

Acknowledgment of Country

Transport Canberra and City Services (TCCS) acknowledge that Aboriginal people are the Traditional Owners of Australia. We acknowledge and pay respect to the Ngunnawal people as the custodians of the land and waters that we live and thrive on today and recognise any other people or families with connection to the lands of the ACT and region.

TCCS acknowledges that Canberra's cultural and natural heritage was maintained by the Aboriginal people for many generations before colonial settlement on Australian soil. Aboriginal people's management of the land preserved the natural balance of local plants and animals.

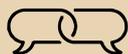
This knowledge of the environment in which we live is critical to the protection and restoration of our land today. It is our responsibility to preserve and encourage traditional custodian family groups, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural integrity. When using this document, consider opportunities to incorporate Ngunnawal, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture into the street planning and design of our suburbs within the ACT.

Gender Sensitive Urban Design Implementation Toolkit

Prepared by

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Introduction

It is important to note that gender sensitive urban design is not a women's issue. It seeks to resolve inequalities and disadvantages in our urban environment, developed from biased or gendered social structures, that limit the opportunities and rights of any person, regardless of gender.

Introduction

The Gender Sensitive Urban Design (GSUD) Toolkit is a comprehensive resource designed to provide designers with essential principles, practices, and strategies for creating inclusive public spaces. With a particular focus on the needs of women, girls, gender diverse individuals, and other vulnerable people, the toolkit offers a range of strategies to address the multifaceted aspects of gender sensitivity in the public realm.

These strategies encompass various themes, including the enhancement of perceived safety and the promotion of inclusiveness, ensuring that public spaces are welcoming and accessible for all individuals. By utilising the resources and guidance provided in the GSUD Toolkit, designers can actively contribute to the creation of more equitable and inclusive urban environments.

What is gender sensitive urban design?

Gender sensitive urban design recognises that people experience public spaces differently based on their identity.

Gender is just one of a multitude of interconnected categories that form an individual's identity, and shape how a person is treated in society. Individual characteristics such as sex, race, ability, sexual orientation, religion, and socio-economic status, as well as prior experiences (both good and bad), all interact on multiple and simultaneous levels. It is this interaction that contributes to feelings of vulnerability, discrimination and inequality. This is also referred to as intersectionality.

In an urban design context the interconnected categories that shape a person's experience of a public space, including their perceptions of safety and sense of belonging, are further expanded to include:

- **External influences** (a place's reputation, collective experiences, social conventions),
- **Spatial features** (lighting, number and types of people using space, planting and greenery, traffic, and visual cues such as art, presence of CCTV) and,
- **Urban design qualities** (comfort, legibility, enclosure, linkages, human scale, security, activity, image and cleanliness).

While not all the experiences that contribute to how a person feels in a public space can be solved by design, a gender sensitive approach will seek to understand and embrace diversity and re-address inequalities in the design of public realm to create more inclusive and equitable environments for everyone.

For example, the look and feel of high-quality public space is known to facilitate positive social behaviour that improves vulnerable people's experiences and perceptions of safety in public spaces. This can increase their sense of belonging and willingness to fully participate in community life.

Benefits of adopting gender sensitive urban design approach

The benefits of adopting a gender sensitive urban design approach are urban spaces that are inclusive, feel safe and comfortable, and are well managed. The recommendations within the Toolkit have broad ranging benefits for everyone and work towards improving Canberra's liveability and wellbeing of its citizens.

Purpose

The GSUD Toolkit is a practical guide that examines common gender-related public realm inequalities and challenges, offering recommendations to remedy and resolve.

Applying a gender sensitive approach will assist not only urban design professionals, but also the ACT Government in understanding how different groups experience the public realm addressing any inequalities in the urban environment.

This Toolkit is not intended to be prescriptive. It does not attempt to standardise outcomes or prescribe planning processes. Rather it acts as a guide, recognising that creative problem solving stems from nuance, empathy and understanding. The toolkit encourages teams to adopt a co-design approach by involving the people who will be directly affected by project outcomes in the decision making process.

Who the GSUD Toolkit is for?

The GSUD Toolkit aims to help and guide urban design professionals in both private practice or government who wish to implement safe and more inclusive urban spaces.



GSUD Toolkit

How to use the GSUD Toolkit

The GSUD Toolkit has three parts.

Part 1: Lived Experiences

Consists of personal stories describing how public realm inequalities impact people's lives. The stories allow designers to build empathy by walking in the shoes of other people and to connect directly with their challenges.

Part 2: What can designers do?

This is a toolkit which identifies common issues and recommends possible solutions. The tools are grouped into four sections relating to the different applications of gender sensitive urban design:

Part 3: How does it look and feel?

Demonstrates the application of the strategies to selected urban open space typologies to help bridge the gap between policy and practice.

1. Approach

Outlining how gender sensitivity can be embedded in the phases of the design process.

2. Urban Design Qualities

Describing the urban design values that contribute to more inclusive urban spaces.

3. Design Elements

Detailing the components of urban space and how they can be much more functional and inclusive.

4. Programme and Operation

Considering the role of ongoing management.

Part 1:

Lived Experiences

This section details six stories inspired by everyday life, and provides insight into the inequalities faced by Canberra locals. The purpose of these stories is to provide a personalised perspective to the facts and data collected during a number of place audits and surveys, build empathy, and motivate designers towards addressing the gendered issues in our design process and urban design outcomes.

A parent with a pram

This is Jane and her young daughter Charlotte. Jane would like to walk Charlotte to the local playgroup in her neighbourhood to make new friends, but the walking conditions are too poor and feel unsafe.

In some streets between her home and the neighbourhood centre there is no footpath at all, and she is forced to walk on the road, navigating around parked cars and competing with traffic, making Jane feel very vulnerable and anxious for Charlotte's safety.

As a consequence, when she has access to a car, Jane prefers to drive even though it is a short distance, or she doesn't go to playgroup at all missing out on important opportunities to exercise, connect to other carers and for Charlotte to make friends.

"I rarely bring my kids into the city unless we need to go shopping at the Canberra Centre. The streets around the city are hard to navigate while managing kids and a pram. There are very few free activities to entertain the kids – not even a play space. I avoid taking them past the carousel so they can't harass me to pay for a ride. Other issues are the quality of the footpaths and the concentration of certain types of the people in the public spaces make it feel unsafe."

Anita, City Walk workshop attendee

Challenges

- Paths are not continuous or barrier free
- No space and amenities for pedestrians.
- Dominance of cars and inappropriate traffic speeds.
- Road infrastructure takes precedence over pedestrian needs.
- Poor links to public amenities and facilities.



Walking along after dark

Clare works in Civic and walks home to Ainslie most nights with her partner Michael. There are many dark corners along the path and areas of low activity and it feels dangerous, making the walk too stressful to do on her own. So on the nights Mike can't accompany her, Clare changes her route to the well-lit and busy streets even though it means walking an extra 15 minutes, carries her house key as a potential weapon and texts Mike to let him know she has made it home safely.

"I am always confronted by people asking for smokes or money when I am alone in the City which makes me avoid the area when I am not with a large group or if it's getting dark."

YourSay feedback

Challenges

- Dark corners and patches without lighting.
- Inconsistent lighting levels.
- Lack of activity and no eyes on the street .
- Informal walking tracks through dark nature strips.



Can I use this toilet?

Susan is a 17 year old child that was born male, but recently decided to identify as female. While it has been a challenging time for Susan and her family navigating the transition, the issue of how gender diverse people are treated in public spaces was the real eye opener that caused stress and fear for the whole family. One basic right is to be able to use a public toilet without harassment, judgement, or embarrassment – which is not easy for a transgender person.

“I hate needing to use the public toilets. The locks are always damaged so you can’t secure the door, and there is never any soap.”

Belconnen skate park walkshop

Challenges

- Difficulty in finding suitable toilets.
- Feeling very unsafe using the male toilet.
- Fear of being harassed or judged for using the female toilet.
- Feeling very self-conscious about using the disabled toilet.



Girls in parks

Research undertaken as part of this project, together with the Belconnen skate park walkshop and place audits, clearly showed that girls stop using parks around the age of 12 years. The data indicates they become much more self-conscious and aware of gender inequalities in the way parks tend to cater more for boys (i.e. active sports courts, running and boisterous activities) and cater less for activities at the other end of the spectrum.

This sets in place a pattern of behaviour that continues into womanhood of not feeling like a legitimate user of public space.

Belconnen skate park regular, Annie, wants the skate park to be a place where a lot more females, whether they are kids, adults, parents, beginners or advanced skaters, feel that they belong. The park design needs to cater for their needs too.

“I’ve had a few experiences with some men in skateboarding that shame you for learning and encourage you to do more feminine activities, like roller skating.”

Annie, Interviewee

Challenges

- Lack of activities that girls enjoy.
- Skate parks and multipurpose courts are often dominated by large groups of boys.
- Self-conscious and intimidated, girls don't like being observed.
- No easy exit.
- Poor passive surveillance.



Living with a disability

Connor's experiences as a transgender male with autism means that he favours quiet and safe spaces. They help him remain calm. Connor also helps his mother with a disability and would love for public spaces to support their mobility needs.

"I'm autistic and that comes with quite a lot of problems in public spaces because of the noise and lights. My mum is also physically disabled, so I have an insight into that aspect of things too."

Connor, Interviewee

Challenges

- Feeling welcome.
- Lack of quiet spaces and zones.
- A choice of spaces to stop and rest.
- Barrier free access.



Culturally safe places

Aboriginal (Yidindji and Gurang) and Torres Strait Islander (Mer and Mabuaig) woman, Margaret, wants to see women and First Nations' culture embraced and celebrated to feel safer on Ngunnawal Country.

“For me, it’s about creating cultural safety in public spaces. In Canberra there are significant women’s and men’s areas that belong to the Ngunnawal and Ngambri people and there’s no upfront information about that. I don’t feel that planning takes into consideration of the cultural significance of an area, where First Nations people can come and celebrate ceremony.”

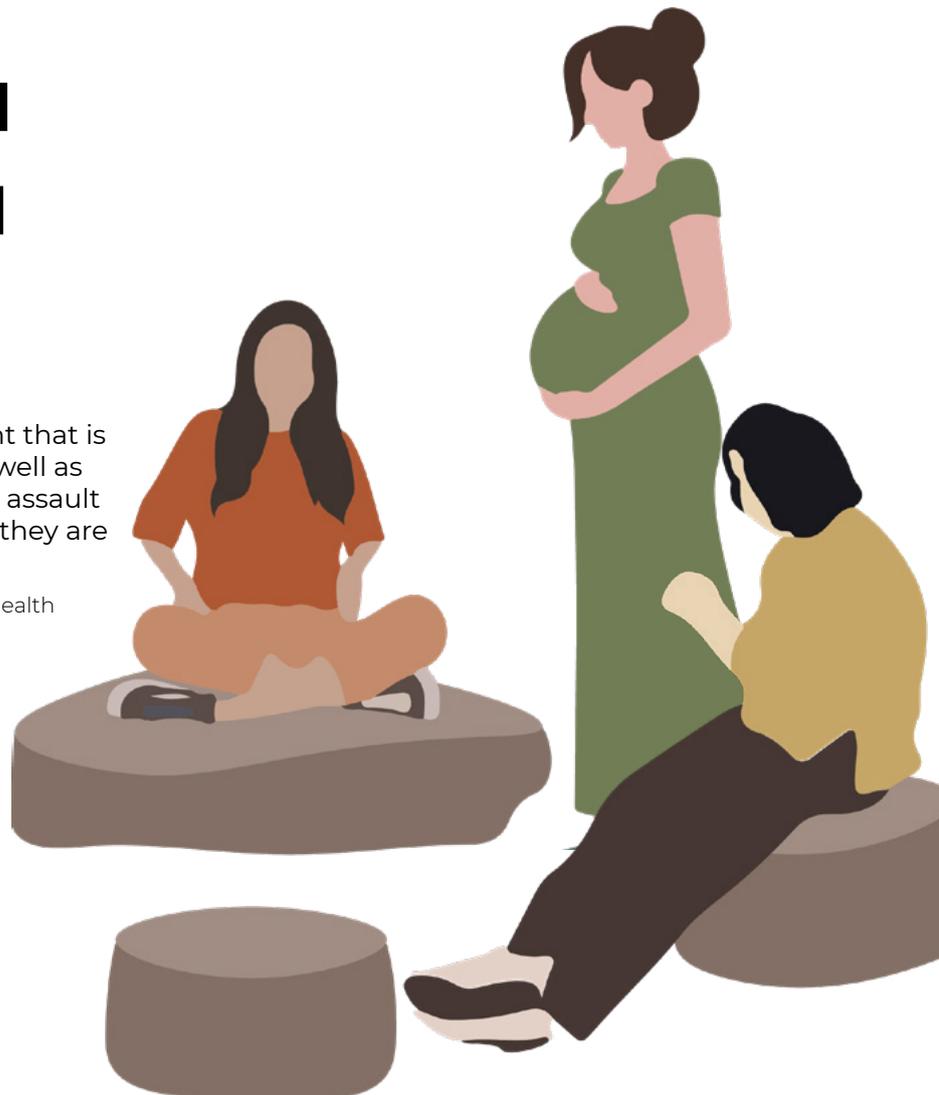
Margaret, Interviewee

Cultural safety is defined as: an environment that is spiritually, socially and emotionally safe, as well as physically safe for people; where there is no assault challenge or denial of their identity, of who they are and what they need.

Source: Williams, R (cited in The Journal of the Public Health Association of Australia Inc. 2008).

Challenges

- Opportunity for First Nations peoples to influence decision making.
- Respecting First Nations peoples' time and contributions.
- Avoiding tokenistic solutions.
- Feeling welcome for First Nations peoples.
- Celebrating the identity and richness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures.
- Encouraging positive behaviour.





Part 2:

What can designers do?

Part 2 is a set of guidance tools which identify common urban design inequalities and recommend possible solutions. The tools are grouped into four sections relating to different applications of gender sensitive urban design.

1. Approach

Outlining how gender sensitivity can be embedded in the phases of the design process.

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Each section of the toolkit includes:

- background
- key reflective questions
- identifies the issue and why it is an issue
- action
- further reading resources and tools.

The key questions offer a point of reflection and act as a catalyst to challenge business as usual solutions. They also ensure that each project or place will be treated uniquely and informed by context and engagement with community members. There is no one size fits all solution.

Approach

Build a gender balanced design team

The team structure should reflect the aim of gender equality by including a range of identities.

Make gender sensitivity a core project objective

Gender sensitivity should be a foundation objective across any urban design project.

Targeted consultation

Engage with a broad range of people, with a specific effort to seek out the voices of diverse and vulnerable people.

Design thinking

Designers must be able to walk in the shoes of the users of public space.

Keeping promises: post-occupancy evaluation

Evaluation will determine how well the design lives up to the original project objectives and if it meets community expectations.

Programme and Operation

Place management

Good place management is a careful balance of presentation and place activation, equally considering social, environmental and financial factors.

Urban Design Qualities

Sociability

Sociable places make people feel comfortable about being themselves.

Activity and uses

Activities and uses are the things that give people a reason to visit and stay in a public space.

Visibility

Visibility is about having clear sight lines to see what is happening within a place, and passive surveillance provided by other people using the space.

Accessibility, legibility and connections

It is important that spaces are easy to get to, easy to enter, and easy to navigate by foot, with a pram, by scooter or bike.

Comfort and image

Considers the sensory qualities of urban spaces and how they impact on people's experience.

Identity

Identity is the expression of social values and culture in the urban design fabric, providing a sense of belonging.

Scale

Understand the macro-scale, city structure, and the human scale, to ensure women are considered in the planning of our cities and the creation of comfortable spaces.

Design Elements

Lighting

Good lighting in public spaces plays an essential role in improving the perception of safety.

Pathways

A high-quality and safe pedestrian and cycle path network are important factors in inclusive design, encouraging people to participate in public life.

Public toilets

Safe access to clean public toilets is a basic right, supports inclusion and dignity, and is essential for participation in public life.

Urban greening - green infrastructure

Provide equitable access to nature to support communities and help create a special place to live and dwell.

Urban furniture

Integrate urban furniture within the public realm to support the elderly, those with limited mobility, and adults with small children.

Spaces

Open spaces within the urban environment, are defined and shaped by surrounding elements that enclose them.

Representation of women and gender diverse people

Representing women and gender diverse people will boost their visibility in the urban environment and acknowledge their achievements.

Approach

Embedding Gender Sensitive Urban

Design in the design process

Build a gender balanced design team

To foster gender equality, it is crucial to establish team structures that embrace a range of identities.

By including individuals of diverse genders, including men, women, and gender diverse people, in decision-making processes, we can enhance the team's perspective and tap into a broader spectrum of thinking.

This diversity of voices enables the design team to benefit from a wider range of experiences, ideas, and insights, leading to more informed and creative solutions.

Moreover, the inclusion of diverse perspectives in decision-making processes enhances awareness and promotes a more inclusive approach to design. By actively involving individuals from different gender identities, we can create a collaborative and equitable environment that supports gender equality and fosters innovation in the design process.

Key reflective questions

- What is the composition of the design team?
- Are different genders represented? Does one single gender make up the majority of team members?
- Do decision-makers have empathy and competence for gender equality and sensitivity in design?
- Does the team culture foster appropriate attitudes, values and behaviour which support gender inclusivity and encourage different members to participate?
- Is there equitable representation in the decision making?

Make gender sensitivity a core project objective

Gender sensitivity should serve as a fundamental objective in every urban design project, prioritising a commitment to inclusivity.

Given the unique nature of each project and its context, the level of ambition, expected outcomes, and design processes for achieving gender sensitivity will vary and should be tailored on a project-by-project basis.

These objectives should be closely linked to performance evaluation criteria, enabling the measurement of outcomes and ensuring accountability. It is important to align the objectives of gender sensitive urban design with the broader goals of the ACT Wellbeing Framework, as both share a common aim of fostering inclusive, equitable, and sustainable communities.

By integrating gender sensitivity as a core objective and aligning it with established evaluation frameworks, urban design projects can contribute to the overarching goals of promoting wellbeing and enhancing the quality of life for all community members.

“When talking about individual wellbeing, we often speak to a person’s physical and mental health, the strength of connections they share with people around them, or their financial position. More expansive indicators of wellbeing can be a person’s relationship to their surroundings, such as their safety, their capacity to enjoy and live in harmony with the natural and built environment, or their ability to be mobile in their community. These aspects of wellbeing are not independent of each other. They operate together and influence one another, creating complex relationships that are in turn shaped by an individual’s lived experience.”

[ACT Wellbeing Framework, ACT Government](#)

Key reflective questions

- What can this project accomplish in relation to gender sensitivity?
- What are the expected outcomes?
- Who will benefit?
- How will it be achieved?
- How will its success be measured - method and metric?
- How we evaluation inform future methods and processes?

Further reading and resources

The Guardian (2014) [City with a female face: how modern Vienna was shaped by women](#)

Targeted consultation

To ensure inclusive and gender sensitive urban design, it is crucial to engage with the future users of public spaces, gaining insights into their experiences, concerns, aspirations, and goals.

This engagement should encompass a broad range of individuals, with a particular emphasis on hearing from diverse and vulnerable groups, taking into account factors such as gender, race, ethnicity, (dis)ability, and socio-economic status.

Collaborating with non-profit organisations and advocacy groups that address issues of inequality can provide valuable assistance in ensuring that the voices of the most vulnerable are heard during the consultation process.

Various platforms and techniques can be employed to engage with the community throughout the project's lifecycle.

These include focus groups, individual interviews, intercept interviews, co-design workshops, placemaking activities, surveys, and online participation.

It is important to address and challenge stereotypes and unconscious bias that may influence people's perceptions and contributions during the consultation process. Techniques should be implemented to raise awareness of unconscious bias, build capacity, and foster authentic participation.

When collecting data, it is advisable to segregate the information by gender, enabling a comprehensive understanding of the differences between genders and their experiences.

This gender-disaggregated data provides valuable insights for designing more tailored and inclusive solutions.

By prioritising meaningful and inclusive engagement, and employing data segregation, urban design projects can better meet the diverse needs and aspirations of the community, fostering truly inclusive and gender sensitive public spaces.

Key reflective questions

- Who is being consulted? Are there any groups missing?
- What consultation techniques are being used?
- Does the consultation process collect insights into the way that people see, understand, and interact with the urban environment? What difficulties do people face?
- What are people's emotional and physical needs?
- How is unconscious bias being managed?
- How do we evaluate the consultation process to ensure it effectively captures a diverse range of views?
- Is the data appropriately segregated?

Design thinking

To effectively address gender sensitivity in urban design, designers should employ design thinking techniques that foster empathy and understanding for the end users. This involves adopting a user-centered approach and placing themselves in the shoes of the individuals who will be utilising public spaces.

Design techniques that encourage empathy include:

- researching thoroughly user needs by conducting site analysis, observational surveys, and consultation
- research best practices and compare how other places are addressing gender sensitivity
- framing or re-framing issues and experiences of different users from multiple perspectives
- challenging assumptions (including unconscious biases)
- exploring ideas through testing, benchmarking, and prototypes.

Key reflective questions

- What were the issues and did any common issues or themes emerge?
- Are there examples of best practice? What has been tried in other places, what failed, what was successful, and why?
- How has the design addressed diversity?
- What questions can designers ask to free their thinking from known or perceived limits and biases?
- Has the design been tested with end users?
- What does the design look and feel like?

Further reading and resources

[The Great Place Guide](#), City Renewal Authority

Gehl, J. (2010) **Cities for people**. Washington, DC: Island Press

Melissa Bruntlett and Chris Bruntlett (2022) [Curbing Traffic - The Human Case for Fewer Cars in our Lives](#), Washington, DC: Island Press

Oldenburg, Ray (1999) **The Great Good Place: Cafés, Coffee Shops, Bookstores, Bars, Hair Salons, and Other Hangouts At the Heart of a Community**. Cambridge, MA: Da Capo Press

Keeping promises: post-occupancy evaluation

Post-occupancy evaluation plays a crucial role in assessing the effectiveness of design strategies and ensuring they align with the original project objectives and community expectations.

By using consistent evaluation tools and measures, information can be collected centrally and shared with all stakeholders.

In order to accurately measure gender sensitivity, it is essential to collect and compare relevant gender-disaggregated data. This data provides a comprehensive understanding of how gender sensitive design solutions are performing over time. It helps bridge the knowledge gap between policy and performance, enabling evidence-based responses and solutions to be developed.

By analysing the data, designers and policymakers can validate design strategies, identify areas for improvement, and stimulate innovation in urban design.

Moreover, collecting the right data supports better urban design outcomes by reducing risk and informing decision-making processes. It allows designers and government entities to gain insights into how gender sensitive design solutions are functioning and to make informed adjustments when necessary. The data also provides a basis for ongoing monitoring and evaluation, ensuring continuous improvement and accountability.

By emphasising the importance of post-occupancy evaluation and the collection of gender-disaggregated data, designers and policymakers can enhance their understanding of the performance and impact of gender sensitive design approaches.

This knowledge empowers them to address gender inequalities, foster inclusive environments, and ultimately improve the quality of urban spaces for all individuals.

Key reflective questions

- What needs to be assessed?
- What data needs to be collected?
- What is the correct metric?
- What worked, what didn't and why?
- How did the expected outcomes perform?
- Were there any unanticipated outcomes?
- How can this knowledge be shared?
- Have any immediate or future project opportunities/applications been identified?

Further reading and resources

[Evaluating Landscape Performance: A Guidebook for Metrics and Methods Selection](#) by the Landscape Architecture Foundation provides a key step in evaluating projects.

[Project for Public Space](#). What makes a successful Place?

Gehl People: Public Life Tools

Methods to measure gender sensitivity outcomes and collect disaggregated data include:*

Urban Design Qualities	Potential Metric	Tool
Sociability	Site visitation	Intercept interviews
	Number of people	Place audits
	Types of people	Surveys
	Groupings of people	Direct observations
	Age	Big data analytics
	Gender	
	Ethnicity	
	Frequency	
	Times of use	
	Duration of stay	
	Level of satisfaction	Surveys Focus groups
	Improvement of mood	Surveys Focus groups
Activity and uses	Activities people are offered and engaged in	Intercept interviews Place audits Surveys Big data analytics
	Quality of experience	Surveys Focus groups
	Business activity	Spend and point of sale data
	Types of businesses	Survey
	Retail sales	Observation
	Building facade activation Presence of outdoor dining	
Visibility	Crime	Statistics
	Perception of safety	Intercept interviews Place audits Surveys Focus groups Crowd mapping (online)
	Traffic/driver behaviour	Speed Traffic count Statistics
	Nighttime safety	Workshops Place audits Observations Statistics
Accessibility, legibility, and connections	Pedestrian activity	Big data Place audits

Urban Design Qualities	Potential Metric	Tool
Identity	Presence of art, buildings with identity and interpretation	Intercept interviews Place audits Surveys Focus groups Crowd mapping (online)
	Evidence of volunteerism or community activities	Observation
	Memorable	Intercept interviews Big data (social media)
Comfort and Image	Perception	Intercept interviews Place audits Surveys Focus groups Big data
	Cleanliness and maintenance	Observation
	Presence of green, landscape, parks, trees	Place audit
	Sensory audit of noise, micro-climate	
Scale	Enclosure	Place audit
	Built form/ proportion	
	Elements	
	Distances between elements.	
	Objects that people interact with - size, shape, and material	

*Adapted from Evaluating Landscape Performance: A Guidebook for Metrics and Methods Selection, Project for Public Spa

Urban Design Qualities

The interconnected building block of an inclusive public space

Sociability

Sociability was identified as a key urban design quality of an inclusive and safe public space during public consultation, particularly by women, girls, and gender-diverse participants.

**“Its important to have layers
that enable social connection –
inviting, inclusive, accessible.”**

Workshop participant

Sociable places make people feel comfortable about being themselves. Public spaces that are welcoming, friendly, and encourage positive social interactions between people tend to be highly regarded by the community.

Project for Public Space acknowledge that these qualities are “... the most important quality for a place to achieve and the most difficult to get right. When a place becomes a favourite spot for people to meet friends, greet their neighbours, and feel comfortable interacting with strangers, then you are well on your way to having a great place.”

A successful social space:

- connects people with nature through trees and plants
- engages people’s minds and emotions through art, play, colour, and music
- supports easy conversation either through activities or the selection of urban furniture
- is comfortable and encourages people to stay longer
- provides flexibility through the freedom to choose - places to sit, types of seating, ability to make your space, activities, and journeys through the space
- makes the community values visible through local narratives and activities.

Key reflective questions

- How is shared ownership being promoted and supported?
- What activities encourage positive social interactions?
- How does the space encourage communication or interaction between strangers?
- What is the context or adjacencies? How can they support the sociability of space?
- Are there choices? Such as a variety of scale, different types of seating, open or private, or short or long term stay spaces?
- How can colour and materials be used to identify or distinguish spaces?
- Is the space flexible and adaptable?
- Is the space comfortable?
- Is the space welcoming?
- What role does sound play in creating more welcoming public spaces?

Further reading and resources

Gehl, J. (2011). **Life between Buildings: Using Public Space**. Washington DC: Island Press

Activity and uses

The presence of other people in a public space gives a sense of security. Activities and uses are the things that give people a reason to visit and stay in a public space. The types of activities and uses can range from the commercial offering (the types of shops and their interface with the public realm), public amenities, (which can be used free of charge such as public seating or a playground), and also public programming of the space (buskers, markets, and events).

A range of activities will attract a variety of people across ages, genders, and ethnicity for different reasons at different times of the day. Free activities are essential in public space as it reinforces a generosity of public spirit in which social bonds are created and valued. Public spaces that are just financially transactional do not encourage the same level of social consciousness.

Programmed activities also have the ability to connect other, less likely groups of people to a place. For instance, many people mentioned how the annual Canberra Multicultural Festival brought people who don't usually visit Civic, to City Walk improving its cultural identity.

"I would like to see more festivals and activities, with children and family focused entertainment."

YourSay feedback

A key criticism of many public spaces is the lack of activities that appeal to or respond to the needs of women and girls.

"The lack of shops and activities can make an area a bit dodgy at times. I can't wait to have a coffee while kids play on a few small kid friendly art installations. It could be such a nice part of our weekend walks."

YourSay feedback

Key reflective questions

- How can the space be used by people of different ages?
- What activities will encourage more women and girls to use the space?
- How many different types of activities can occur at one time?
- Is the space adaptable - changing during the day between morning, lunch and afternoon, from day to night, or weekday to weekend to meet different user needs?
- Is the space flexible to allow different types of activities and programs?
- Can people personalise the space? Can they move the furniture?
- Is the space managed?
- Can people organise activities?
- Is there a balance of positive and active uses?
- Do some users exclude any other potential users from using the space? How and why?
- What are non-visual solutions? How can visual solutions signal activity?

Visibility

Being able to see and be seen is ranked as one of the most important attributes of a safe public space by people in the place audits, surveys and workshops.

Visibility is about having clear sight lines to see what is happening within a place. This gives people a sense of control and confidence to make decisions about their safety.

Passive surveillance, provided by other people using a space, overlooking a space, and shopkeepers with eyes on the street also made people feel safer.

A local example of good visibility was identified at Belconnen skate park, where girls spoke positively about being able to survey the entire skate park from the key entry points, allowing them to see who was there and what spaces were being used, helping them make a decision about where they would choose to hangout and skate.

However at Dickson, Tuggeranong, and City Walk, the expansive street frontages of dark glass, blank walls, shuttered windows and recessed doorways greatly reduced levels of passive surveillance and were identified as being unattractive, unfriendly and unsafe.

The configuration of the courtyards at Dickson, with poor sightlines, made people feel more uncertain and vulnerable. This was exacerbated at nighttime, when many of the shops were shut and lighting from within did not spill into the public spaces, creating dark spots.

On the other hand, workshop participants talked about needing some privacy and not being overly observed, watched, or judged.

This is particularly relevant to public toilets. While they should be located in areas of high activity with good passive surveillance, they should be designed respectfully to ensure a level of discretion by screening the entries and locating them away from busy pathways.

Key reflective questions

- Are there any blind spots or non-visible areas (existing or designed)? How can they be avoided or treated?
- What is the context or adjacencies? How can they support passive surveillance?
- Is it possible to provide privacy without comprising visibility? What is the visibility at different scales within the space?
- How is the difference between public, semi-public and private managed?
- Where are the desire lines and connections within and through the site?
- How do you access the site?

Further reading and resources

[Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design General Code, 2011](#), ACT Government

Accessibility, legibility and connections

During consultation many people spoke about the importance of being able to get around easily and safely with confidence. It is important that spaces are easy to get to, easy to enter, and easy to navigate by foot, with a pram, by scooter or bike.

The quality and safety of the connections between destinations and transport hubs and car parking, particularly after dark, was also raised as a concern in Dickson, City Walk, and Tuggeranong.

Issues related to:

- poor pavement quality
- width of paths
- obstacles in the path
- poor lighting
- poor signage or intuitive wayfinding.

Improving the walking and cycling network goes beyond just convenience and safety; it encompasses the overall enjoyment and urban experience for people of all genders, ages, and abilities.

Well-designed and landscaped spaces that prioritise pedestrian and cyclist infrastructure create environments where individuals can enjoy their surroundings.

Both young and old find pleasure in walking through spaces that are thoughtfully designed and offer a sense of safety. These spaces allow individuals to move at their own pace, take breaks when needed, and engage in social interactions with friends.

Furthermore, easy access to destinations such as dining establishments, shopping areas, and essential facilities and services enhances the overall experience.

By prioritising the design and development of pedestrian and cycling infrastructure, cities can create vibrant and inclusive spaces that promote physical activity, social connectivity, and a positive urban experience for people of all ages and abilities.

This approach not only encourages sustainable modes of transportation but also enhances the overall livability and attractiveness of the city.

Key reflective questions

- Are there visual cues and a visible hierarchy of elements, materials, planting, and topography that aid navigation through the space?
- Are there good connections between the space and the adjacent buildings? Do the roads and paths take people to where they want to go?
- Can people move easily through the space without obstructions? Does the space function for people with different levels of mobility?
- Are disabled people treated fairly ie. are ramps located conveniently (i.e. that don't make people with disability travel extra distances or out of the way to access a building)?
- Are there any barriers?
- What are the available transport options or connection points? Are the active travel routes safe, accessible, and connected?
- How has the experience of users with different levels of ability been improved (i.e. novice bike rider vs experienced bike rider)?

Further reading and resources

- Jarrett Walker (2012) **Human Transit**, Island Press
- Paul Mees (2009) **Transport for Suburbia**, Routledge
- [Design Manual for Bicycle Traffic](#), Crow Platform
- Transport for NSW, [Cycleway Design Toolbox: Designing for cycling and micromobility](#)

Comfort and image

“Women are good judges of comfort and image, because they tend to be more discriminating about the public spaces they use.”

[Project for Public Spaces](#)

Comfort and image play crucial roles in shaping people’s experiences of urban spaces.

Sensory qualities, such as access to sunlight, shade, and shelter, greatly influence individuals’ comfort levels in public areas, protecting them from harsh weather conditions.

Additionally, minimising exposure to unpleasant factors like noise, wind, heat, rain, traffic, and pollution is essential for creating a comfortable environment.

The visual quality of a public space is also vital for enhancing comfort and image, combining functional design with aesthetics to create something that is beautiful.

Attention to cleanliness and effective management of the area further contribute to the positive image of a place.

During community consultation, poor maintenance emerged as a significant concern regarding comfort and image. Spaces that lacked cleanliness, suffered from graffiti or vandalism, had broken pavements, or damaged furniture conveyed a sense of neglect and potentially compromised safety.

Addressing these issues and ensuring proper maintenance is crucial to creating inviting, cared-for spaces that promote comfort, safety, and a positive image for the community.

Key reflective questions

- What will be people’s first impression of the space?
- How clean is the space?
- What type of people are using the space? Are there elderly people, women and children?
- What microclimates are being created? Is there access to sunlight and shade, and alternatively shelter from wind and rain?
- Is the planting contributing to the user experience? Is it appropriate to the site?
- Are there places to sit and does the positioning of furniture encourage use? i.e. not having exposed back.
- How does sustainability, biodiversity, and microclimates contribute to comfort and image?
- How is noise pollution (and specifically traffic noise) negatively impacting the wellbeing of city dwellers?
- How can we adjust our built environments to ensure everyone enjoys hearing cities?

Identity

Identity plays a vital role in urban design, as it reflects the social values and cultural diversity of a community, providing a sense of belonging for its members.

By actively acknowledging and representing the identities of women, gender diverse individuals, and diverse cultural communities, urban spaces become more inclusive and safe.

The inclusion of diverse identities in urban design validates the presence and rights of women, gender diverse people, and cultural communities, contributing to a more equitable and inclusive city. When individuals see their gender or culture represented in public spaces, it reinforces their sense of belonging and legitimacy within the urban fabric. This representation also helps challenge and shift gender stereotypes in the city, promoting greater gender equity.

Promoting visibility and representation through urban design aligns with the principle of “You Can’t Be What You Can’t See.”

By showcasing diverse identities, urban spaces become platforms for empowerment, fostering a more inclusive society and encouraging greater participation from underrepresented groups.

Through the lens of identity, urban design can contribute to the creation of a city where everyone feels seen, valued, and able to fully participate in public life.

Key reflective questions

- What are the community’s values?
- What cultures are present?
- What stories and values are currently being portrayed through the local identity and what ones are missing?
- How do you manage tensions and trade-offs?
- How will better representation of different groups benefit the community?

Scale

Urban design encompasses multiple scales, ranging from the macro-scale of city structure to the human scale of public spaces with outcomes that can have both negative and positive impacts on people's lives, in particular women, girls, gender diverse and vulnerable people.

Good urban planning seeks to improve access to economic and social opportunities, while balancing the impacts of urbanisation on the environment.

It addresses interdependent elements including "land use, transportation and mobility, access to open space, environment, communication, water resources, and housing, as well as economic development and resilience".

World Bank Handbook for Gender-Inclusive Urban Planning and Design, 2020

The World Bank, in its Handbook for Gender-Inclusive Urban Planning and Design, emphasises the active inclusion of women and gender diverse individuals in the urban planning process. This inclusion is essential to prevent adverse impacts and ensure that gender issues are effectively and comprehensively addressed.

At the human scale, urban design focuses on creating comfortable and inviting spaces for people. It considers factors such as the layout, design, and amenities that contribute to a positive experience and sense of comfort within urban environments.

Additionally, scale can also be measured in terms of time, considering the long-term impacts and sustainability of urban design interventions. By considering multiple scales, urban design can create spaces that are not only visually appealing but also functional, inclusive, and capable of meeting the diverse needs of the community.

Key reflective questions

- What scale is appropriate for the function/use of the space?
- Are there a variety of spaces for different types and numbers of users?
- What would be the time spent in these spaces?
- Is the application of design elements appropriate to scale (i.e. the number of trees planted/species selection)?
- Are facilities located appropriately in or near public spaces?
- What is the distance between elements/amenities/transport? Is it walkable?
- What are the proportions of the space?
- What objects do people interact with - size, shape, and material?

Design Elements

Detailing the components of urban spaces so that they can be much more inclusive

Lighting

In all the place audits and workshop surveys, lighting was mentioned the most frequently as a critical factor in determining the perception of safety after dark.

Poor lighting scored consistently high as a reason women felt unsafe after dark, with City Walk, Anketell Street, and Dickson scoring the worst for lighting.

Conversely good lighting scored highly as a reason for feeling safe. Gungahlin Town Centre scored the highest due to the abundance of lighting at the light rail stop and the active frontages on Hibberson Street providing light-spill onto the sidewalk.

“The connective spaces between the main street and courtyard to carpark are not well lit.”

Survey respondent

Good lighting in public spaces plays an essential role in improving the perception of safety by:

- helping women negotiate urban spaces at night and perform tasks comfortably and safely
- achieving a balance between functional and experiential outcomes as a backdrop to urban activity
- enhancing the attractiveness of urban spaces after dark to improve footfall and dwell times.

People want to feel safe and welcome in an urban environment. The quality of lighting will influence how safe someone feels, and how likely they are to visit or spend time in an area.

Key reflective questions?

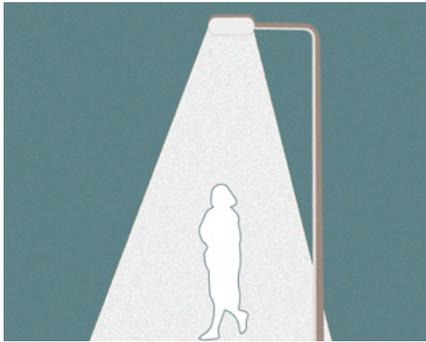
- Where are the main pedestrian routes?
- How can lighting improve the atmosphere and encourage people to stay longer in the space?

Further reading and resources

MIS 14 Public Lighting, ACT Government

[AS/NZS 1158.3.1](#) - Lighting for roads and public spaces
The most relevant section is “Pedestrian area (Category P) lighting - Performance and design requirements”

Issue	Why this is an issue?	Action	Source / Benchmark
Bright lights	<p>Glare from bright unshielded lights is intrusive, reduces visibility, creates hard shadows and blind spots.</p> <p>This makes a space feel unsafe after dark.</p>	<p>Brighter does not mean safer spaces at nighttime.</p> <p>Avoid extreme contrasts between light and dark surfaces.</p> <p>Conceal lamps with full cut-off fittings, baffles, glare shields, reflective lighting and other techniques.</p>	<p>The role of lighting in supporting town centre regeneration and economic recovery, September 2020, ARUP</p> <p>City of Melbourne Lighting Strategy, 2021, City of Melbourne</p> <p>MIS 14 Public Lighting, ACT Government</p>
No lighting	<p>Some pedestrian paths and key spaces are too dark and don't invite people to use them after dark.</p> <p>This results in low levels of activity and passive surveillance making the space feel unsafe after dark.</p>	<p>Provide continuous lighting along main pedestrian paths that connect key areas (such as the entry into shops) with public transport stops/hubs and carparks.</p> <p>Any voids in a building frontage should appear as pools of light rather than dark cavities.</p> <p>Illumination levels should be sufficient to light the edges of streets and other public spaces, reveal changes in level and other potential hazards, allow a person's features to be recognised at a distance of 10 to 15 metres and facilitate video surveillance for public safety.</p> <p>All new outdoor lighting should meet relevant Australian standards and Municipal Infrastructure Standard (MIS) for traffic safety and pedestrian amenity.</p>	<p>City of Melbourne Lighting Strategy, 2021</p> <p>Australian Human Rights Commission accessible bus stops guidelines</p> <p>MIS 14 Public Lighting, ACT Government</p>



Issue	Why this is an issue?	Action	Source / Benchmark
Lack of atmosphere	<p>Lighting lacks variety and interest and doesn't attract people after dark.</p> <p>This results in low levels of activity and passive surveillance making the space feel unsafe after dark.</p>	<p>Punctuate areas with feature and decorative lighting.</p> <p>Consider the colour of the light for the type of space:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • white light provides a good colour rendition, more effective illumination, and creates the impression that spaces are more brightly lit • warmer colour provides a gentle light and can reduce impacts on wildlife from lighting spill. <p>Promote creative and well-lit shop window displays and alfresco areas that add to the interest of the street edge.</p>	<p>Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design General Code, 2011, ACT Government</p> <p>MIS 14 Public Lighting, ACT Government</p>
			

Pathways

The development of a high-quality and safe pedestrian and cycle path network is a vital aspect of inclusive design, promoting active transportation and encouraging community engagement in public life. Through the place audits and walkshops, several significant issues concerning pathways were identified.

In the case of Anketell Street in Tuggeranong pedestrian safety was a major concern. Feedback indicated that the speed of traffic, presence of large vehicles, and the design of pedestrian crossings contributed to a sense of insecurity and potential danger.

City Walk faced maintenance issues, particularly with regard to pavements, which posed safety risks and were deemed unsuitable for elderly individuals and those using mobility devices like scooters.

Another common issue observed in various locations, including City Walk, Gungahlin, Tuggeranong, and Dickson, was the lack of activation along the edges of pathways. Blank walls, security grills, and shutters contributed to a sense of uninviting surroundings.

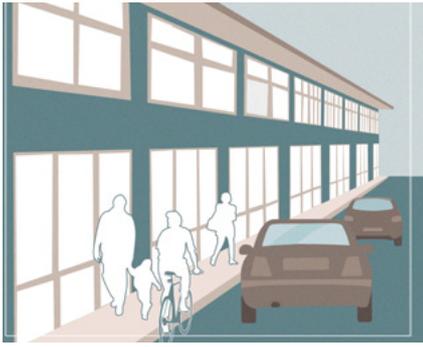
Furthermore, a notable challenge reported for all locations was the absence of adequate wayfinding. The lack of clear signage and navigational cues caused disorientation and anxiety among pedestrians.

Addressing these identified issues will contribute to the creation of more inclusive and user-friendly pathways. The benefits of an improved path network include:

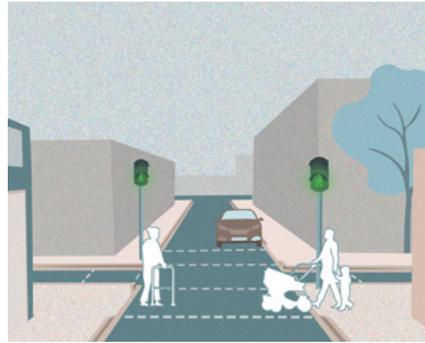
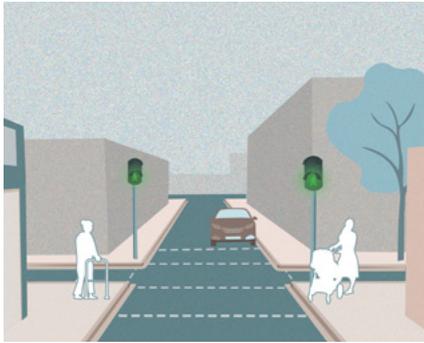
- increase in the number of people using the paths improving the level of natural surveillance and perception of safety
- improved mobility for people with less access to private vehicles to reach areas where they can participate in work or social activities.
- better health and fitness
- cost effective
- improved environment with zero carbon emissions and noise by taking people out of their cars.
- ease of use with pram, bike or scooter.

Key reflective questions?

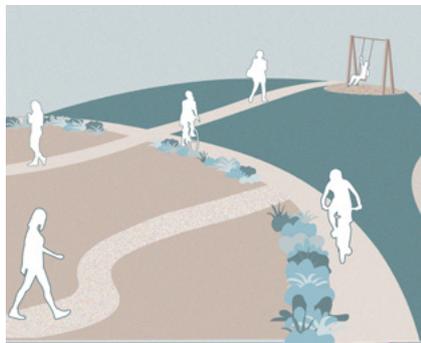
- Where are the main pedestrian routes? Is the journey continuous?
- Is the path wide enough for different users?
- Are the crossings and pram ramps located conveniently?
- Would you feel safe using this path?
- Is wayfinding intuitive?
- Is the journey interesting and enjoyable?
- Is the journey comfortable? Is there shade, shelter, light, and places to rest?
- Does the pathway provide adequate precedence over vehicle routes? Who has the right of way?
- Is it possible to create streets that benefit everyone, and not just the people using them for transportation?
- How might solutions be implemented to improve trust and empathy on our city streets?

Issue	Why this is an issue?	Action	Source / Benchmark
Path width	Narrow paths force people to walk single file and are uncomfortable for people with prams, children, and/or carrying bags. Shared use paths are too narrow for both pedestrians, people with prams, and cyclists.	Provide wider paths that can accommodate a pram, wheelchair user, cyclist or scooter and two people side by side and pedestrian traffic in the opposite direction.	<p>MIS 05 Active Travel Facilities Design, ACT Government</p> <p>Global Designing Cities Initiative: Improving Road Safety through Street Design.</p>
			
No footpath	Many streets have no footpath or a footpath on one side of the road only, requiring people to cross the road to access a footpath.	Provide footpaths between key destinations such as transit stations, parks, schools, local shops, group centres, community facilities and neighbourhood main streets on both sides of the road.	
			
Crossing opportunities	Limited crossing points force people to detour to get to a safe pedestrian crossing.	Provide more central medians mid-block and at intersections to assist in crossing streets and slow traffic.	
			

Issue	Why this is an issue?	Action	Source / Benchmark
<p>Pedestrian signals</p>	<p>Pedestrian signal times are not long enough for slower-moving pedestrians, particularly people with children and prams, to cross the street and are often intimidated by drivers.</p> <p>Pedestrian wait times between sequences are too long.</p>	<p>Increase pedestrian crossing time signal so it is equal to or higher than the timing of vehicular traffic.</p> <p>Intersections along key pedestrian routes should have an all-pedestrian phase so pedestrians can make diagonal intersection crossings.</p>	
<p>Pram ramps</p>	<p>No pram ramps or poorly positioned pram ramps make footpaths inaccessible to people who rely on mobility aids and make walking difficult for people using strollers, wheelchair users, cyclists and scooters.</p>	<p>Position pram ramps logically in line of travel.</p>	
<p>Pavement quality</p>	<p>Concern about uneven pavements and trip hazards from tree roots, driveways and poor maintenance.</p>	<p>Provide a maintenance service for footpaths that matches that of road pavements.</p>	



Issue	Why this is an issue?	Action	Source / Benchmark
Route connectivity	<p>Long detours and gaps in the network.</p> <p>Poor connections including cycle paths that suddenly end placing the rider on the road.</p>	<p>Provide footpaths between key destinations such as transit stations, parks, schools, local shops, group centres, community facilities and neighbourhood main streets.</p> <p>Ensure cycle paths start and end logically to provide a continuous and safe route.</p>	<p>Design manual for bicycle traffic.</p> <p>Infra Manuals - A compendium of bicycle infrastructure manuals</p> <p>Transport for NSW, Cycleway Design Toolbox</p>
Journey	<p>Path systems which don't offer a choice or connect with destinations.</p>	<p>Open spaces offer a choice of journeys including both direct paths and looping (circular) paths that connect park features.</p>	<p>Make Space for Girls - campaigns for facilities and public spaces for teenage girls.</p>
Shoulder zones		<p>Shoulder zones are dedicated areas parallel to busy pathways, which serve as a space for signage, lighting, seating, furnishings, and plantings, to prevent obstructions from jutting into the main path of circulation.</p>	



Issue	Why this is an issue?	Action	Source / Benchmark
Traffic	<p>Safety concerns related to perceived high traffic volumes, speeding, driver's failure to give way to pedestrians, and poor air quality.</p>	<p>Provide alternative path networks away from busy roads.</p> <p>Lower traffic speeds (30km/hour) on streets with a pedestrian focus/priority, residential streets around schools, community facilities, and local shops and group centres.</p>	<p>Ashton Old Rd/Fairfield Rd Cyclops Junction</p>
Entry points	<p>Having to pass people to enter into a space is intimidating. Limited entry points creates a perception of being trapped.</p>	<p>Provide multiple and wider entries in and out of public open spaces.</p>	<p>Make Space for Girls - campaigns for facilities and public spaces for teenage girls.</p>
Comfort - shade	<p>Inadequate shade makes the path too hot and uncomfortable to use.</p>	<p>Plant more trees and landscape to reduce urban heat island effects.</p>	<p>ACT Government Urban Forest Strategy 2021-2045</p> <p>Canberra's Living Infrastructure Plan: Cooling the City, ACT Government</p>



Issue	Why this is an issue?	Action	Source / Benchmark
Navigation	Disorientation and not knowing the location of important amenities (such as a public toilet) can affect a sense of control, and cause stress and anxiety.	Develop a consistent and easy to understand wayfinding system to help people orient themselves and navigate safely to key landmarks and amenities. This could consist of physical signs as well as GPS enabled apps.	Where Am I? How to navigate London by bike
Frontages	Expanses of blank street frontages create boring/ hostile walking environments and reduce levels of passive surveillance. They are also a visual cue that indicates space is inactive and potentially unsafe.	Encourage interactive ground floor tenancies along main pedestrian thoroughfares. Discourage the use of security shutters and grilles.	Global Designing Cities Initiative: Global Street Design Guide Global Designing Cities Initiative: Designing Streets for Kids
On-road cycling and on-road bike lanes	A lack of confidence and a fear of traffic and personal safety are major deterrents for women, children, and other people to ride.	Provide more off-road cycle paths as separated cycle paths or appropriately wide shared paths. Locate cycle routes off main roads that are quiet to ride on.	On the go: How women travel around our city , City of Sydney 2020 ACT Transport Strategy 2020 , ACT Government Complete Streets for Canada Bicycle User Experience BUX methods toolkit
End of trip infrastructure	Concern and worry about appearance at their final destination plays a significant role in women's decisions to walk or cycle to their destination.	Locate secure bike parking near the entry of key locations. Mandate the provision of showers, change rooms, locker facilities and secure bike storage racks in major commercial and government offices, shopping centres, and large institutions.	On the go: How women travel around our city , City of Sydney 2020



Public toilets

Safe access to clean public toilets is a basic right, supports inclusion and dignity, and is essential for participation in public life, particularly for certain groups of people such as disabled people, older people, people with children, pregnant women, as well as tourists and visitors.

Generally, women have more reasons to visit the toilet. This includes managing menstruation, and caring for children or adults who need their assistance. Women also can't use public spaces to urinate in the same way men do (illegally).

Access to public toilets is also a particularly sensitive issue for non-binary, trans, and gender diverse people who do not fit into the common gender segregated labeling of public toilets - male, female or disabled. Often they avoid needing to use public toilets, in fear of being prevented from accessing them or exposed to embarrassment, humiliation, and violence.

There are also limited toilet facilities at public parks and playgrounds. This is a significant issue for families with young children, who are not provided access to safe and clean public toilets.

The place audits and workshops identified several issues relating to public toilets including:

- location of toilets for a greater feeling of security
- poor maintenance, broken locks on the door, unclean, and lack of soap
- poor wayfinding to locate the public toilets
- fear of other people hanging around the public toilet
- poor passive surveillance.

Key reflective questions?

- Is a toilet needed? Has a safety audit been undertaken?
- Is there equitable provision of toilets for all genders based on need?
- Can some toilets be all-gender?
- Are there all-gender parent/ carer rooms and facilities?
- Is the toilet located in high-traffic areas, near well-used amenities, close to footpaths or carparks where there is a high level of passive surveillance?
- Is it easily visible?
- Is there sufficient screening for privacy?

Issue	Why this is an issue?	Action	Source / Benchmark
Quality and hygiene	Public toilets are not well looked after with broken locks, no wash basins, and no soap dispensers.	Review maintenance and cleaning regime.	Belconnen skate park and Dickson place audit and workshops
Wayfinding	Toilets are not easy to find.	Provide directional signage that locates public toilets.	City Walk and Dickson workshop MIS 23 Public Toilets, ACT Government National Public Toilet Map
Gender inclusive	No inclusive public toilets.	Provide single-stall gender-inclusive toilets. Change signage to label what facilities are available instead of what sex it is for, providing the opportunity for people to make choices about which toilet they may need or prefer to use based on their individual requirements.	City Walk workshop
Safety and privacy	Going to the toilet is a private and vulnerable human function.	Provide audible and visual privacy.	We Need to Talk About Public Toilets, Policy agendas for inclusive suburbs and cities, Katherine Webber, University of Queensland



Issue	Why this is an issue?	Action	Source / Benchmark
Quantity	Women often have to queue to access a public toilet.	Single stall gender-inclusive toilets are more efficient and will equalise wait times for all genders.	
Perception of safety	Poor location.	<p>Locate toilets in high-traffic areas, near well-used amenities, close to footpaths or carparks where there is a high level of passive surveillance.</p> <p>Provide screening at the entry.</p>	<p>MIS 23 Public Toilets, ACT Government</p> <p>Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design General Code, 2011, ACT Government</p>



Urban greening - green infrastructure

During the consultation process, the community expressed a strong desire for more urban greening, including increased tree coverage and the establishment of more gardens across all public realm typologies.

People acknowledged the significance of Canberra's treescape and easy access to nature in making the city a special place to live. A notable example mentioned was the 'Floriade Community' initiative, which involved numerous community groups planting bulbs and annuals to create a tulip trail throughout the city's suburbs during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2019.

Interestingly, women, across various cultures, have a deep connection with plants for culinary, gathering, medicinal, and gardening purposes. Research indicates that women perceive and value different characteristics of urban green spaces compared to men. They often place greater aesthetic value on green spaces and experience higher well-being associated with such environments. [Braçe, Olta, Garrido-Cumbrera, MarcoCorrea-Fernández, José \(2021\) Gender differences in the perceptions of green spaces characteristics](#)

Urban greening serves multiple purposes beyond its visual appeal. It provides cleaner air, contributes to climate change resilience, enhances the natural environment and promotes biodiversity by attracting birds and insects.

Recognising the disproportionate impact of climate change, land degradation, water scarcity, and air pollution on women due to their varied roles and responsibilities in society, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) emphasises the need for gender-responsive policies in addressing these environmental challenges.

[Canberra's Living Infrastructure Plan: Cooling The City \(2019\)](#) reflects the ACT Government's commitment to maintaining and enhancing living infrastructure in the city, recognising its crucial role in addressing the challenges of climate change and promoting a cooler urban environment. By prioritising urban greening and living infrastructure, Canberra can create a more sustainable, resilient, and aesthetically pleasing environment that positively impacts the wellbeing and quality of life for all residents, while specifically considering the unique perspectives and needs of women and diverse communities.

Key reflective questions?

- What are the opportunities to include more urban greening?
- Will it improve air quality, noise or urban heat exposure?
- Does it support water management and reduce risk of flooding?
- Does it support contact to nature?
- Does it enhance biodiversity?
- Does urban greening have a specific function - edible plants/ornamental/biodiversity and habitat?
- How can urban greening promote social interaction and exchange?
- Which people will benefit from urban green space? Who are those groups that benefit least or even face disadvantages and how can that be changed?
- Who is responsible for maintaining and managing the planting? Is there an opportunity to involve the community?

Further reading and resources

[Gender differences in the perceptions of green spaces characteristics](#), Braçe, Olta, Garrido-Cumbrera, MarcoCorrea-Fernández, José (2021)

Issue	Why this is an issue?	Why this is an issue?	Source / Benchmark
Flower power	<p>People have a positive relationship with flowers as demonstrated during 'Floriade Community'.</p> <p>In contrast, places with no vegetation appear barren and neglected and are a visual cue for being unsafe.</p>	<p>The use of plants (including ornamental planters, trees, and garden beds) makes a space look attractive, has a positive influence on behaviour, and emotional wellbeing, and makes a place appear cared for.</p>	<p>Guerrilla Gardening Blog</p> <p>Your Nature Strip: Guidelines For Use of Residential Nature Strips, ACT Government</p>
Sightlines	<p>Short understorey vegetation blocks sightlines and reduces visibility.</p>	<p>Avoid short planting in areas that require good passive surveillance. Tall trees with clear understorey are preferred.</p>	<p>Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design General Code, 2011, ACT Government</p>
Biodiversity	<p>Loss of natural environment, and limited use of native plants.</p>	<p>Use native plants where appropriate.</p>	<p>ACT Government Urban Forest Strategy 2021-2045</p> <p>Canberra's Living Infrastructure Plan: Cooling the City, ACT Government</p> <p>ACT Government Urban Planting Calendar</p> <p>Ngunnawal Plant Use field guide</p>



Issue	Why this is an issue?	Why this is an issue?	Source / Benchmark
Micro-climate	Insufficient shade, making a space too hot to use in summer.	<p>ACT Government has set a target of 30% tree canopy cover (or equivalent) and 30% permeable surfaces in Canberra's urban footprint by 2045.</p> <p>Seek opportunities to plant more trees. Consider their location, space, and planting method to ensure their long-term health.</p>	Canberra's Living Infrastructure Plan: Cooling the City , ACT Government
Community participation	Limited opportunity for the community to contribute to managing and maintaining urban greening.	Explore opportunities for the community to participate through examples such as micro-forests and other community based projects. Reduce red tape to enable community participation.	



Urban furniture

Urban furniture provides the opportunity for people to rest, sit, eat, and socialise in the public realm. The ability to stop is especially important for the elderly, those with limited mobility, and adults with small children. Encouraging people to stop and stay in public spaces has a positive impact on the sociability of a space creating a welcoming atmosphere and improving its perception of safety.

Better seating, comfortable seating and more seating were suggested as an improvement to all the typologies during the place audit interviews.

City Walk received the most positive comments:

Really like the greenery and the choice of seating. Nice blend of private and public seating so you can feel a part of it even if you're just passing through or not dining out.

Survey respondent

I don't use the place as a destination but the seats attract more people and that makes it feel safer to walk through.

Survey respondent

Likes that she can grab a takeaway coffee on her break and talk to people in the seating area.

Survey respondent

Critical considerations of urban furniture are:

- location in regards to micro-climate and comfort
- placement in terms of visibility and access
- type of furniture
- quality and materiality
- ability to move furniture to form social seating groups.

Key reflective questions?

- How does the furniture support positive social interactions?
- Is there a choice? Is it possible for people to personalise space?
- Is the furniture comfortable to use?
- Is the positioning of furniture encouraging use? i.e. not having exposed back.
- Can it be moved to allow the user to determine social settings?

Issue	Why this is an issue?	Why this is an issue?	Source / Benchmark
Placement	Poorly located or no furniture.	<p>Place furniture in a location where it has a comfortable relationship to the sun, shade, and wind.</p> <p>Place furniture on the edges, with a good view of what's going on, and a protected back.</p> <p>Niches, spaces within spaces, and corners are good for sitting, provided there is a clear view and can be easily accessed.</p> <p>Place seating at regular intervals (100m) as rest points and break a journey into manageable walking distances.</p>	<p>Gehl, J. (2011) <i>Life between Buildings: Using Public Space</i>. Washington DC: Island Press</p> <p><u>MIS 20 Street and Park Furniture</u>, ACT Government</p>



Sociable furniture	Furniture that does not facilitate social interaction.	<p>Provide a choice of more sociable seating such as picnic settings or loose furniture to serve as a meeting spot for socialising.</p> <p>Provide flexible loose furniture that can be used for sitting or informal activities.</p>	
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Issue	Why this is an issue?	Why this is an issue?	Source / Benchmark
Different abilities	Furniture that does not support a diversity of users.	<p>Armrests and back support provide assistance and comfort to the elderly or less able or when people sit for longer periods of time.</p> <p>Next to tables and benches allow for room to accommodate wheelchairs.</p>	
			
Play element	Parents and carers (both men and women) looking after children and are more sensitive to child-friendly environments and the availability of children's facilities, such as play elements.		
Material	Concrete and steel seating is uncomfortable and unpopular.	Timber seating is the preferred choice of material because it is a natural material that feels warmer in cold weather and cooler in hot weather, unlike metals, concrete, or stone.	

Spaces

Open spaces within the urban environment are defined and shaped by the elements that surround them. These elements can include buildings, streets, fences, walls, vegetation, or natural features such as water bodies. The surrounding context plays a significant role in determining the character and functionality of open spaces.

Buildings, for example, can provide visual enclosure and define the edges of a public square or park. They can also create a sense of enclosure and privacy within smaller-scale open spaces such as courtyards or plazas. Streets, on the other hand, can serve as connectors between open spaces, providing access and movement throughout the urban fabric.

Fences and walls can act as physical barriers, delineating the boundaries of open spaces and providing a sense of separation and security.

Vegetation, including trees, shrubs, and gardens, not only contributes to the aesthetic appeal of open spaces but also provides shade, privacy, and a connection to nature.

Natural features such as water bodies including rivers, lakes, or ponds, can be prominent elements within open spaces, offering opportunities for recreational activities, aesthetic enjoyment, and ecological benefits.

The design and integration of these surrounding elements are crucial in creating inviting, functional, and harmonious open spaces within the urban environment. They contribute to the overall character, identity, and liveability of a city, providing opportunities for social interaction, recreation, relaxation, and connection to nature.

Key reflective questions?

- Who are the different users, how can they use the space and what are their different requirements?
- Can the space be divided into smaller spaces with different types of activities that might appeal to different types of people?
- Do people designing cities truly represent those that inhabit them?

Issue	Why this is an issue?	Action	Source / Benchmark		
Entry into open spaces	Intimidation from entering the space when groups are congregated at the entry.	Wide and multiple entries. Visual access is an equally important element in ensuring that people feel free to enter the space.	<p>Pailt, Natalya (2020). Gender Mainstreaming in urban planning. RTPI George Pepler International Award</p> <p>Belconnen skate park walkshop and place audit</p> <p>Make Space for Girls - campaigns for facilities and public spaces for teenage girls</p>		
		Number and size of spaces	Groups of men and boys tend to dominate larger open spaces, skate parks and basketball courts, leaving less confident people, women and girls to use the periphery.	Subdivide open space into smaller spaces or provide multiple spaces. For example, in addition to a basketball half court, provide a second multipurpose court without formal line marking.	<p>Pailt, Natalya (2020). Gender Mainstreaming in urban planning. RTPI George Pepler International Award</p> <p>Make Space for Girls - campaigns for facilities and public spaces for teenage girls.</p> <p>City Walk and Belconnen skate park walkshop and place audit</p>
Degrees of enclosure	Being over observed and feeling judged for using public space.	Secure, semi-private space to see and be seen. These can be provided along the edges of major pathways to provide security at the back and an open view at the front, towards public activity, which can be crucial for comfort. These spaces also offer room to move off of the main path to converse and relax while limiting obstructions.			

Representation of women and gender diverse people

Public art and place names that represent women and gender diverse people have a significant impact on their visibility and recognition in the urban environment. By incorporating public art installations and naming places after women and gender diverse individuals, their achievements and contributions can be celebrated and acknowledged.

For women and gender diverse people, seeing their gender represented in the city through public art and place names is empowering and validates their presence. It sends a message that their experiences, perspectives, and contributions are valued and recognised. This representation helps challenge gender stereotypes and promotes inclusivity and diversity in the urban environment.

The findings of the place audits reveal a lack of public art pieces in the study areas, highlighting the need for more diverse and inclusive representation. Similarly, the research on place names indicates a prevalence of names associated with men, often reflecting historical connections to exploration, agriculture, politics, and the military.

This reinforces the need to actively include and recognise the contributions of women and gender diverse individuals in the naming of places.

However, there have been positive examples, such as the “LGBTQI+ Flags ground plane mural” by Yanni Pounartzis, which has been mentioned during the workshops as a symbol of inclusion for the LGBTQ+ community. Such public art installations not only contribute to the aesthetic appeal of the urban environment but also serve as affirming symbols of representation and inclusivity.

By incorporating more public art and place names that honor women and gender diverse individuals, cities can create a more inclusive and welcoming environment. It is an important step towards acknowledging and celebrating the diverse identities, experiences, and achievements of all people, fostering a sense of belonging and promoting social equality.

Key reflective questions?

- What are the stories of the place and how can they be told through design?
- What opportunities are there to recognise other people?
- How can representation support local creativity?

Issue	Why this is an issue?	Action	Source / Benchmark
Public art	<p>Women artists are underrepresented in Canberra's public art.</p> 	<p>Increase opportunities for public artwork by women artists.</p>	
Place names	<p>In Canberra place names are derived from the names of persons famous in Australian history for exploration, navigation, pioneering, colonisation, administration, politics, education, science, or letters. Due to a historical bias in favour of the actions of men, places are usually named after men creating an imbalance in the representation of women.</p>	<p>Ensure better equality and inclusion of women and gender diverse people and Ngunnawal in the place name selection.</p>	<p>Public Place Names (Naming of Public Places) Guidelines 2021, ACT Government</p>

Programme and Operation

Considering the role of ongoing management

Place management - presentation and place activation

Well-managed urban spaces are a reflection of a community's commitment to their public areas and the wellbeing of the people who use them. Effective place management involves striking a careful balance between presentation and place activation, taking into account social, environmental, and financial considerations.

Place management and activation plays a crucial role in attracting and engaging a diverse range of individuals to visit, utilise, and enjoy public spaces. It involves creating an inviting and well-maintained environment that appeals to people from various backgrounds and interests. It also helps encourage positive behaviour in a space and to strengthen the feeling of safety.

When a public space is activated appropriately it can bring together a diverse range of people, make them feel welcome and part of a community.

Presentation refers to the physical upkeep and maintenance of a space. Neglected areas, poorly maintained gardens and lawns, malfunctioning lighting, dirty pavements, litter, graffiti, and vandalism can create a sense of insecurity and contribute to a perceived lack of safety.

However, in the context of a cityscape, it is also important to embrace the unique urban expression and local identity. Grittiness and authenticity can contribute to the vibrancy, character of a place and be exciting!

It is a balance between maintaining cleanliness and order while preserving the urban charm and distinctiveness that make a city unique.

“The cleanliness of the place contributes to feeling safe because it feels maintained, like someone is paying attention.”

Anketell Street place audit respondent

Impressions of cleanliness were ranked in the place audits with City Walk, Anketell Street and Gungahlin ranking the best. Perhaps due to the high level of activity and the types of users, more maintenance and daily cleaning were suggested improvements for Dickson and Belconnen skate park.

The level of place activation, ranging from outdoor dining, busking to regular markets, seasonal festivals or the evidence of outreach programs focused on engaging with certain users groups was low. Almost all place audit locations had no formalised place activation activity. There were no place management strategies evident in the audit locations.

Only City Walk and Gungahlin had a few restaurants with outdoor dining areas providing small moments of vibrancy to the urban spaces, particularly at night time.

The Civic Carousel in City Walk, although a place that holds fond memories to the people of Canberra since it was installed in 1974, is heavily fortified when closed, and only half the shutters are opened when it is operational, reducing its attractiveness and negating any contribution of vibrancy to the area.

Lack of community events was mentioned in all of the place audits. Several people mentioned that more events would attract them to the places and encourage them to stay longer.

“With pop up stores and events taking place in other town centres, not having Tuggeranong be popular in that aspect was discouraging for the local community.”

Anketell Street place audit respondent

Issue	Why this is an issue?	Action	Source / Benchmark
Presentation			
Maintenance	Outcomes driven by maintenance requirements.	Apply a value for money approach to design to consider social and environmental objectives as well as financial management objectives.	
Cleanliness	Level of cleaning based on the level of use.	Maintenance schedule is based on use and need.	
Place Activation and Management			
Activation	Lack of events.	Establish a Community Events and Place Activation Grant Program aimed to support local organisations to deliver community events and activities. Assign a place manager to the town centre.	
Commercial activation	Outdoor dining.	Continue to encourage outdoor dining and pop up events.	<u>ACT Outdoor Activation Program: A guide for using public land for outdoor dining purposes</u>

Key reflective questions?

- Does the design allow flexibility and adaptability of the space?
- Is there appropriate infrastructure and amenities for daily use activities as well as events?
- Is there a place manager allocated to the project/precinct?
- Is the selection of materials robust to minimise unnecessary maintenance?
- What role can community and local business play in caring for and activating a space?
- How can businesses be encouraged to activate public space?
- How can place management support local identity and creativity?

Part 3:

How does it look and feel?

The following images demonstrate the application of the strategies to selected urban open space typologies to help bridge the gap between policy and practice.



Skate park



Local shopping centre



Civic



Main street



Transport hub

Skate park

Comfort and image

Considers the sensory qualities of urban spaces and how they impact on people's experience.

Visibility

Visibility is about having clear sight lines to see what is happening within a place, and passive surveillance provided by other people using the space.

Accessibility, legibility and connections

It is important that spaces are easy to get to, easy to enter, and easy to navigate by foot, with a pram, by scooter or bike.

Public Art

Public art and cultural activities create vibrant and activated spaces. Increase opportunities to celebrate and reflect the diverse communities living and working in the area.

Activity and uses

Activities and uses are the things that give people a reason to visit and stay in a public space.

Journey

Open spaces offer a choice of journeys including both direct paths and looping (circular) paths that connect park features.



Micro-climate

Increased canopy cover supports wildlife and reduces urban heat island effect. Seek opportunities to plant more trees. Consider their location, spacing, and planting method to ensure their long-term health.

Sociable furniture

Provide a choice of more flexible seating such as picnic settings or loose furniture to serve as a meeting spot for socialising.

Path widths

Provide wider paths that can accommodate a pram and two people walking side by side, cyclists, and pedestrian traffic in the opposite direction.

Play opportunities

Provide child-friendly facilities such as play elements for both formal and informal play.

Bike paths

Provide more off-road cycle paths as separated cycle paths or appropriately wide shared paths. Locate cycle routes off main roads that are quiet to ride on.

Sociability

Sociable places make people feel comfortable about being themselves.



Local shopping centre

Gender inclusive

bathroom signage

Signage that display amenity and function rather than gender remove barriers to use and allow people to choose a toilet based on their individual requirements.

Equitable paths

Design paths with suitable surface treatments and maintenance services to facilitate equitable access. Locate pram ramps logically in the line of travel.

Active frontages

Encourage interactive ground floor tenancies along main pedestrian thoroughfares to increase passive surveillance and improve perceptions of safety. Discourage the use of security shutters and grilles.

Good quality

public toilets

Toilets that are conveniently located, accessible, safe, well maintained and easy to find are essential for participation in public life.

Comfort and image

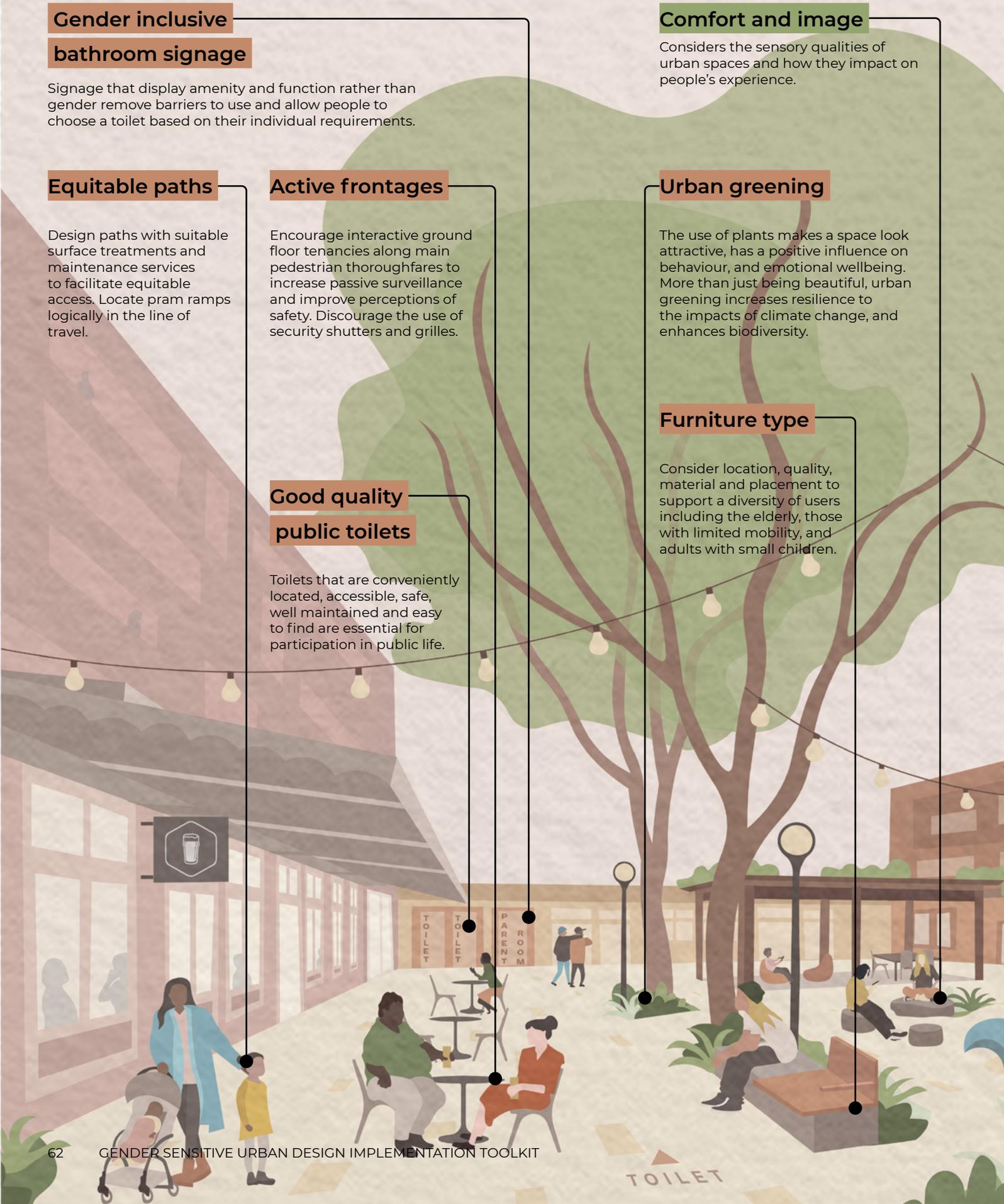
Considers the sensory qualities of urban spaces and how they impact on people's experience.

Urban greening

The use of plants makes a space look attractive, has a positive influence on behaviour, and emotional wellbeing. More than just being beautiful, urban greening increases resilience to the impacts of climate change, and enhances biodiversity.

Furniture type

Consider location, quality, material and placement to support a diversity of users including the elderly, those with limited mobility, and adults with small children.



Micro-climate

Increased canopy cover supports wildlife and reduces urban heat island effect. Seek opportunities to plant more trees. Consider their location, spacing, and planting method to ensure their long-term health.

Public art

Public art and cultural activities create vibrant and activated spaces that celebrate and reflect the diverse communities living and working in the area.

Visibility

Visibility is about having clear sight lines to see what is happening within a place, and passive surveillance provided by other people using the space.

Lighting

Good lighting in public spaces improves the perception of safety. Avoid extreme contrasts between dark and light, and consider placement, colour, intensity, and impact on wildlife to ensure everyone feels safe and supported to participate after dark.

Sociable furniture

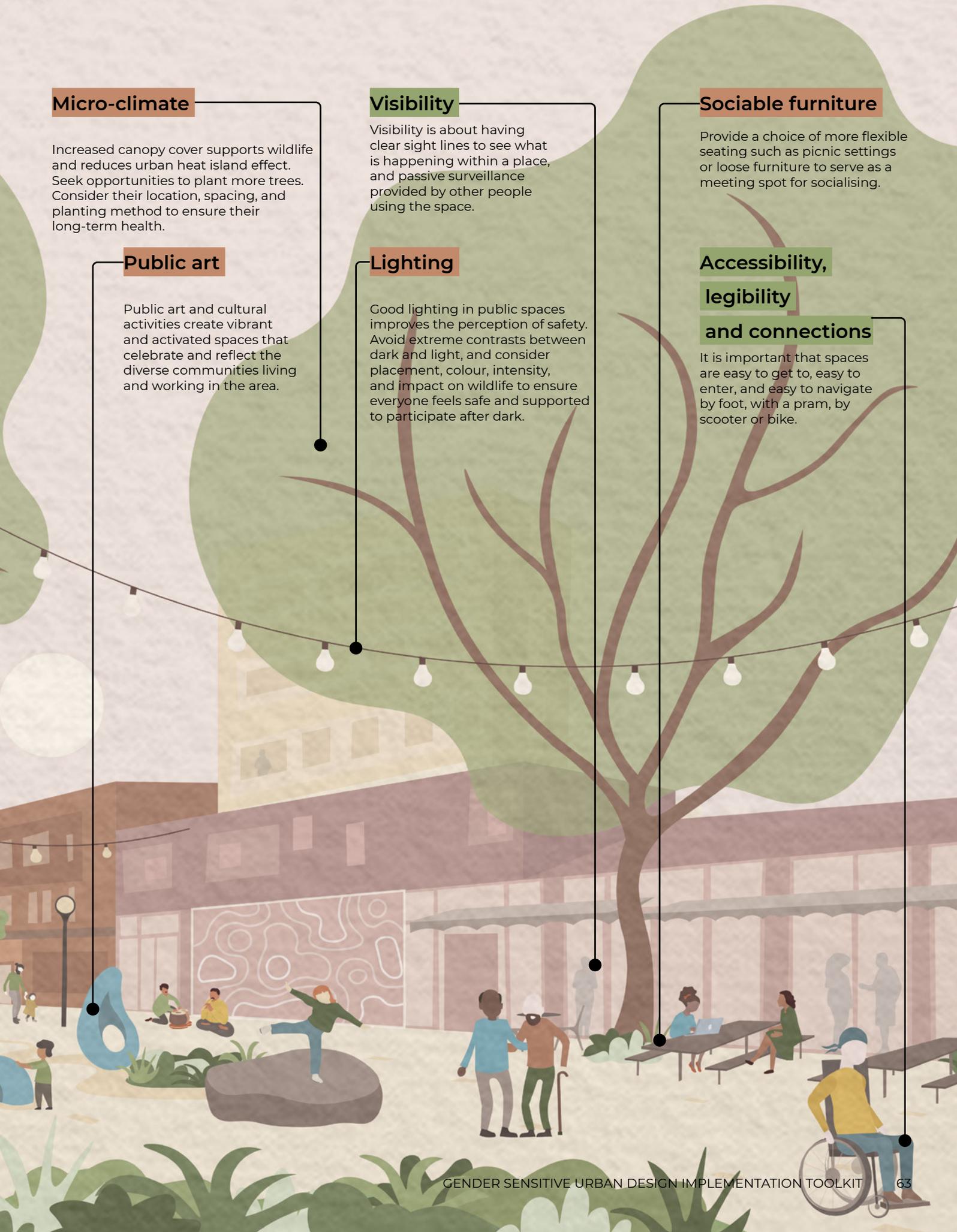
Provide a choice of more flexible seating such as picnic settings or loose furniture to serve as a meeting spot for socialising.

Accessibility,

legibility

and connections

It is important that spaces are easy to get to, easy to enter, and easy to navigate by foot, with a pram, by scooter or bike.



Civic

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Path widths

Provide wider paths that can accommodate a pram and two people walking side by side, cyclists, and pedestrian traffic in the opposite direction.



Main street

Lighting

Good lighting in public spaces improves the perception of safety. Avoid extreme contrasts between dark and light, and consider placement, colour, intensity, and impact on wildlife to ensure everyone feels safe and supported to participate after dark.

Scale

Understanding the macro-scale, city structure, and the human scale, to ensure women are considered in the planning of our cities and the creation of comfortable spaces.

Active frontages

Encourage interactive ground floor tenancies along main pedestrian thoroughfares to increase passive surveillance and improve perceptions of safety. Discourage the use of security shutters and grilles.

Sight lines

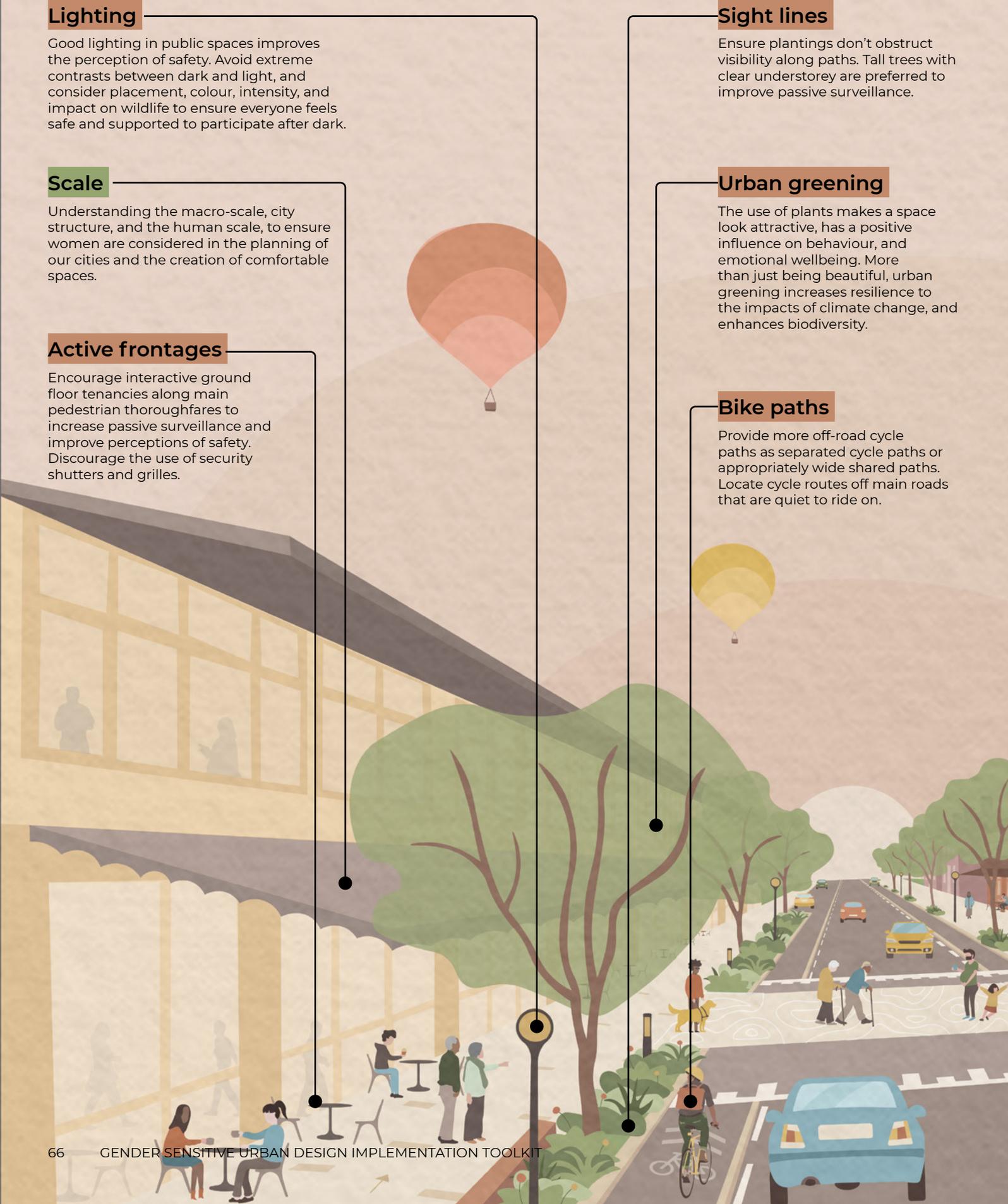
Ensure plantings don't obstruct visibility along paths. Tall trees with clear understorey are preferred to improve passive surveillance.

Urban greening

The use of plants makes a space look attractive, has a positive influence on behaviour, and emotional wellbeing. More than just being beautiful, urban greening increases resilience to the impacts of climate change, and enhances biodiversity.

Bike paths

Provide more off-road cycle paths as separated cycle paths or appropriately wide shared paths. Locate cycle routes off main roads that are quiet to ride on.



Traffic

Consider measures that make streets more comfortable and safe for pedestrians and cyclists including increased crossing opportunities, lower traffic speeds and space for pedestrian and cyclist amenity.

Furniture type

Consider location, quality, material and placement to support a diversity of users including the elderly, those with limited mobility, and adults with small children.

Comfort and image

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Sociable furniture

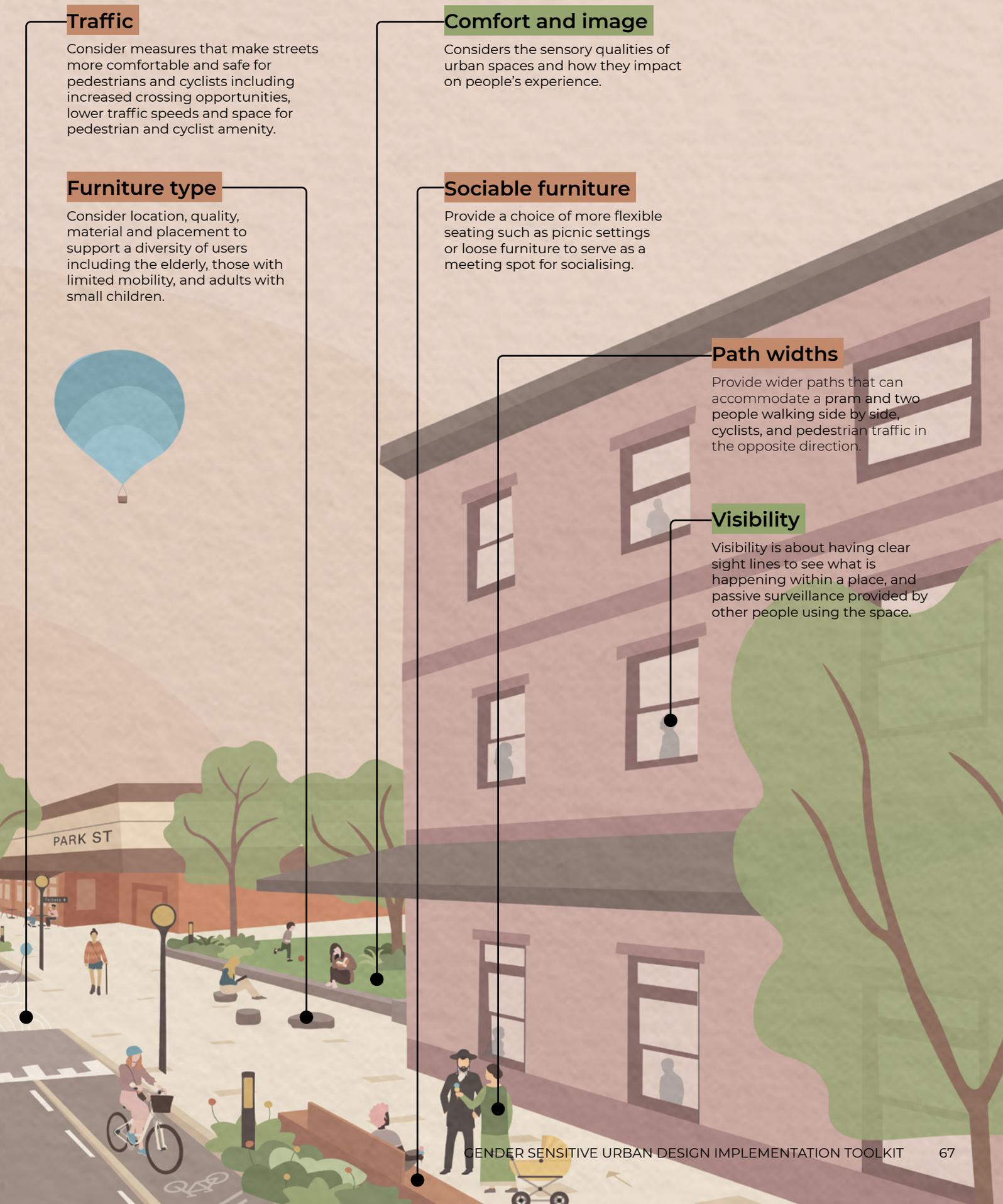
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Visibility

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Transport hub

Good quality

public toilets

Toilets that are conveniently located, accessible, safe, well maintained and easy to find are essential for participation in public life.

Gender inclusive

bathroom signage

Signage that display amenity and function rather than gender remove barriers to use and allow people to choose a toilet based on their individual requirements.

Identity

Identity is the expression of social values and culture in the urban fabric, providing a sense of belonging.

Accessibility, legibility and connections

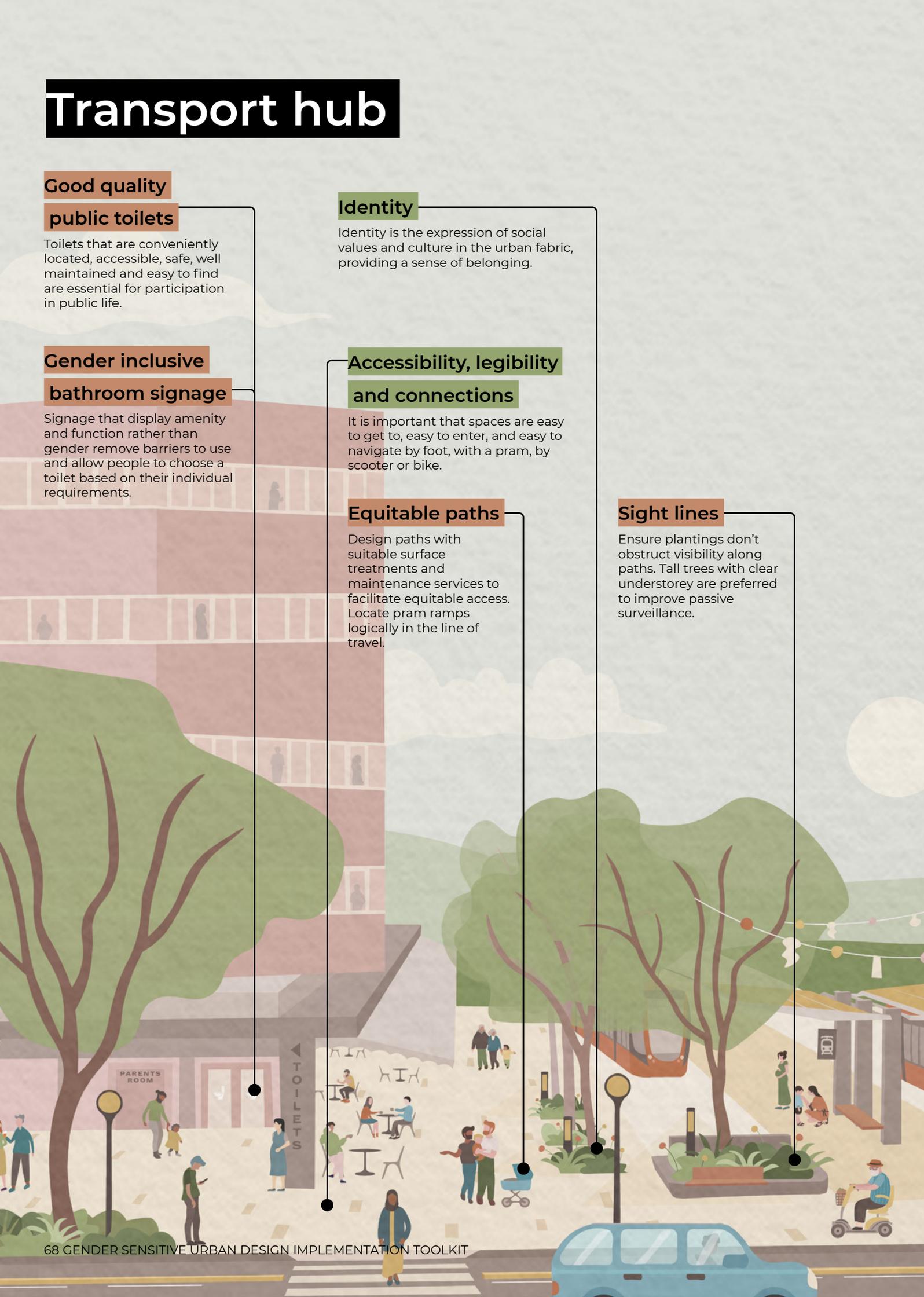
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Active frontages

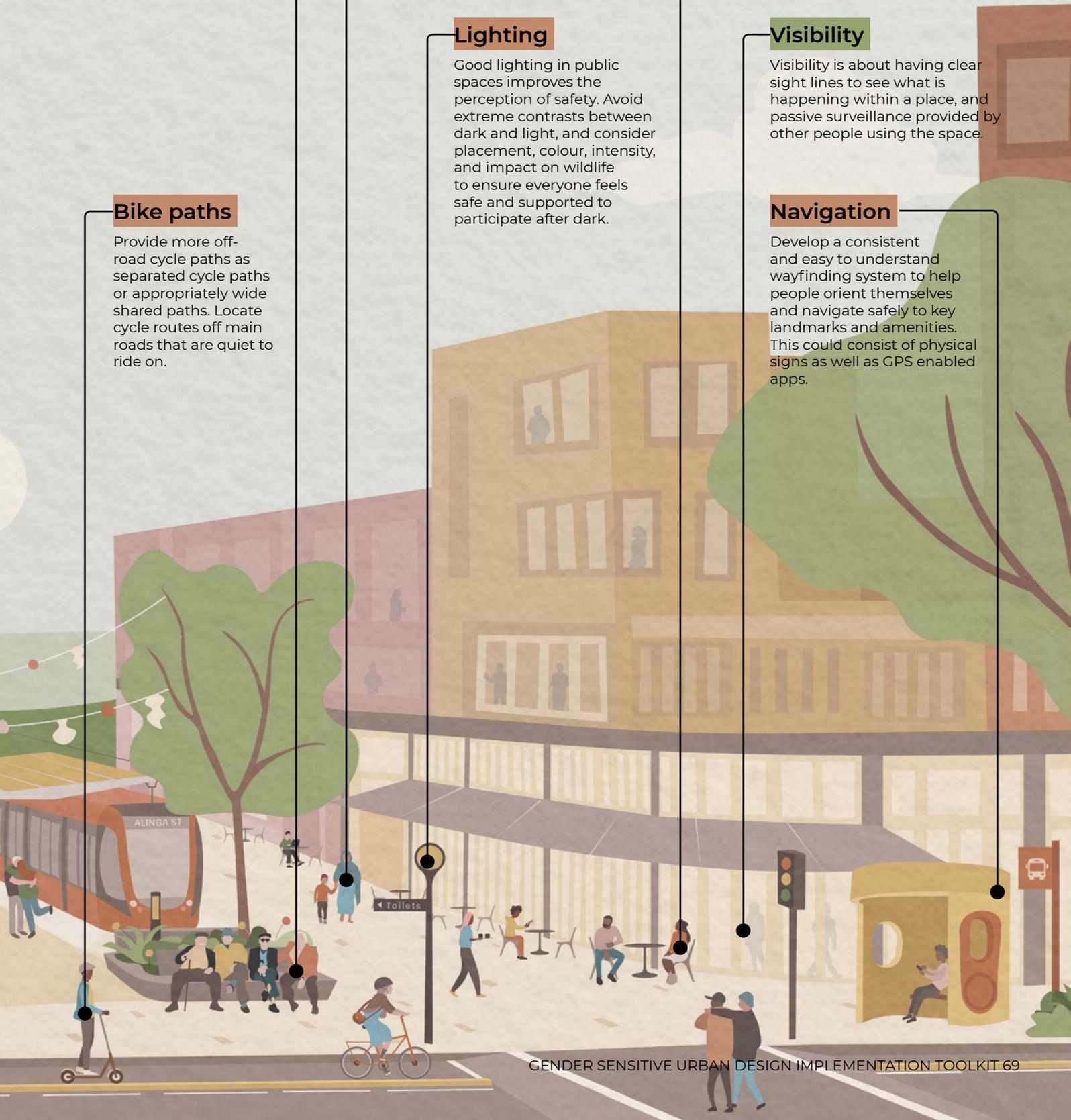
Encourage interactive ground floor tenancies along main pedestrian thoroughfares to increase passive surveillance and improve perceptions of safety. Discourage the use of security shutters and grilles.

Visibility

Visibility is about having clear sight lines to see what is happening within a place, and passive surveillance provided by other people using the space.

Navigation

Develop a consistent and easy to understand wayfinding system to help people orient themselves and navigate safely to key landmarks and amenities. This could consist of physical signs as well as GPS enabled apps.



Glossary of terms

Term	Meaning	Source
Benevolent gender bias	When people seek to provide support to women, but end up preventing them from being challenged or demonstrating their ability. This can end up devaluing female accomplishment and can undermine female leadership.	Gender Equity Toolkit
Built environment	The built environment constitutes the human-made, physical spaces in which human activity takes place. This can include buildings, streets, public spaces like parks and plazas, transportation systems, and land use patterns. The built environment is a system that can influence physical and mental health, public safety, commerce, and traffic patterns (Frank et al., 2003; Handy et al., 2002).	World Bank Handbook for Gender-Inclusive Urban Planning and Design
Cisgender	Cisgender or cis (meaning “in alignment with” or “on the same side”) people are those whose gender identity is in alignment with the sex assigned to them at birth.	World Bank Handbook for Gender-Inclusive Urban Planning and Design
Disadvantaged groups	Disadvantaged groups such as people with disability or mental illness, migrants, Indigenous.	Sustainable Procurement Policy 2015
Entrapment spots/hiding places	Small, confined areas, shielded on three sides by some sort of barrier that may be used by criminal offenders to trap potential victims or conceal themselves.	Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design General Code, 2011, ACT Government
Explicit versus implicit bias	Overt discrimination, such as hate speech and sexist commentary, can be consciously regulated and persecuted, whereas more covert actions impact us on an unconscious level, making it harder for people to take actions against them.	Gender Equity Toolkit
Gaybourhoods	An area of a city or town characterised as being inhabited or frequented by gay people.	The queer city: how to design more inclusive public space
Gender	Gender refers to social, behavioral, and cultural attributes, expectations, and norms associated with being male or female.	World Bank Handbook for Gender-Inclusive Urban Planning and Design
Gender analysis	Gender analysis is a process of considering gender and gender inequalities when analysing data and in program planning. It informs action to address inequalities that arise from the different roles of women and men, the unequal power relationships between them and the consequences of these inequalities on their lives, their health and wellbeing.	Creating Safe and Inclusive Public Spaces for Women
Gender-based violence	An umbrella term for any harmful act that is perpetrated against a person’s will and stems from socially ascribed (i.e. gender-based) differences between males, females, and people who do not conform with gender norms. GBV includes acts that inflict physical, mental, or sexual harm or suffering; threats of such acts; and coercion and other deprivations of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life (IASC Guidelines, 2015, modified).	World Bank Handbook for Gender-Inclusive Urban Planning and Design
Gender bias	Unfair difference in the treatment of men or women based on their gender.	Gender Equity Toolkit
Gender equality	Gender equality represents the equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women, men and trans and gender-diverse people. Equality does not mean that women, men and trans and gender non-binary people will become the same, but that their rights, responsibilities, and opportunities will not depend on their gender.	Creating Safe and Inclusive Public Spaces for Women

Term	Meaning	Source
Gender equity	<p>Gender equity entails the provision of fairness and justice in the distribution of benefits and responsibilities on the basis of gender. The concept recognises that people may have different needs and power related to their gender and that these differences should be identified and addressed in a manner that rectifies gender related imbalances.</p> <p>Equal rights, responsibilities, and opportunities for people of all genders. Equality between women and men is seen both as a human rights issue and as a precondition for, and indicator of, sustainable and people-centered development. Here it should be stressed that gender equality implies equality for all genders, not just men and women.</p> <p>Equal outcomes for people of all genders. Where gender equality implies people of all genders should have the same starting point of equal rights, responsibilities, and opportunities, gender equity implies that they should be enabled to reach an equal end-point through the provision of benefits, resources, and opportunities that meet their specific needs. These benefits, resources, and opportunities may be the same or different depending on the specific needs and challenges faced by people of a certain gender, especially when also taking into account other factors such as race, ethnicity, age, ability, income, and class.</p>	<p>Creating Safe and Inclusive Public Spaces for Women</p> <p>World Bank Handbook for Gender-Inclusive Urban Planning and Design</p>
Gender expression	The way we show our gender to the world around us, through things such as clothing, hairstyles, and mannerisms, to name a few.	World Bank Handbook for Gender-Inclusive Urban Planning and Design
Gender identity	Each person's deeply-felt internal and individual experience of gender (e.g. of being a man, a woman, in-between, neither, or something else), which may or may not correspond with the sex they were assigned at birth or the gender attributed to them by other people. Note that this sense of self is not related to sexual orientation. Gender identity is internal; it is not necessarily visible to others.	World Bank Handbook for Gender-Inclusive Urban Planning and Design
Gender-inclusive	An approach that takes an inclusive view of gender, considering people of all genders and sexualities as well as intersections with factors such as race, ethnicity, income, class, age, and ability, to ensure the voices of people of all genders are heard and integral to project design, delivery, and evaluation, with the goal of promoting gender equity.	World Bank Handbook for Gender-Inclusive Urban Planning and Design
Gender mainstreaming	Gender mainstreaming is a process that systematically integrates gender perspectives into legislation, public policies, programs, and projects. This process makes women's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of policies and programs in all political, economic, and societal spheres with the goal of achieving gender equality (United Nations, 2002). The World Bank Group's Gender Group highlights gender gaps as a good practice version of Gender mainstreaming.	World Bank Handbook for Gender-Inclusive Urban Planning and Design
Gender norms	The socially accepted ways of acting out one's socially defined gender. We learn what is expected of our gender from socialisation, parents, schools, the media and other social institutions.	Gender Equity Toolkit
Glass cliff	A euphemism for when women are more likely to be placed in precarious leadership roles that are considered risky and have a higher rate of failure associated with them.	Gender Equity Toolkit

Term	Meaning	Source
Implicit bias	A hidden bias that manifests as a judgement and/or behaviour, based on learned stereotypes.	Gender Equity Toolkit
Informal settlements	Residential areas where inhabitants are deemed by the authorities to have no legal claim to the land they occupy and the system of occupation ranges from squatting to informal rental housing. In most cases, the housing is insecure and poor quality and does not comply with current planning and building regulations. Informal settlements are also often situated in the most precarious urban areas where basic services and infrastructure, including public or green spaces, are limited (UN-HABITAT, 2013b).	World Bank Handbook for Gender-Inclusive Urban Planning and Design
Intersectionality	A theory and approach which recognises and respects that our identities are made up of multiple interrelated attributes (such as race, gender, ability, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation, sexual identity, and socio-economic status) and understands the intersections at which women experience compounding cultural and structural oppression, discrimination, violence and disadvantage.	Creating Safe and Inclusive Public Spaces for Women
Intersex	An umbrella term that refers to people who have one or more of a range of variations in physical sex characteristics that fall outside of traditional conceptions of male or female bodies. Some intersex characteristics are identified at birth, while other people may not discover they have intersex traits until puberty or later in life. Note that intersex is not synonymous with transgender.	World Bank Handbook for Gender-Inclusive Urban Planning and Design
Organic mentorship	When a natural relationship support and guidance forms between two people in order to assist one person to learn new skills and leadership. This can occur in different social situations, from workplaces to friendships, and is usually informal in nature.	Gender Equity Toolkit
Overconfidence bias	Studies show that men routinely overvalue their professional capabilities whereas women often downplay and undervalue them.	Gender Equity Toolkit
Participation	Citizen or community member involvement in decision-making processes, which enables the “have-not” citizens, who are typically excluded from political and economic processes, to be intentionally included in shaping the future in order to share in the benefits of an affluent society. It is the strategy by which the “have-nots” join in determining how information is shared, goals and policies are set, tax resources are allocated, programs are operated, and benefits like contracts and patronage are parceled out (Arnstein, 1969).	World Bank Handbook for Gender-Inclusive Urban Planning and Design
Participatory planning & design	The participation of citizens or community members in decision-making, joint analysis, visioning, and design of the changes in the built environment that affect their lives. It involves the “co-development” or “co-design” of plans and physical interventions with community members and technical experts to ensure the results meet the needs of the end users.	World Bank Handbook for Gender-Inclusive Urban Planning and Design
People with disabilities	People who have mental or physical impairments that adversely affect their ability to carry out everyday activities on a substantial, long-term basis. These impairments can be visible or invisible. Disabilities can affect a person’s mobility, manual dexterity, physical coordination, continence, ability to lift or carry objects, speech, hearing, eyesight, memory, and ability to concentrate, learn, or understand. Around 15% of the global population has some sort of disability, and prevalence is higher in developing countries (WHO, 2011).	World Bank Handbook for Gender-Inclusive Urban Planning and Design

Term	Meaning	Source
Placemaking	A philosophy for planning, designing, and managing public space that encourages community leadership in the evolution of a place. An iterative and collaborative process of creating places that people love and feel connected to.	Great Place Guide
	A multi-faceted approach to the planning, design and management of public spaces. Placemaking encourages broad community and business involvement in the design, experience, place management and progressive enhancement of the public realm through engagement and participation.	ACT Planning Strategy 2018
Practical gender needs	A concept defined by Caroline Moser (1993) relating to gender equality and development. Practical gender needs are the needs women identify within their socially accepted roles in society. These needs arise from the gendered division of labour and women's subordinate position in society, and meeting these needs does not challenge this subordination. Practical gender needs are a response to immediate perceived necessity, identified within a specific context (Moser, 1993).	World Bank Handbook for Gender-Inclusive Urban Planning and Design
Productive work	The production of goods and services for consumption or trade, in both employment and self-employment (Moser, 1993).	World Bank Handbook for Gender-Inclusive Urban Planning and Design
Reproductive work	Reproductive work is seen as the chief and "natural" role of women in many regions and cultures. In addition to physical childbearing, it includes the care, socialisation, and maintenance of individuals throughout their lives to ensure the continuation of society to the next generation (Edholm et al., 1978). Reproductive work is often invisible, not seen as "real" work, and does not have a clearly defined start and end (Moser, 1993).	World Bank Handbook for Gender-Inclusive Urban Planning and Design
Sex	The biological categories of male, female, and intersex to which humans belong, based on sex characteristics and chromosomes.	World Bank Handbook for Gender-Inclusive Urban Planning and Design
sexual or gender minorities	Persons whose sex, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and/or gender expression differ from those of the majority of the surrounding society.	World Bank Handbook for Gender-Inclusive Urban Planning and Design
Sexual orientation	Each person's enduring capacity for profound romantic, emotional, and/or physical feelings for, or attraction to, person(s) of a particular sex or gender. It encompasses hetero-, homo- and bi-sexuality and a wide range of other expressions of sexual orientation.	World Bank Handbook for Gender-Inclusive Urban Planning and Design
Silent office work	There are prevailing expectations that women are more communal and collective thus they tend to end up lumped with the more community-based extra work in the office, from organising birthday parties to providing emotional support. These extra tasks impact a woman's ability to focus on her main work and give men an unfair advantage with their time.	Gender Equity Toolkit
Social infrastructure	Encompasses all the facilities, services and networks that help families, groups and communities to meet their social, health, education, cultural and community needs.	ACT Planning Strategy 2018

Term	Meaning	Source
Strategic gender needs	A concept defined by Caroline Moser (1993) relating to gender equality and development. Strategic gender needs are the needs women identify because of their subordinate position to men in their society. Strategic gender needs vary according to particular contexts. They relate to gender divisions of labour, power, and control and may include such issues as land rights, domestic violence, equal wages, and women's control over their bodies. Meeting strategic gender needs helps women to achieve greater equality (Moser, 1993).	World Bank Handbook for Gender-Inclusive Urban Planning and Design
Transgender	Transgender refers to a person whose sex assigned at birth does not match their gender identity. The term "trans" is often used as shorthand.	World Bank Handbook for Gender-Inclusive Urban Planning and Design
Unconscious bias	Unconscious bias is an automatic response triggered by our brain when making quick judgements and assessments of people and situations. This automatic response operates beyond our control and awareness and often leads individuals to make quick and often inaccurate judgements which are mainly influenced and shaped by our background, cultural environment and personal experiences.	United Nations Environment Programme,
Urban design	<p>Urban design is the creation of useful, attractive, safe, environmentally sustainable, economically successful, and socially equitable places. It involves a number of key design areas, one being open space design, the general as well as detailed design of squares, sidewalks, promenades, courtyards and other open spaces. This may include spatially significant forms of public or environmental art.</p> <p>The physical shaping of the built environment beyond the scale of individual buildings. It is a multi-disciplinary practice at the intersection of architecture, landscape architecture, and urban planning that is concerned with enhancing the quality and functionality of urban life, while addressing environmental and economic needs (Wall and Waterman, 2010; McHarg, 1992).</p>	<p>Creating Safe and Inclusive Public Spaces for Women</p> <p>World Bank Handbook for Gender-Inclusive Urban Planning and Design</p>
Urban development	An economic, social, and cultural process in which an area becomes more urbanised and less rural (Henderson, 2003). Urban development may include shifts in employment that rely less on physical labour and more on ministerial/administrative labour, widespread use of technology and industry, and larger, denser human settlements.	World Bank Handbook for Gender-Inclusive Urban Planning and Design
Urban intensification areas	The city centre, town and group centres and transit corridors which are areas of high accessibility.	ACT Planning Strategy 2018
Urban planning	A multi-disciplinary approach to deciding where things get build and why. Urban planning is concerned with the relationship between people and the built environment and ensuring the protection of people's general health, safety, and welfare. Planning does this by creating and assessing plans for the preservation and development of commerce, the environment, transportation, housing, parks and public spaces, and urban design.	World Bank Handbook for Gender-Inclusive Urban Planning and Design
Violence against women	Any act of gender based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion, or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life.	Creating Safe and Inclusive Public Spaces for Women
Vulnerable Canberrans	Children and the elderly, and those living in apartments and at the urban fringe.	Canberra's Living Infrastructure Plan: Cooling the City