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## FEEDBACK SURVEY

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This submission was developed by the following organisations:

- Heart Foundation SA
- Department of Health and Ageing
  - OPAL Program
  - Public Health Partnerships Branch
  - Local Government Relations
- Planning Institute of Australia (SA Branch)
- Australian Institute of Landscape Architects
- RAA
- Walking SA
- Social Planners Network

Please tick if you do not wish for your name, company or group and postcode to be published with your submission.



Government of South Australia  
Department of Planning,  
Transport and Infrastructure



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# Submission on the draft 30-Year Plan for Greater Adelaide 2016

## The South Australian Active Living Coalition

The South Australian Active Living Coalition (the Coalition) is a collaborative venture between twenty key Government and non-Government organisations.

Membership on the Coalition is varied as responsibility for the design and creation of the built environment lies not only with health but also with urban planners, transport planners, local government, open space planners, developers, landscapers, designers and other built environment professionals. Membership also includes community group advocates for active living.

Active living is defined as a way of life that integrates physical activity into daily routines. Our current patterns of living, that rely less on local facilities and opportunities and more on dispersed and distant centres of work, education, shopping and recreation have led to a reduction in opportunities to be physically active in daily life and have contributed to increasingly sedentary lifestyles.

The Coalition slice of the health 'pie' is supportive environments for physical activity. The rationale is that well-planned neighbourhoods can increase the number of people who have a genuine convenient choice to walk or cycle to work, school, shops, parks, services, facilities and public transport. We aim to make healthy choices the easy choices.

Engaging in regular physical activity reduces the risk of diseases such as cardiovascular disease, type II diabetes, osteoporosis, colon cancer, obesity and injury. In addition, physical activity has been shown to alleviate depression and anxiety and increase social interaction and integration.

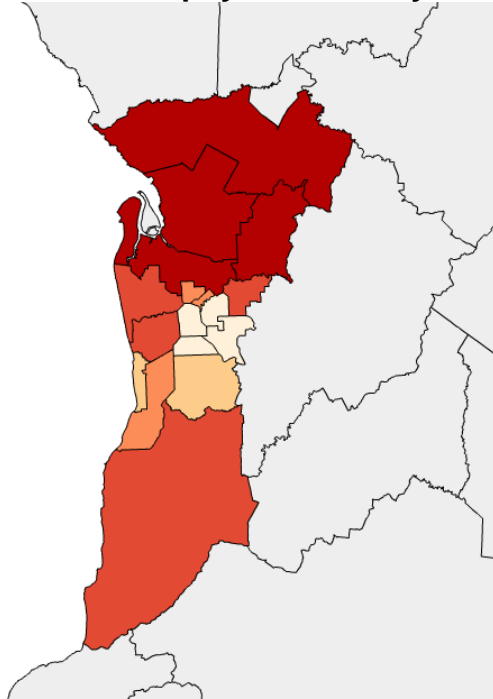
The National Physical Activity Guidelines for Australians recommend that people of all ages accumulate at least 30 minutes of moderate physical activity on most, preferably all days of the week. Despite promotion of the message, less than half of the adult population in Australia is not active enough to achieve a health benefit.

Figure 1 below extracted from the [Heart Foundation Heart Maps for South Australia](#), show Insufficient Physical Activity for the Adelaide region, by local government area. The darkest areas over 62% are Playford, Salisbury, Tea Tree Gully and Port Adelaide Enfield. The areas with the lowest numbers of insufficiently active persons (light yellow areas) are Adelaide CBD, Unley, Norwood Payneham and St Peters, and Burnside.

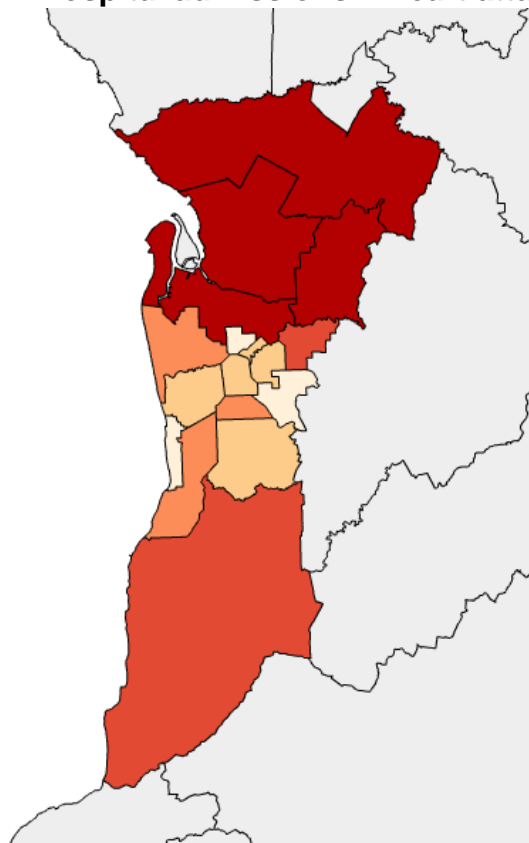
Figure 2 is unsurprisingly similar to Figure 1, and shows Hospital Admissions for Heart Attack (total) for persons aged 30+ years, June 2012-June 2014. The areas in dark red, are the areas with the highest rate. The City of Playford is 18% higher than the SA average for heart attack. Salisbury, Tea Tree Gully and Port Adelaide Enfield are also all above the state average. Burnside, Holdfast Bay, Prospect and Norwood Payneham and St Peters have the lowest percentage of hospital admissions for heart attack.

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**Figure 1: Insufficient physical activity**



**Figure 2: Hospital admissions – Heart attack**



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## Engagement process

The comments in this submission have been based on the feedback from our members and a broader council input, over two workshops:

1. September 2016 - Healthy Neighbourhoods/Target 4 Workshop, co-hosted by Heart Foundation and DPTI.
2. October 2016 – Member consultation on the draft 30-Year Plan, workshop hosted by the Heart Foundation.

The Coalition commends the South Australian Government on the updating of the Plan, the leadership shown in broadening the Plan to reflect contemporary trends and thinking, and the extensive process of engagement and consultation.

The Coalition welcomes the opportunity to have input into the update, as in 2009 when we made a submission on the original Plan.

## The importance of health, wellbeing and inclusion

Overall, we are pleased with the breadth of the policy themes, and that they address community social planning. The *Health, wellbeing and inclusion* theme is particularly welcomed, as are the relevant Targets 2-5. We strongly support this theme remaining in the Plan, with some amendments.

The participants of the *Healthy Neighbourhoods Workshop* stated that health, wellbeing and inclusion should be a priority for the planning system because:

- planning is for people, it places people first and people are our greatest resource
- without health, wellbeing and inclusion, nothing else will work or matters
- we need to keep people at the centre of the system
- we want to enjoy where we live
- healthy people maximises prosperity as well as contributing to South Australian's goals in business, innovation, education, personal health, and community health
- the natural and built environment create the conditions for individuals and populations to be healthy - the planning strategy set out the framework for these conditions
- getting people active plays a huge role in reducing reliance on our health system
- people need to be part of a community to avoid alienation and the costs associated.

The Active Living Coalition is very pleased to see that the Plan is promoting environments that are supportive of active living, and healthy, walkable neighbourhoods.

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## Equity and disadvantage

Our comments on the themes and targets **relate mostly to our concerns about improving the health and wellbeing of those communities who have the poorest health outcomes and are the least walkable and ensuring that these areas are a priority**. In addition, we questioned how the themes would be implemented, and the system, culture and governance changes needed to ensure this.

The Coalition recognises and supports the need for higher density development in Greater Adelaide, and evidence shows that higher density in the right location, with appropriate height, good design and accompanying amenity *can* contribute to creating walkable environments and encourage more active travel.

We can see the attraction to focus on the Inner metro areas, which are already walkable with good transport options, and to encourage growth in these areas through densification. However, while focussing on the inactive and least healthy areas identified in Figure 1 and 2 would provide challenges, it would also bring enormous potential for long term positive changes amongst the most vulnerable communities.

The update of the Plan gives us the opportunity to acknowledge and focus on key determinants of social, economic and health inequities for infill and greenfield development, where targets have the potential to raise disadvantaged suburbs/growth areas to the amenity and sustainability levels (eg walkability) already enjoyed by the Inner suburbs of Adelaide. The Coalition would strongly support the application of 'universal' planning approaches, actions and targets with a scale and intensity that is proportionate to the degree of need.

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## Feedback on the draft targets

### **Target 2: Smarter travel. 60% of new housing in metro Adelaide will be within close proximity to public transport (rail, tram, bus)**

Target 2 is aimed at providing housing within close walking distance of high frequency buses and fixed rail networks. This is likely to increase the population in select, mostly inner and middle metropolitan areas. These areas are often already considered 'walkable', which will support the health of the new population moving to the area.

Target 2 may also benefit currently low density suburbs adjoining fixed rail services. An increase in dwelling density and population may support additional retail and other services which then may improve the liveability and walkability of those suburbs (supporting Target 3).

However the Coalition suggested that we should be extending the public transport networks, and expressed their concern about building new houses along main road transit corridors. Whilst supporting public transit usage, dwellings adjacent to major roads face additional problematic health issues to be addressed such as air pollution, noise pollution, lack of open space and lack of green streetscapes. Evidence also suggests that it can also increase blood pressure.

Overall the Coalition supports policy that improves transit in Greater Adelaide and puts more of the population within walking distance of a transit stop. Locating new medium to higher density housing in existing fixed transit corridors and providing for mixed use and activity around train stations aligns with planning for physical activity principles of providing local facilities and improving public transport.

### **Target 3: Getting active. Increase the number of work trips made by active transport modes by 25% by 2045 in metro Adelaide**

Target 3 provides a good measure of our success in achieving the Plan: Agree

As a reflection of land use planning, journey to work data as a proxy for physical activity could be useful; perhaps reflecting improvements to public transport and cycling and walking infrastructure.

However, it was acknowledged that Adelaide's public transport system is heavily focused on moving people in and out of the CBD. Major employment opportunities may occur outside the CBD (eg defence related projects) and away from public transport links and/or with free carparking. There is a possibility that if journey to work data is examined on a metropolitan wide basis, results may not demonstrate whether infrastructure improvements or increased dwelling density adjacent transport (Target 2) has influenced rates of active transport. Mapping improvements to infrastructure and/or dwelling density against journey-to-work mode

may give insight into where land use planning and improvements to infrastructure has supported people to choose active transport to get to work.

The Coalition is concerned that adopting a blanket 25% increase as the target only serves to widen the disadvantage between the Inner Metro and the Outer Metro regions. We do not believe that the 25% increase is challenging, or aspirational, and will make little impact on modal shift from vehicle use particularly in the Middle and Outer Metro areas. Overall, the Target as it stands serves to benefit short-term trips for those working in the CBD during the standard weekday hours. We know that the difficulty will be for those working long distances from home, on weekends, nights, and those travelling across town.

The Targets should be more aspirational for the Outer Metro areas, to address the current low levels of active travel so we would suggest a 100% increase in order to catch-up to the Inner Metro baseline

Despite welcoming this target the Coalition believes that the measure of “work trips” alone is too narrow to be a good indicator of whether the community is “getting active”.

We would suggest that the Target be broadened to include a wider range of trips made by active transport to school, or shops. Younger and older people in our communities are using transport for other important purposes such as education, social support or health appointments. Also the new urban form should improve the use of active travel for non-work trips as well as work trips.

Using journey to work data is understandable as it is collected on a regular basis by the Australian Bureau of Statistics. However, if there are not currently usable surveys available to cover non-work related trips. Could the data be developed or acquired to support a wider range of journeys? We support DPTI to continue to explore a larger set of data to ascertain whether there is an overall increase in active travel as a result of the new urban form.

**Target 4: Walkable neighbourhoods. Increase the percentage of residents living in walkable neighbourhoods in inner and middle Adelaide by 25% by 2045**

Target 4 provides a good measure of our success in achieving the Plan: Strongly agree

Comments:

We understand the purpose of this target to be to make the neighbourhoods of Greater Adelaide more walkable, as this is a good indicator of liveability and quality. The target and methodology appear rational, able to be measured, and supported by evidence.

However, it is worth recognising that this target will be easier to meet in suburbs with land use planning that pre-dates widespread ownership of cars and therefore has an existing level of mixed uses.

We would suggest in order to improve the walkability of all neighbourhoods, rather than have people move to existing walkable neighbourhoods, a shift in the wording around the target is needed:

Increase the number of walkable neighbourhoods by XX% by 2045

Or

All neighbourhoods to have 2 or more walkability criteria, including nearby public transport, by 2045

The Coalition does not agree to confine the target to the Inner and Middle metro areas only. Consideration of an appropriate target for the Outer Metropolitan area is supported in consultation with relevant Councils set at a level both rational and feasible. It is worth noting that the current paradigm in urban planning of 'Mixed Use zoning policy' + 'let the market provide' is not likely to deliver the desired level of standard of walkable catchments with a 314 ha area (radius of 1 km), particularly in areas of lower housing density. It is acknowledged that planning policy which allows a school, a shop, a community meeting place, a public transport service etc does not mean these things will be provided within that catchment.

We must ensure that this Target enables the most disadvantaged areas to become more walkable, and to potentially increase the level of physical activity of the community (see Figure 1).

The Coalition encourages the connectivity of walkable neighbourhoods be strongly considered in the planning process, particularly of large infrastructure road projects, to ensure that neighbourhoods are not physically isolated for active living outcomes. Facilitating transport connectivity would be an area where collaboration with local government was central, particularly for open space and integrated transport planning. The Plan identifies the need to link and coordinate with local government on other planning matters, so the principle is there.

This Target has appropriate measurement criteria and is based on evidence from the work of the Coalition (see references). Some improvements to the walkability criteria could include:

- All criteria to be based on measurements from each house, rather than an unspecified point in the neighbourhood
- Both 800m and 1km are described as 15minute walk in the walkability criteria (p134). Was this intended? A general rule of thumb used in many guidelines is 800m is a 10minute walk for a healthy adult
- Criteria 2: Primary schools may not be as relevant to an ageing population in the future, and could be expanded to primary school and/or community centre
- At present there is no regular measurements of actual walking activity. By contrast we have excellent measures of vehicle traffic volumes, public transport vehicle movement and usage. Without some comprehensive base-line measurements of pedestrian activity, we will never know if walkability actually improves.

#### **Target 5: A greener city. Tree canopy is increased by 20% across metro Adelaide by 2045**

Target 5 provides a good measure of our success in achieving the Plan: Strongly agree

The Coalition welcomes the introduction of this target which provides strategic incentive to encourage expanded tree planting. The Coalition members agrees that trees and green



infrastructure are important to support physical activity principles, particularly in the public realm (as private green spaces get smaller) where they provide shade, cooling, protection, safety, amenity, improved air quality, and habitats for birds and animals.

However, the scale of the target is not ambitious enough. The Coalition members suggested that more work is done to use evidence-based targets that have demonstrated effect, and where we will see the most benefit. We would encourage greater consideration of: an urban forestry, the wider variety of green infrastructure, as well as reflecting on the research to determine the actual benefits.

Once again we were concerned that areas of greatest disadvantage and with the lowest tree cover may not be a priority in the implementation of the Plan. The implementation of the Plan should focus on quality, and appropriateness – if the purpose is to reduce the heat island effect, then the solution is not just to plant more trees, but to be targeted on the identified areas of need.

## **Policy 6: Health, wellbeing and inclusion**

Policy theme 6 is a good reflection of what is important for Greater Adelaide between now and 2045: Strongly agree

The Coalition welcomes the theme of *Health, wellbeing and inclusion* into the Plan. We agree that the seven policies are appropriate and reflect what we know about creating healthy, liveable neighbourhoods.

We welcome the commitment to developing guidelines for appropriate thresholds for community infrastructure for new urban infill and growth area. This is a vital planning policy support for the 'inclusion' element.

The Coalition members suggested the following amendments:

- Page 68 - Planning policies should consider the requirements of the ageing population, and provide consideration to ageing in place. We support planning policy that would encourage new models of service provision that allow people to remain living in their community throughout their life. This would include looking at zoning restrictions that often preclude residential care from being near the services, shops, and community they require.
- Page 68 – Policies are missing on social inclusion. Suggest including a policy as follows “Create safe and engaging public places, where people of all ages can congregate for social activities, in a positive setting.”
- Page 68 – Include policy that encourages the planning of segregated bike paths
- Page 69 – Streets for People, needs to be about more than “green and leafy”. Must include: activation of streets, quality infrastructure, prioritising walking and cycling over vehicles.
- Page 69 – Diverse Housing Options, to also include social and community housing options.

Once again we would strongly suggest that the theme be implemented to proactively target disadvantaged areas to improve health and wellbeing.

Although it is outside of the scope of this Plan, our members have been adamant that the **quality** of the open space developed be addressed, and that we improve the linkages to open space by taking a regional approach.

## **Policy 11: Open Space; Sport and Recreation.**

Policy 94 (p102) addresses convenient distances for accessing open spaces, however it is not clear how the walking distance of a neighbourhood to open space would be measured?

The Heart Foundation's *Healthy by Design SA* guidelines recommends a small open space be within 150-300m of dwellings and a larger open space be within 500m of dwellings. It is at the Government's discretion as to whether it uses a distance in the target however:

- the Healthy Neighbourhoods diagram (p69) has a criterion that dwellings should be within 400m of any public open space (not necessarily a green space)
- the Walkable Neighbourhoods criteria (Target 4) has a threshold of 400m for a public open space greater than 4000m<sup>2</sup> (p134). It is not clear where this criterion has come from.

It is suggested that the Plan re-words P94 (p102) to use dwellings rather than neighbourhoods.

Consistency is required between P44 in the *Health, Wellbeing and Inclusion* section and Target 4. Either the Heart Foundation criteria for distance to larger parks (acknowledging that existing green space is limited in inner metro areas) could be adopted or the rationale for where the 4000m<sup>2</sup> space within 5 min walk criteria comes from could be explained.

## **References**

This submission was informed by the following references:

1. Heart Foundation, and the SA Active Living Coalition. *Streets for People*. 2012
2. Udell T, et al. *Does Density Matter? The role of density in creating walkable neighbourhoods*. 2014
3. Heart Foundation SA. *Healthy by Design SA*. 2012
4. Heart Foundation SA. *Good for Business. The benefits of making streets more walking and cycling friendly*. 2011
5. *Transit-oriented developments. Through a health lens*. SA Dept of Health and Ageing. 2011

We would strongly encourage these references to be included in the 30-Year Plan for Greater Adelaide.

We would also suggest the heading "End notes" on page 155, be changed to "References".

