


Slide 1

The slide features a blue header with the City of Gosnells logo and name. The main content is on a yellow background with the title "Walking the Talk" in blue. Below the title is the subtitle "Local Government's role in facilitating walking and reducing car dependence" in blue. At the bottom, there is a white bar with the names "Etienne Brits (City of Gosnells)", "Ray Haeren", and "Taylor Burrell Barnett" next to their respective logos. To the right of the names are four small images: a person walking, a person pushing a stroller, a person on a bicycle, and a person on a motorbike.

Local Government has a critical role to play in implementation of sustainability in urban form.

Gosnells is a place which is striking new ground in the implementation of sustainability at a grass roots level. Gosnells is not a wealthy Council, in fact its rate base and staff ratios are amongst the lowest per capita in Perth. Which begs the question why and how Gosnells can take the lead?

The answer – vision, commitment and foresight.

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### Why it is part of LG Core Business

- Creating sustainable communities
- Improving viability of centres – people have to get there to spend money;
- Community health and wellbeing;
- Cars cannot meet the needs of all (young, poor etc)



Some may ask – what does walking and creating accessible areas have to do with Local Government? Is it a feel good thing?

The Local Government Act in fact requires Local Government to facilitate the creation of sustainable communities – and this is from the economic, social and environmental perspective.

if people can't get there they can't spend their money, therefore increasing accessibility for all improves the economic viability of centres.

Improving the walkability of new and existing areas is receiving increasing recognition for its health benefits, but also in the creation of communities. People on the street increase the safety of neighbourhoods and encourage interaction which has benefits in creating a sense of community. This is particularly important for those in our community without access to a car – such as the young, seniors and the poor. Many Local Governments spend significant time and money dealing with traffic issues - Providing opportunities for people to get mobile without their car would seem to be a good place to take a long term approach to addressing these problems. This is also part of a more global issue of getting people to be more sustainable and with petrol prices on the rise this may be more forced than chosen.

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## From the Macro to the Micro

- Macro
  - Safe Urban form
  - Having destinations
  - Interesting environments
  - Networks and choice
- Micro
  - Shared Paths
  - Road design
  - Levels and grades
  - Shade and seating



There is a broad range of issues which need to be considered.

Has the broader planning been done?

Do people feel safe to walk – or is there estate walls on both sides representing a canyon etc

Is there something to walk to? Even a mail box or a place to buy some milk?

Is there a level of interest in the street and the ability to see your neighbours?

Is walking a reasonable option and are there alternative routes?


Many aspects are contained within Liveable Neighbourhoods.

But once you have the big picture – the devil is in the detail. Local Governments need to look at their standards and procedures to facilitate good environments on the ground.

This does not mean separating everything in the name of safety either – sharing of space is critical if we are going to get the overall picture right.

Underpasses may save you from being hit by a car – but is being mugged better?

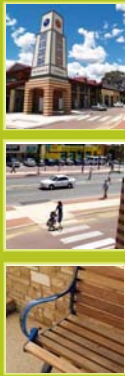
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## A Holistic Approach to Walkability

- Walkability is about much more than footpaths
- Broad Principles to create people friendly places
  - Destinations and origins
  - Create a built form that invites people/ pedestrians to enjoy the public domain
  - Calm Traffic and make people/pedestrians feel safe
  - Accessibility to all
  - Small comforts and qualities make big differences



It is about sustainability or the whole environment including things like:

Health

Social Capital

The Economy

The Urban village

It is fairly straight forward – if you want to accommodate walking, you'll have to accommodate people

And to accommodate people you need to consider their varying needs and ability

If we don't get it right at the small scale it will not work.

You can have the best regional plan for a network of footpaths, but if you do not give enough attention to the detail you'll fail to make it attractive for people to walk.

The small scale is important because people need to:

sit, stand and walk

see, hear and talk

and we have to give attention to these functions of people if we want to create places that they'd want to use

## Slide 5



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### Gosnells Initiatives

- Universal Access
- Safe City
- Urban Design
- Etc.



An example of this kind of holistic approach can be found in the Gosnells Town Centre (GTC) Project.

#### Universal Access:

Universal access was designed into the project from the outset.

And the city has received an internationally judged award in the 1999 Universal Design competition in this regard for the GTC revitalisation project.

Quote from person in wheelchair in photo:

*“Sometimes I can get to where I need to go, so I can do my shopping, pay my bills, visit my friends and go out for lunch. Sometimes I can only get part of the way and then can’t go any further. So I just turn around and go home.”*

#### Safe City:

One of the most comprehensive studies of crime and urban layout was also conducted by Space Syntax at the University College of London.

Urban design guidelines specifically geared towards safety followed from this work

#### Urban Design Guidelines:

General Gosnells Urban Design Guidelines were also compiled based on the community's desire:

“to recreate traditional urban qualities including the variety of land use and the human activity associated with it”

#### Some other component of the project that is worth mentioning are:

The Railway station,

Relocated,

With universal accessibility,

Safe city features and

Integrated public art

The Civic Centre – which is called the Agonis

an Energy Efficiency 4 ½ star Australian Building Greenhouse rating, with a

Knowledge Centre and Business incubator

Town Square with fully integrated

Universal accessibility,

Safe city features and

Public art

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**“the battle for quality is won – or lost – at the small scale” Jan Gehl**



The photograph shows a street scene with a cyclist in the foreground, a pedestrian pushing a stroller, and a car. The street has a wide crosswalk with white stripes and a red brick-paved area. In the background, there are commercial buildings, including one with a sign for 'H&R BLOCK'. The overall scene depicts a well-designed, pedestrian-friendly urban environment.


All the previous strategic initiatives are extremely important.  
However, if we leave it at that, success will not necessarily be achieved.  
Time and effort has to be spent on the detail

4 of the areas where Gosnells spent the time on detail and got it right:  
The built form,  
Traffic calming,  
Accessibility, and  
Small comforts that make urban areas truly people friendly.

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## Built Form

- David Sucher, City Comforts (2003) – “The 3 Rules of Urban Design to preserve and create walkable commercial areas.”



Built form is a crucial element of places where people enjoy walking. It provides the frame for the pedestrian area and if this frame does not provide pedestrians with opportunities for engagement they will not use it to its full potential. Many issues are addressed in the GTC Urban design guidelines.

However, the few crucial ones to focus on are:

Build to the sidewalk:

Inside floor level at level of sidewalk

Make building front “permeable”:

Prohibit mirrored glass and coverings that block visibility

Prohibit Parking Lots at the front of Buildings

Allow on street parking it is essential for business


*However, in many cases this is not easy and Gosnell is an example of that.*

*Arterial routes sometimes make it impossible to build to the property boundary and then we have to be creative and engineer suitable outcomes.*

*In the case of Gosnell a so-called “slip-Lane” parking area in front of the building was created.*


*This imitates on street parking,*

*creates a slow traffic area where pedestrians feel safe and the two other principles are still achievable.*

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## Calm Traffic and Let People Feel Safe

- “Effective planning for pedestrian-oriented cities recognise [that motor vehicles are an important part of our modern way of life]”



The car is an important part of our lives today as the quote from David Sucher suggests. And it doesn't really matter how much we despise the over reliance on cars, they remain the preferred mode of transport for people at present. The art of creating good walkable places lies in how we direct this traffic to make pedestrians more important.

In the case of Gosnell's the following measures were implemented:

High non-mountable curbs

Bulb corners

Decrease turning radius

Raise cross walks


Curve and narrow roads

Trees

On street parking

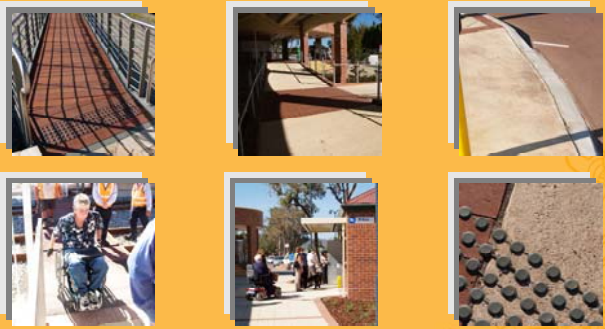
Mid block crossings

Etc.

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## Accessibility

- Universal Accessibility takes into account and addresses peoples varying needs and ability to get around.




The slide features a 2x3 grid of images illustrating various accessibility measures. The top row includes a close-up of a metal ramp, a view of a curbed ramp, and a close-up of a tactile paving tile. The bottom row includes a person in a wheelchair, a view of a crossing, and another close-up of a tactile paving tile. A large, faint watermark of the City of Gosnell logo is visible in the background of the slide.

As mentioned earlier in the presentation, the provision of access to all has been incorporated in GTC right from the start of the project. And it shows in the comprehensive way that it's been addressed throughout GTC.

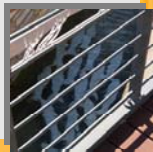



Some of the mechanisms used include:

- Ramps
- Curbed ramps
- Crossings
- Toilets
- Tack tiles

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### Small comforts and personalisation

- “the battle for quality [urban environment] is won – or lost – at the small scale” Jan Gehl



Small things that make walking and staying pleasurable for people is often forgotten because of their perceived insignificance. But it is often these small things that make for a successful pedestrian and urban environment in general.

These paraphernalia include:

Places to rest in the shade

Toilets

Water

Garbage bins

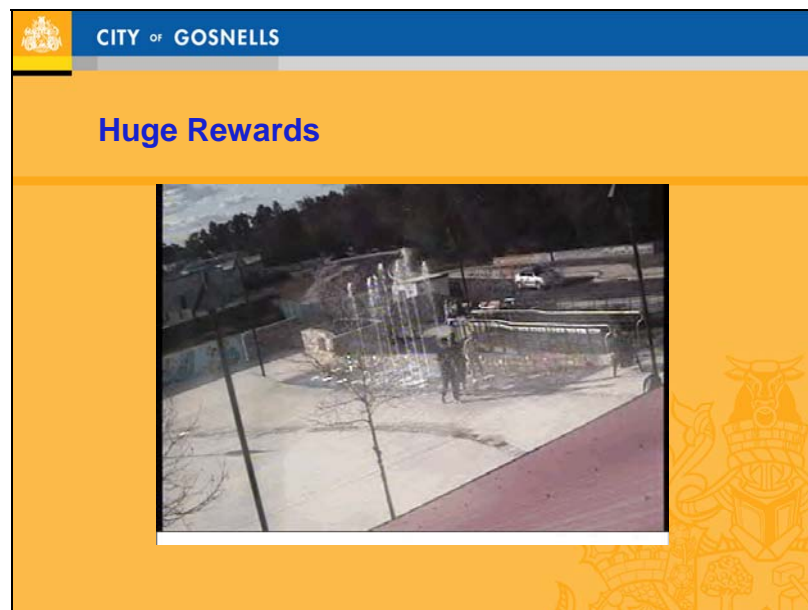
Shade for walking and protection from rain

Art

Integrated into Railway Station and Town Square

Scattered throughout town centre

Temporary art pieces



If done properly, huge rewards can be reaped by communities and local governments  
– see good story CCTV clip

Finally, there are three key ingredients to the creation of good urban environments:  
Including the important issues like accessibility, walkability, safety, etc right from the start of a project;  
Affording enough time to detail; and  
Having people that care about the issues enough to ensure it is implemented in projects.