

LIVEABLE CITIES

Cities are where thousands or millions of people live and work closely together.¹ In 1900, there were 12 cities with one million people living in them. The 20th century saw the emergence of some 330 cities around the world, and by the year 2030, the number of people projected to be living in cities is 5 billion.²

To make cities liveable and comfortable for dwellers is the job of **urban planners**. They play a critical role in planning land usage and developing programmes that create communities, accommodate population growth, and revitalise physical facilities within city areas. Their mission would include making cities safe, organised, beautiful, and environmentally friendly so that dwellers can lead better lives and enjoy quality daily life.³

Some basic needs that could be found in cities include comfortable housing, safe drinking water, stable supply of energy, functioning sewer systems, transportation systems, telecommunication services, and even food choices from around the world.⁴

VILLAGES

TOWNS

CITIES



SONGDO IN SOUTH KOREA

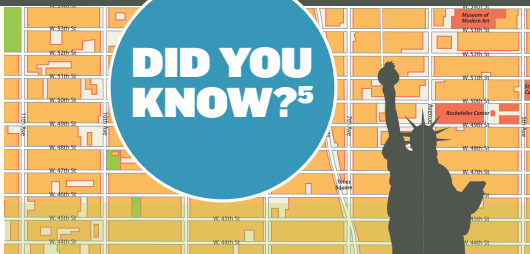
Songdo is a new city that is located about 32 kilometers from Seoul. It has been called the City of Tomorrow. More than 25,000 people live in the city, which has a saltwater canal with water taxis, bike racks at each apartment block, and pneumatic tubes that enable garbage to shoot its way to the dump.



DID YOU KNOW?⁵

NEW YORK IN UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

This city has a famous grid plan road system. Here, the city streets run in straight lines, crossing each other to make a net of pattern. Many streets are given numbers or letters as names so that pedestrians and motorists can 'count' their way across the city. The roads are orderly and well-organised to give people space.



DUBAI IN THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

This city is famous for its mega-buildings such as the Burj Khalifa. It is also home to Palm Island, artificial islands shaped like a palm tree, where houses are built along each 'frond' to create a waterfront view.

SINGAPORE

For city-state Singapore, the Urban Redevelopment Authority is the main agency for matters pertaining to land-use planning and conservation efforts. Its mission is to make Singapore a great city to live, work, and play in. It aims to build Singapore into a vibrant and sustainable city of distinction by planning and facilitating Singapore's physical development in partnership with the community.⁶

Overseeing this mission is the Ministry of National Development, which recently announced its key priorities to ensure that Singapore is highly liveable in terms of:⁷

- Providing affordable and quality housing and building communities
- Embarking on urban transformation projects such as moving the ports in Tanjong Pagar and Pasir Panjang to Tuas, developing the second central business district in Jurong, and rejuvenating Paya Lebar after the old airport moves out
- Pushing boundaries on creating a greener and better environment
- Building digital infrastructure to support the future economy

In addition, the Ministry of National Development and Ministry of the Environment and Water Resources set up the Centre for Liveable Cities (CLC) in 2008. The CLC's mission is "to distill, create and share knowledge on liveable and sustainable cities" for agencies involved in this effort.⁸



INFORMATION LITERACY TIP:

Books on city area planning and urban redevelopment matters on Singapore are located on level 7 of Lee Kong Chian Reference Library. They are shelved under the 711.4095957 collection area.

To search for resources on this topic, do use these keywords:

- City planning - Singapore
- Urban renewal - Singapore
- Land use - Singapore

REFERENCES:

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- 2) Vermond, K. (2014). Why we live where we live. P. 24. CA: Owlkids Books Inc. Call no.: J 307 VER
- 3) Urban and regional planners. Bureau of Labor Statistics website. Retrieved on 3 January 2017 from <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/life-physical-and-social-science/urban-and-regional-planners.htm>
- 4) Vermond, K. (2014). Why we live where we live. pp. 26. CA: Owlkids Books Inc. Call no.: J 307 VER
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- 7) Whang, R. (11 October 2016). Aiming for a highly-liveable Singapore. The Straits Times, p. C1.
- 8) Centre for Liveable Cities website. Retrieved on 3 January 2017 from <http://www.clc.gov.sg/>