

As cities recover from COVID-19, trends emerge to guide urban transformation: Deloitte Global report

NEW YORK, NEW YORK, UNITED STATES, September 21, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- A new Deloitte Global report on urban transformation identifies 12 trends cities need to act on as they seek sustainability, resilience, and prosperity in a post-COVID landscape. [Urban Future with a Purpose: 12 trends shaping the future of cities by 2030](#) identifies how cities can use these trends as a guide to build back better by leveraging technology and innovation.

Although the pandemic disrupted the very core of urban living—from social distancing and lockdowns to destabilized local economies—cities remain well-placed to respond to crisis and set the rules for restoring vibrant, humanized communities. With their human capital, infrastructure, and scalability potential, urban centers can drive the change needed to create a green, digital, and inclusive society of the future.

“These 12 trends set the stage for what a resilient and sustainable urban future looks like,” says Miguel Eiras Antunes, Deloitte’s Global Smart City, Smart Nation and Local Government Leader. “They not only can help governments develop and evolve their urban transformation strategies but also help them balance short-term pressures with longer-term needs.”

Drawing on the insights from researchers, policy makers, and city leaders, the 12 trends include:

- **Green planning of public spaces.** While traditionally characterized by high density of population and buildings, cities are now rethinking their structure and functions to achieve sustainable urban living.
- **15-minute city.** Urban planners are aiming to design neighborhoods so that amenities are within a 15-minute walk or bicycle ride, with a range of housing, more green spaces, and designated walking and bicycle routes.
- **Inclusive services and planning.** Governments around the world are proactively implementing inclusion-focused solutions, with the goal of leaving no one behind.
- **Smart health communities.** Cities are developing health care ecosystems that not only focus on diagnosing and treating sickness but also on supporting well-being through early intervention and prevention.
- **Mobility: intelligent, sustainable, and as-a-service.** With more walking and cycling spaces, cities are working towards offering digital, clean, intelligent, autonomous, and intermodal mobility.

- Digital innovation ecosystem. Tending to attract talent, enable creativity, and encourage disruptive thinking, cities are promoting new sources of employment and economic growth related to technological innovation.
- Circular economy and producing locally. Cities are adopting circular models based on a healthy circulation of resources and the principles of sharing, re-use and restoration.
- Mass participation. Local governments are acting as platforms for co-creation enabled by technology and promoting mass participation—that is citizens working in a collaborative ecosystem of academia, businesses, NGOs, and the public sector.
- Cybersecurity and privacy awareness. To cope with rising cyber risks and privacy issues, cities are creating robust cybersecurity strategies and policies in response to any cyber failure, data loss, financial impact, or major service disruption.
- Smart and sustainable buildings and infrastructure. By leveraging digital technologies, cities can use data to optimize energy consumption and the use of resources in buildings and utilities, including waste, water, and energy.
- City operations through AI. Using artificial intelligence, technology-powered infrastructure can support cities in automating operations, creating efficiencies, solving problems, and delivering better services.
- Surveillance and predictive policing through AI. Cities are aiming to carefully leverage technology to ensure public safety—such as automatic contact tracing—while paying special mind to citizen concerns and governance.

While recovery from the pandemic as well as the pressure of growing populations are key factors for cities, other relevant challenges must also be addressed by urban planners in order to create sustainable cities. The report identifies some of these challenges, including such economic, social, and environmental issues as affordable housing, segregation and inequality, and climate change.

About the report's contributors

The 12 trends were developed based on original research and interviews conducted with experts from a range of public, private, and academic organizations, including:

- Yvonne Aki-Sawyerr, Mayor of Freetown
- Kirby Brady, Chief Innovation Officer of San Diego
- Owe Brandes, Faculty Director, Georgetown University Global Cities Initiative
- Sandy Carter, Vice-President of Amazon Web Services Worldwide Public Sector Partners and Programs
- Markus Elkatsha, Urbanist at MIT Media Lab
- Kent Larson, Director of City Science group at MIT Media Lab
- Jukka Mäkelä, Mayor of Espoo
- Carole Mancel-Blanchard, Member of Cabinet of European Commissioner for Cohesion & Reforms
- Jeff Merritt, Head of IoT and Urban Transformation at the World Economic Forum
- Maimunah Mohd Sharif, Executive Director of UN-Habitat
- Rui Moreira, Mayor of Porto

- Miguel Pinto-Luz, Deputy Mayor of Cascais
- Mohamed Ridouani, Mayor of Leuven
- Paulo Rosado, CEO of OutSystems
- Sameh Wahba, Global Director, Urban, Disaster Risk Management, Resilience and Land Global Practice at the World Bank
- Kok Yam Tan, Deputy Secretary of Singapore's Smart Nation and Digital Government Office

The insightful contributions of these interviewees on the topic of urban transformation and smart cities formed the backbone of this report. You can read more about their views at <https://www2.deloitte.com/urban-future-with-a-purpose-study>

Learn more about Deloitte's Smart Cities & Urban Transformation

Through the Smart Cities & Urban Transformation practice, Deloitte has an ambition to improve citizens' quality of life, solve key urban challenges, and positively contribute towards the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goal 11: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable. The initiative offers up-to-the-minute thinking on how cities can use advanced digital technologies to address such key issues as mobility, data, and sustainability. Drawing on our global reach and cross-sector experience, Deloitte translates a holistic vision of smart cities into actionable, concrete solutions that can enable a brighter urban future.

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