview

- Evidence base
- Health impact
- Checklist
- Case studies
- International examples



The screenshot shows the website for the Heart Foundation's 'Healthy Active by Design' initiative. The top navigation bar includes links for 'Design Features', 'Modules', 'Resources', 'HAbD news', 'Case Studies', 'About', and 'Community Walkability Checklist'. A search bar is located on the right. The main header image depicts a family of four (a woman, a man, and two children) riding bicycles on a tree-lined path. Below the image is a small bicycle icon. The section title 'Movement Networks' is prominently displayed. A secondary navigation bar lists 'Health Impact', 'Evidence', 'Checklist', 'International Examples', and 'Case Studies'. The introductory text defines movement networks as integrated walking, cycling, and public transport routes that are accessible, safe, and cohesive. A final paragraph explains that the section focuses on the reasons and methods for encouraging walking, such as street design, trees, and benches, and how these can be improved in both new and existing neighborhoods.

Heart Foundation Healthy Active by Design

Design Features Modules Resources HAbD news Case Studies About Community Walkability Checklist

Search...

Movement Networks

Health Impact Evidence Checklist International Examples Case Studies

A neighbourhood on the move is one that has a network of integrated walking, cycling and public transport routes. Movement networks within a neighbourhood, and connecting to other neighbourhoods, need to be accessible, safe and cohesive.

This section is about how and why, for instance, children do or don't walk to school, why some street designs make walking more likely and how street trees and the occasional bench or chair can encourage residents to walk more. Design examples will help with planning new developments, but they also show ways to improve movement networks and connectivity in established neighbourhoods.



Design features - Checklist



Movement networks



Healthy
Active
by Design™

Objective

An accessible, connected movement network integrates walking, cycling and public transport routes, facilitates safe and convenient travel within neighbourhoods, and encourages use of destinations.

Principle	Considerations	Strength of evidence	Yes	No	N/A
Connections Movement can be enhanced through the provision of safe, connected, convenient, continuous, easily navigated and attractive links.	Do the streets, footpaths and cycle ways connect to each other and to destinations?	***			
	Are these connections well lit, with shade and shelter, as well as directions or signposts, to encourage their use?	***			
	Is there more than one route between destinations to provide variety in active transport options and experiences?	***			
Infrastructure The inclusion of safe, functional and highly visible infrastructure encourages a range of travel options.	Are facilities such as bike racks, drinking fountains, change rooms and lockers provided at destinations?	***			
	Are public transport stops provided within suitable proximity to dwellings and destinations?	***			
	Have stops along routes been provided offering shade/ shelter, seating and lighting?	***			
	Have facilities been designed for all users including the young, the elderly and those with disabilities?	***			
Streetscape design Streets that have been designed to accommodate all transport users encourage more movement.	Does the street design work for all users, including pedestrians, cyclists, public transport and cars?	***			
	Have the streets been designed in response to their surrounds?	***			
	Do roads narrow near schools with footpaths becoming wider? Are there crosswalks and pedestrian crossing points to connect movement networks?	***			

Process considerations: Consider prioritising walking as the preferred means of travel. Think about wait times at traffic lights, the size of footpaths compared to roadway widths and prioritising pedestrian crossing points. Modes of transport have evolved over time. Have future transport needs been accommodated in the street design?



Community

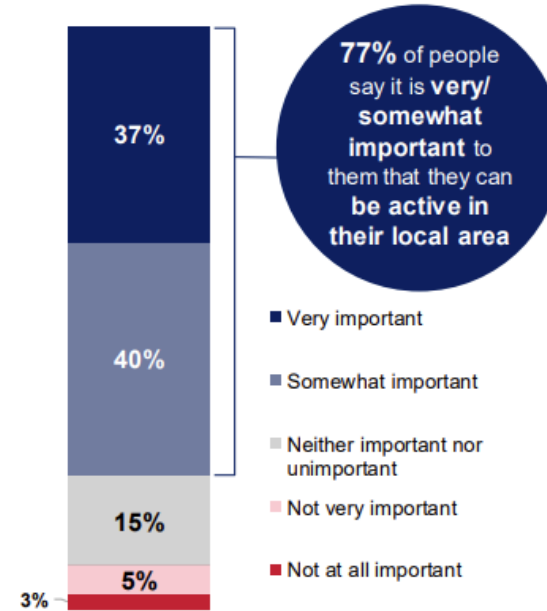


Upcoming resources:

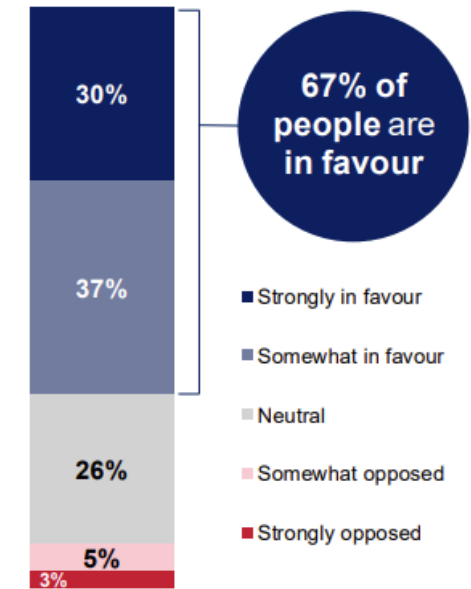
- Education and awareness
- Interactive map
- Advocacy petition
- Community Walkability Checklist

Results of new 'What Australia Wants: Neighbourhood Design' national survey

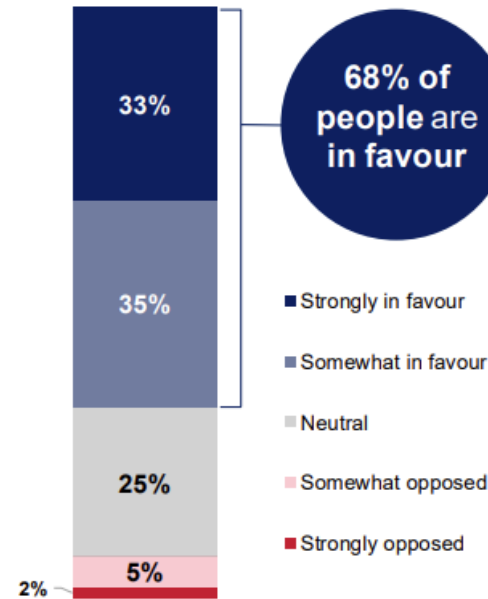
Importance of local area allowing physical activity:



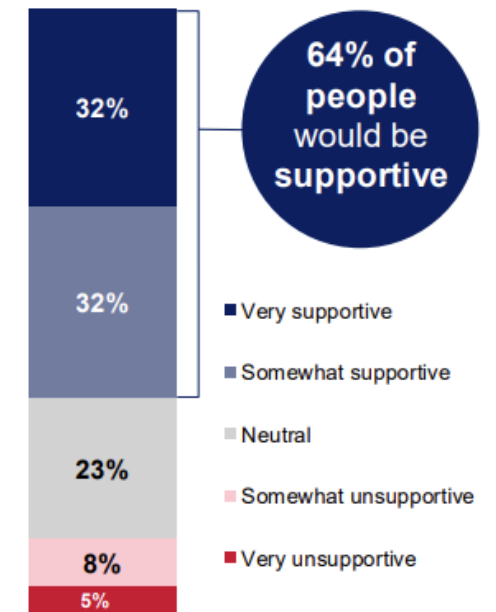
Support for redirecting funding to active infrastructure:



Support for redirecting funding to public transport:



Support for reducing speed limits in neighbourhoods:



What's next... (April – June 2025)

Discussion Papers

- Walkability and the built environment
- Density
- Active school travel
- The heart of road use
- Good for Busine\$\$

Continued:

- Advocacy
- Industry engagement
- New case studies



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www.healthyactivebydesign.com.au