

City Planning *for* Modern Lifestyles

Solving real urban issues & changing the way we plan and develop our cities

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Solution 2 - Active Communities

1. Problems

Around the world many communities have been built around the Great American Dream; A big house in the outer suburbs, a big backyard, a swimming pool and space for multiple cars.

This is what we were all told we should aspire to. Everyone copied everyone else, and so now American, Australia and many other countries have cities have sprawling car orientated suburbs full of big houses in with big backyards and swimming pools and parking for lots of cars.

“Normal is getting dressed in clothes that you buy for work and driving through traffic in a car that you are still paying for in order to get to the job you need to pay for the clothes and the car, and the house you leave vacant all day so you can afford to live in it.” Ellen Goodma

2. The challenges

- Car orientated lifestyles
- Traffic congestion
- Inactivity
- Physical inactivity
- Obesity
- Financial disadvantage

3. The mistakes we make

- The planned distances between origins and destinations in our communities are too long.
- Alternatives to car travel are implemented in new communities too late
- There is no consistent provision of active transport infrastructure

4. The principles for creating change

Increasingly, local governments, public and private sector planners are considering ways to create change. There are four key principles.

- Be positive
- Create an appetite for change
- Overcome people’s anxiety
- Help people build new habits

5. The solution

The solution is the 7 step process in my book Active Communities

1. Create some clarity
2. Understand travel times
3. Produce reference materials for developers
4. Provide the appropriate solutions for the target audience
5. Ensure alternatives to using the car are attractive
6. Sequencing
7. Collect data

6. The benefits

Active communities are places where bicycling and walking are safe, healthy, fun and normal daily activities. Active communities are highly desirable places to live featuring environments where healthy physical activity permeates through all aspects of life. An active community is a place where everyone can live safely and get involved in activities they enjoy. These are communities that thrive with a culture of activity.

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