Croydon South

Our 20-Minute Neighbourhood

20-Minute Neighbourhood Pilot Program

VICTORIA
State Government

Creating a city of 20-minute neighbourhoods

Neighbourhoods are the foundation of our city — they are the places we live, connect and build communities.

Plan Melbourne 2017-2050 is a long-term plan to accommodate Melbourne's future growth in population.

The 20-minute neighbourhood concept is a key principle of the strategy. The 20-minute neighbourhood is all about 'living locally' — giving people the ability to meet most of their everyday needs within a 20-minute walk from home, with access to safe cycling and local public transport options.

Research shows that 20-minutes is the maximum time people are willing to walk to meet their daily needs locally.[1]

These needs include local health facilities and services, schools and local shopping centres. This represents an 800m walk from home to a service or destination, and back again.

This distance is a guide as there are many factors that influence people's ability or willingness to walk.

To make Croydon South a more liveable place, people should have access to the 20-minute neighbourhood features within 800 metres from home.

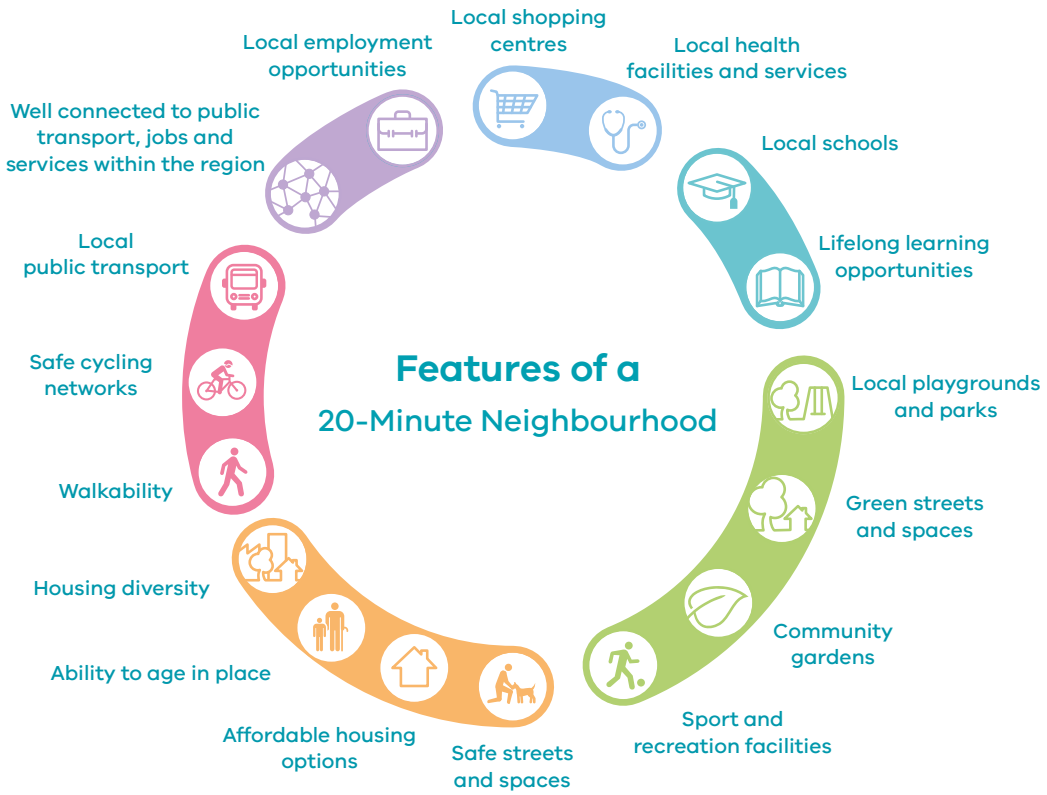


Figure 1 Features of a 20-minute neighbourhood

Source: Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning

20-Minute Neighbourhood Pilot Program

The Victorian Government is working in partnership with local government to test the implementation of 20-minute neighbourhoods in three pilot projects sites in Melbourne.

This report outlines the approach taken in the Croydon South pilot project, delivered in partnership with Maroondah City Council, Victoria Walks and the Heart Foundation (Victoria).

The purpose of the project was to identify opportunities to improve liveability and create a 20-minute neighbourhood in Croydon South.

The project was delivered in three stages.

The pilot program and this report are important in developing local solutions to address global and metropolitan sustainable development challenges.

20-minute neighbourhood 'hallmarks'

Plan Melbourne outlines the 'hallmarks' of a 20-minute neighbourhood.

The purpose of the pilot project was to identify opportunities to deliver on the hallmarks in Croydon South.

To deliver on the hallmarks and be a 20-minute neighbourhood, Croydon South must:

- be safe, accessible and well connected for pedestrians and cyclists to optimise active transport
- offer high-quality public realm and open space
- 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
- facilitate thriving local economies.

Pilot project stages

1.1 Community partnerships

Place-based engagement to understand community concerns and capture their ideas

1.2 Technical assessments

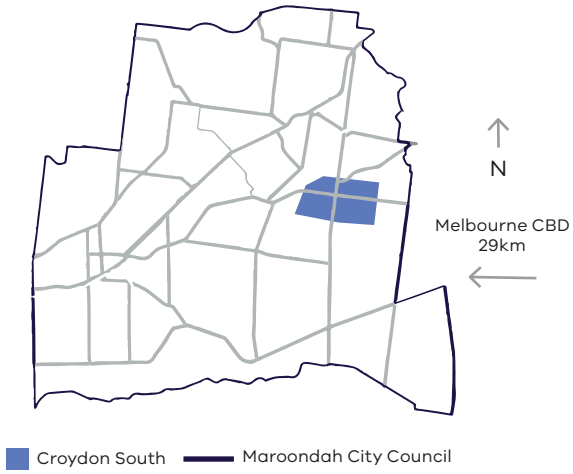
Technical assessments undertaken on walkability, transport network, land use, housing density and vegetation cover

1.3 Future opportunities

Initiatives and infrastructure opportunities identified for the neighbourhood

Cheong Park, Croydon South

Croydon South



Neighbourhood context

Croydon South is a 'middle ring' suburb of Melbourne, located approximately 29km east of Melbourne CBD and approximately 4km from Ringwood Metropolitan Activity Centre. The neighbourhood is serviced by bus route 664 (Chirnside Park-Knox City) and Tarralla Creek Trail (Strategic Cycling Corridor).

Croydon South is characterised by undulating topography and an abundance of public open space including Cheong Park and Dorset Recreation Reserve. The Eastfield Shops is a Neighbourhood Activity Centre and a primary destination in the area.

The Eastfield shops offers a variety of small retail services including cafés, organic grocers, a small supermarket, a bakery, restaurants, hairdressers, local health services, a chemist, and a newsagent.

The Eastfield Shops are located at the intersection of Bayswater and Eastfield road. Both are major arterial roads. The area is predominately car-based with single use low-scale commercial development. The public space is dominated by impermeable surfaces including a large car park and an inaccessible stormwater drain along Tarralla Creek.

The activity centre is well positioned to undergo renewal in the coming years and support greater diversity of housing, enhanced public spaces, improved interface with the creek and improved destinations.

The 20-minute neighbourhood concept is all about 'living locally'

Maroondah strategic directions

The following Maroondah strategic plans informed the project opportunities:

- Maroondah 2040 Community Vision
- Maroondah Health and Wellbeing Plan 2017–2021
- Maroondah Open Space Strategy 2016
- Maroondah Housing Strategy 2016

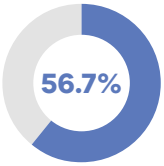
As set out in Maroondah 2040, Maroondah will be a vibrant and diverse city with a healthy and active community, living in green leafy neighbourhoods. These neighbourhoods are connected to thriving and accessible activity centres contributing to a prosperous economy within a safe, inclusive and sustainable environment.

The Maroondah 2040 Community Vision captures the aspirations, desires, dreams, and priorities of the community looking ahead to the year 2040 and beyond.

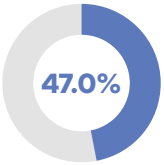
This long-term vision provides a 'roadmap' for the community, Council and other levels of government to partner together and create a future that enhances Maroondah as a great place to live, work, play and visit.

Community health profile

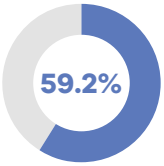
The following physical, mental and social indicators for Maroondah City Council residents are relevant for Croydon South:



Do not meet physical activity guidelines

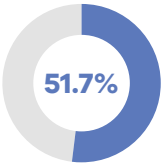


Feel unsafe walking alone after dark, significantly less than the Victorian estimate

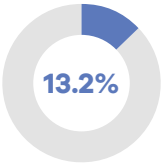


Feel that they live in a close-knit neighbourhood

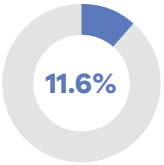
The three most popular non-organised physical activities are walking, cycling, and gym or fitness.



Walk



Cycle



Gym/fitness

Croydon South, image courtesy of Maroondah City Council

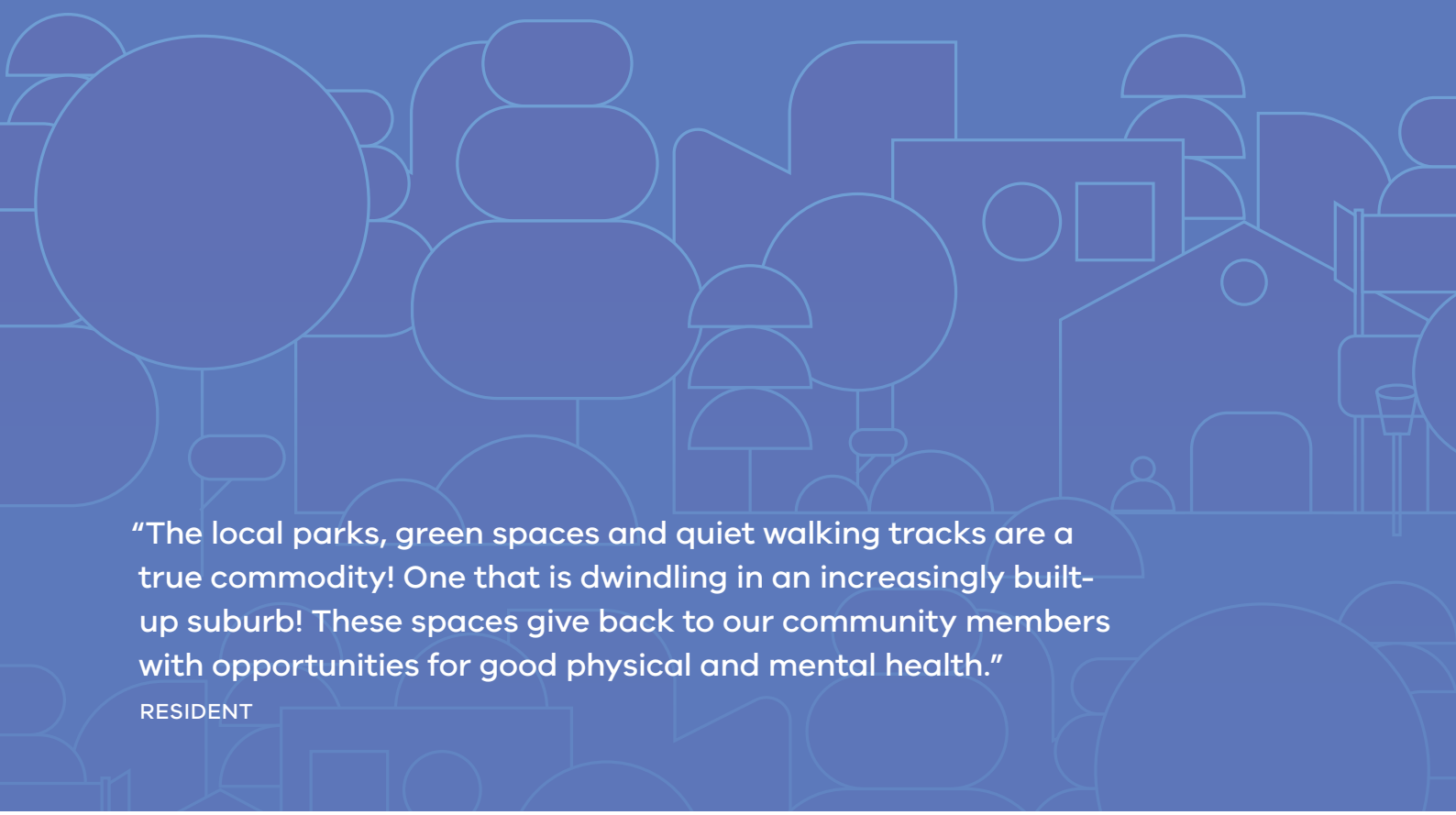
Croydon South pilot project

1 Community partnerships

A community partnership approach underpinned the pilot project. This reflects the need to strengthen community participation in the planning of our city.

The project empowered a broad range of local people to take a partnering role to support the project and help shape the changes they want to see in their neighbourhood.

Maroondah City Council has undertaken a range of initiatives to support the community to take a meaningful role in consultation and increased their ownership of the changes they want to see in their neighbourhoods.



"The local parks, green spaces and quiet walking tracks are a true commodity! One that is dwindling in an increasingly built-up suburb! These spaces give back to our community members with opportunities for good physical and mental health."

RESIDENT

Croydon South Community Day

A Croydon South Community Day was held on 8 September 2018 at the Eastfield Shops. The area was converted into a market from 9.00am to 1.00pm. The purpose of the day was to build community connections, promote 20-minute neighbourhoods and ask residents: what would you change and what would you keep the same in Croydon South?

The street market comprised a range of community stalls that covered the full length of the shopping strip. The stalls were run by Maroondah City Council, the National Disability Insurance Agency, community groups, school and kindergartens, the cricket club, and four Croydon South businesses.

The event was attended by approximately 300 people with activities including children's rides, tractors, balloon art, seed potting, science experiments, music performances, and craft activities.

Maroondah City Council hosted a community listening post where people participated in various forms of interactive engagement on council's pilot project Reimagining Tarralla Creek, (led by Melbourne Water in partnership with council), and the Greening the Greyfields project (led by council in partnership with Swinburne University).

This event built relationships between council, local businesses and the community and demonstrated strong community connection to the place.

Direct engagement

Local government undertook a series of face-to-face engagements in the neighbourhood at the Eastfield Shops, Eastfield Dog Park, Croydon Library, and at a Duathlon event.

These engagements were particularly useful in establishing direct and informal engagement supporting the community partnership approach.

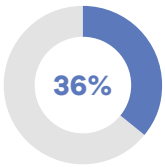
Each engagement involved visits to key neighbourhood locations to capture residents' community perspectives, as well as promote, educate and gain support for the project.

Council reported that the engagements were essential in developing positive relationships with the community and showing care for the neighbourhood. By investing time into these face-to-face interactions, council established a stronger presence in the community and increased the potential for partnerships in the future.

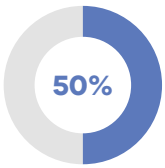
CrowdSpot

CrowdSpot is an innovative online engagement platform that was used in Croydon South to spatially map neighbourhood ideas, issues and favourite spots. This enabled hyper-local feedback and community insights that will shape future priorities. Council found the tool to be highly effective and will continue to use it in future engagement.

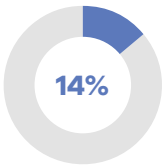
117
total responses



Idea spots



Movement issues spots



Favourite spots

Key recommendations include:

- Investigate opportunities to improve the Tarralla Creek Trail corridor.
- Improve crossings: Tarralla Creek and Eastfield Rd and Bayswater Rd and Eastfield Rd
- Install a community neighbourhood notice board

> "Tarralla trail crossing across Eastfield Rd is desperately needed. A dedicated pedestrian crossing is required as it can take a long time to cross & is dangerous with kids."
>
> RESIDENT

Liveability survey

The survey sought community feedback on perceptions of neighbourhood liveability. The survey was made available online and advertised via social media and by letterbox drop to residents. A total of 267 surveys were received.

The survey results revealed that residents felt they had little influence on local decision-making.

Common themes were the need for:

- affordable housing options
- local employment opportunities
- learning and engagement opportunities
- community art and cultural programs.

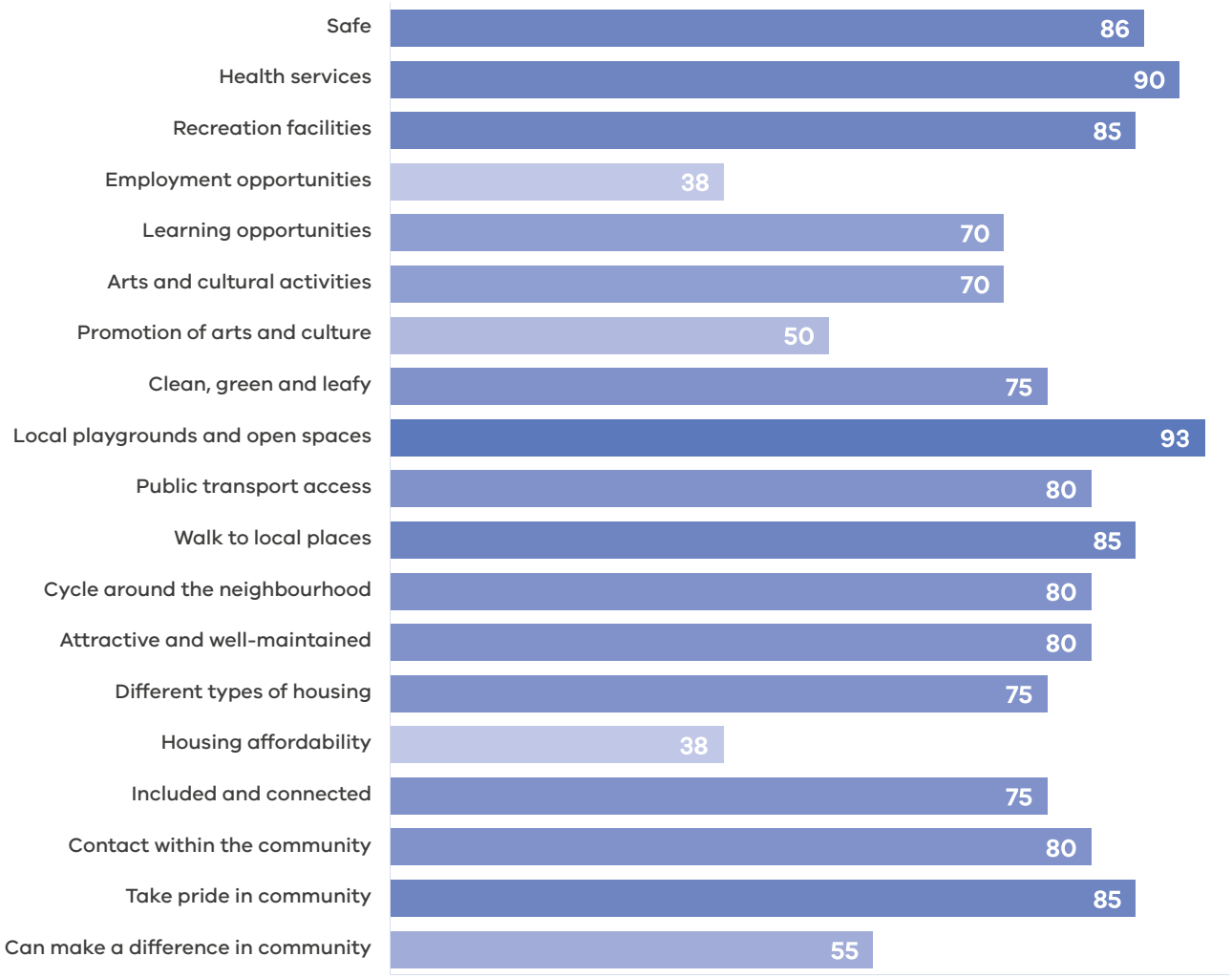
The Liveability survey reinforced strong community satisfaction with local playgrounds and parks, recreational facilities and local health services.

The survey results are mapped below showing community perspectives on access and satisfaction in Croydon South.

A high level of community satisfaction already exists within the 'Accessible & Connected', 'Safe, Healthy & Active' and 'Inclusive & Diverse' indicators.

Liveability survey results

Perspectives on access and community satisfaction in Croydon South



2 Technical assessments

To support a whole-of-government evidence-based approach to the project, DELWP facilitated the preparation of technical assessments for Croydon South. This included transport, housing, health and vegetation assessments.

Healthy Active by Design

The Heart Foundation works to improve heart disease prevention and care. A key way to achieve this is through improved physical activity by promoting walking, cycling and other forms of physical activity. Work undertaken by the Heart Foundation aligns closely with the aims of 20-minute neighbourhoods, in particular the Healthy Active by Design guidelines, which were developed as practical guide to address the need to create healthy neighbourhoods.

These guidelines were used to inform the delivery of the program and were adapted into a 20-Minute Neighbourhood Scorecard, which was used to identify opportunities in **Step 3: Future opportunities**. This simplified scorecard will be adapted into a useful tool for other councils.

For more information on the healthy active by design guidelines visit here

Walkability assessment

Victoria Walks is an independent health organisation that advocates for safe, accessible and connected environments that encourages walking.

In June 2018, Victoria Walks conducted an on-site walking assessment of Croydon South to identify pedestrian infrastructure issues.

The assessment provided preliminary recommendations to:

- Construct a pedestrian crossing on Eastfield Road.
- Reduce speed limits around Eastfield Shops.
- Improve wayfinding signage.
- Explore opportunities to naturalise the Tarralla Creek.
- Install raised zebra crossings at intersections.

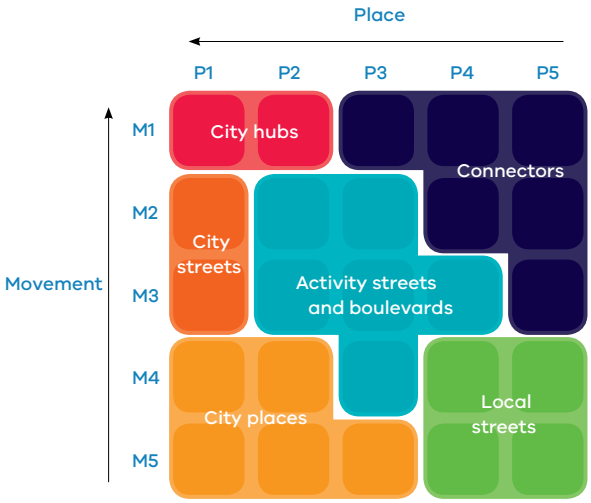
To see the full walkability assessment visit here

Movement and Place assessment

Movement and Place is a new Department of Transport road-management framework for Victoria. It recognises the role streets play not only in moving people and goods, but also in contributing to the places where people live, work and play. It integrates planning and transport and it will be used as a framework to support transport decision-making.

An assessment was undertaken for Croydon South, which was one of the first times the new framework was tested at a local level. Based on this assessment the following design objectives were identified for Croydon South:

- Pedestrian-safety upgrade at the intersection of Bayswater and Eastfield roads.
- Road-safety upgrade along Bayswater and Eastfield roads.
- Improvements to cycling infrastructure on Dorset Road and Patterson Street.



For information on the methodology, visit here

Housing development assessment

Housing development data provided information on the number and location of existing dwellings, vacant residential land, and recent residential development across all land in Victoria.

Housing stock in Croydon South is characterised by single detached dwellings. While there has been an increase in unit developments in recent years, the area is generally considered low density with 17 dwellings per hectare.

Research shows that a minimum housing density of 25 dwellings per hectare is needed to deliver inclusive, vibrant and healthy neighbourhoods.[2]

> **Facilitate an increased percentage of new housing in established areas to create a city of 20-minute neighbourhoods close to existing services, jobs and public transport.**
>
> **POLICY 2.1.2. PLAN MELBOURNE**

Vegetation and heat vulnerability assessment

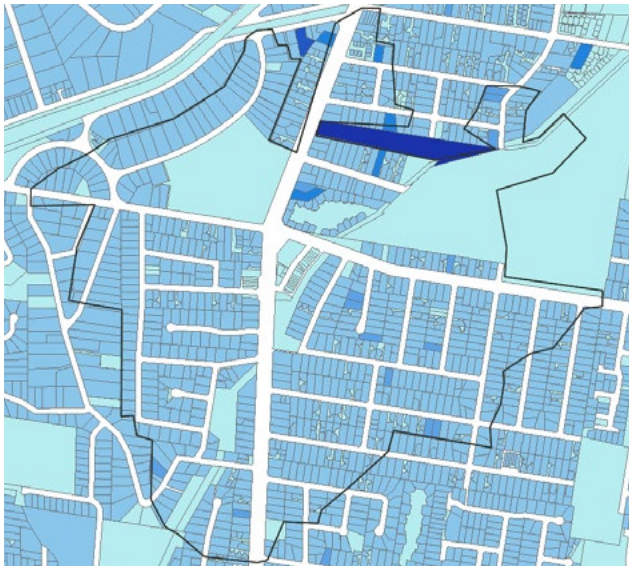
The urban heat-island effect is created by the built environment absorbing, trapping and, in some cases, directly emitting heat. This effect can cause the built environment to be up to four degrees Celsius hotter than surrounding non-urban areas.[3]

Increasing the vegetation cover and greening the city can provide cooling benefits and improve the community's resilience to extreme heatwaves. Urban greening and street trees remove pollution, an increase in tree cover by 10%, can reduce energy needed for heating and cooling by 5 to 10%.[4] Greenery can improve shade for walking and generally improve the public realm of neighbourhoods.

While vegetation mapping shows moderate to high canopy cover for most of Croydon South (more than 50%), there are some areas with low canopy cover (less than 30%). These areas include Eastfield Shops and industrial areas to the north.

To minimise heat vulnerability associated with low canopy cover, continued protection of existing vegetation is required. Future investment is also needed to increase support for an urban forest.

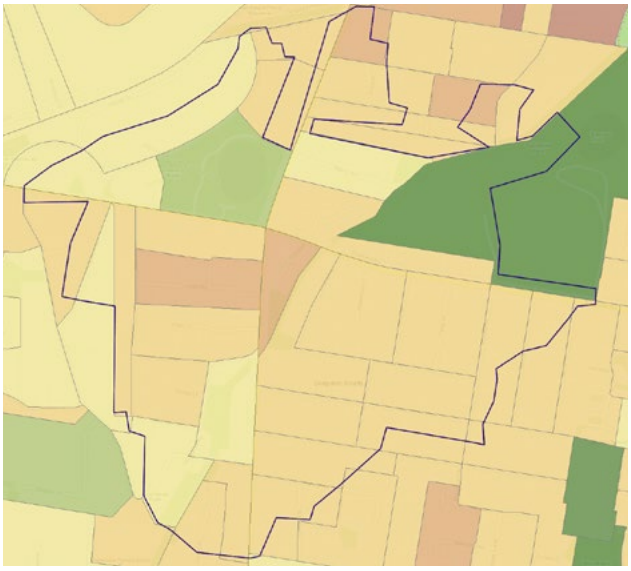
> **Support a cooler Melbourne by greening urban areas, buildings, transport corridors and open spaces to create an urban forest**
>
> **POLICY 6.4.1. PLAN MELBOURNE**



Housing Development Data Stock 2016

0 1 2 10+ Dwellings per lot

0 200m N



Percentage Vegetation Cover 2018

10–20 20–30 30–40 40–60 50-60 60+ %

0 200m N

3 Croydon South future opportunities

This section brings all the work on the pilot together, it draws on the community partnership feedback, workshops and technical assessments.

The 20-minute neighbourhood features (see figure 1) informed the three steps of the pilot program. The features have been used as the basis for a range of opportunities to improve liveability and support people to live locally in Croydon South.

The following opportunities reflect community ideas that will be a starting point in a local approach to delivering a 20-minute neighbourhood in Croydon South. These opportunities reflect community feedback and technical assessments. They are not formal funding commitments.

- Improve the cycling and pedestrian crossings at the railway line to support Ringwood to Croydon shared-user pathway
- Enhance connectivity and amenity of Tarralla Creek through improved walking and cycling paths and reorientation of the Eastfield Shops
- Investigate opportunities to prioritise pedestrian movement and increase pedestrian safety including though measures such as shared zones, speed restrictions and signal phasing
- Deliver pedestrian safety upgrades such as road art installations
- Improve pedestrian access to bus stops
- Review bus service routes and frequency and improve access to Ringwood East, Croydon, and Bayswater North industrial precinct
- Improve perceptions of safety by improving passive surveillance and lighting
- Deliver streetscape improvements within Eastfield Shops to revitalize the activity centre, including public toilets and noticeboards
- Establish a clear function and strategic direction for Eastfield Shops to support a mixed-use and vibrant activity centre
- Support safe walk-to-school program and work to implement pedestrian-safety upgrades
- Support community public art programs and installations including trail art and projects that reflect Aboriginal cultural heritage
- Continue to explore housing diversity options to support the Greening the Greyfields project and ensure a consistent approach to neighbourhood character

Note: These icons indicate areas for investigation, not specific locations or project sites

References

1 Badland H, Whitzman C, Lowe M, Davern M, Aye L, Butterworth I, Hes, D and Giles-Corti B 2014, Urban liveability: Emerging lessons from Australia for exploring the potential for indicators to measure the social determinants of health, Social Science and Medicine, 111: 64–73.

2 Badland H, Whitzman C, Lowe M, Davern M, Aye L, Butterworth I, Hes, D and Giles-Corti B 2014, Urban liveability: Emerging lessons from Australia for exploring the potential for indicators to measure the social determinants of health, Social Science and Medicine, 111: 64–73.

3 Voogt, JA 2002, 'Urban heat island', in I Douglas (ed.), Encyclopedia of global environmental change, John Wiley and Sons, New York

4 Ewing, R et al. 2008, Growing cooler: The evidence on urban development and climate change. Washington, DC: Urban Land Institute.

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