



Desert Futures

HEAT RESILIENCE & PUBLIC-SPACE LEARNING

A Cooler Journey

A public-space planning starter

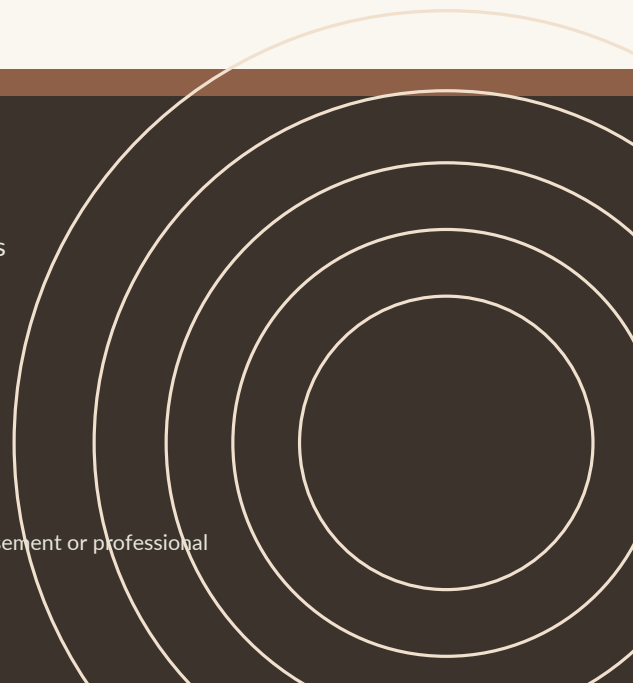
Examine the entire walking, waiting and gathering experience—not a single shade structure in isolation.

FREE TO READ • NO REGISTRATION

Councils, community groups, campus teams and public-space planners

ORIGINAL EDUCATIONAL RESOURCE • OCTOBER 2026

An Apollo NZ Global open-learning initiative. Not a funded programme, official endorsement or professional certification.



Begin with the right questions

A short briefing for the facilitator and participants.

Examine the entire walking, waiting and gathering experience—not a single shade structure in isolation.

01 / COMFORT IS A CONNECTED JOURNEY

A well-shaded seating area provides limited relief if the approach, crossing or queue remains exposed.

02 / COMBINE STRATEGIES

Trees, orientation, shelters, rest places, shade, materials, water availability and operation all have a role; trade-offs must be assessed.

03 / LOCAL CLIMATE AND MAINTENANCE MATTER

Claims about temperature reductions, irrigation loads or compliance require qualified, location-specific analysis.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Where do people start, stop, wait or cross?
- Where is shade interrupted along those journeys?
- Who is less able to use the route comfortably or accessibly?
- Who can assess maintenance, irrigation, fire, engineering and municipal approvals?

A guided group session

One 60-minute stakeholder workshop + feasibility review

00–10

Select a real journey

Choose one school-to-stop, park-to-service or plaza-to-crossing route.

10–24

Map user experience

Record shade continuity, waiting points, access and resting options.

24–38

Compare interventions

Consider vegetation, orientation, built shelter and operational options together.

38–50

Test responsibilities

List accessibility, heat safety, maintenance, services and approvals needing local review.

50–60

Set a review brief

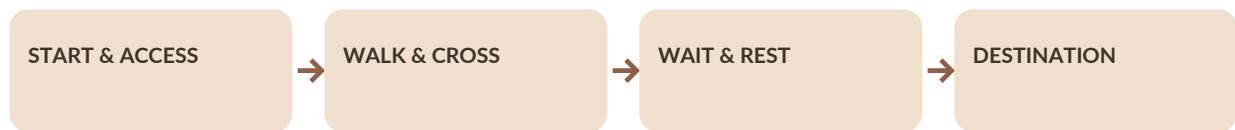
Write one clear question for a qualified planning or municipal team.

FACILITATOR CHECK

Use locally meaningful language. Invite corrections. Avoid gathering or publishing private, culturally sensitive, or personal information without consent.

Whole-journey shade continuity map

Use this as an observation and prioritisation aid only. Any measurement or heat-risk assertion needs appropriate local methods.



Illustrative planning pathway — adapt locally; arrows do not imply measured causation.

GROUP ACTIVITY

- 1 Choose a route and list user groups with different needs.
- 2 Mark places of waiting, rest, shade and access to cooler areas.
- 3 Compare vegetation, built shade and operational responses.
- 4 Identify ownership, maintenance and municipal approvals.

REFLECTION

Which conclusion can we support today? Which question still needs local advice, permission or reliable evidence?

A planning sheet to keep

Fill this in together. Leave space for uncertainty and for local voices.

01 CITY, SITE AND EXAMPLE ROUTE

02 WHO USES THE JOURNEY AND WHY

03 KNOWN SHADE GAPS AND WAITING POINTS

04 ACCESSIBILITY, WATER AND COMFORT QUESTIONS

05 LOCAL REVIEW OWNER, APPROVALS AND NEXT DATE

Review, do not rush

Keep the value in informed discussions and locally accountable decisions.

WHAT A USEFUL FIRST REVIEW LOOKS LIKE

- ☐ The whole journey is considered, not only the destination.
- ☐ Vulnerable users and accessibility are central.
- ☐ Temperature and performance benefits have not been invented.
- ☐ Relevant municipal and qualified professionals are assigned review.

PRIORITY HANDOFF

Who should receive the discussion summary? Who can confirm cultural, health, planning, environmental or engineering requirements? Agree a review date rather than promising an intervention.

INDEPENDENT FURTHER READING

UNEP – Sustainable Cooling Handbook

wedocs.unep.org/handle/20.500.11822/37313

UNEP – Urban cooling & extreme heat

www.unep.org/en/what-we-do/cities/cooling-and-heating-cities/urban-cooling-and-extreme-heat

WHO – Heat and health

www.who.int/en/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/climate-change-heat-and-health

IMPORTANT

Planning conversation only. Not a microclimate study, certified design, heat-safety guarantee or statutory approval.