SPACES

PLANNING FOR A SUSTAINABLE SINGAPORE

LAND USE PLAN FOR 2030
HOW WILL THE LAND USE PLAN AFFECT OUR LIVES

We are in a unique time of change and reinvention. With cities becoming engines of growth and life around the world, we are investing more and more effort to remake, rejuvenate and transform cities to better our lives. We want cities to fulfill almost all of our needs, from a basic roof over our heads, to good job opportunities, exciting play places, and even intangible aspects that might feed our soul or make us happy.

While our needs are growing and becoming more complex, our resources and land remain limited as a city-state. So how do we do it? What must we do to be sustainable? This special issue looks at Singapore’s latest Land Use Plan for 2030, how it affects us and ideas for the future.
at a glance

FIVE THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT THE LAND USE PLAN

While our needs and challenges today are vastly different from the 1960s, our priority remains the same: to create a high quality living environment that is sustainable for current and future generations. By 2030, more than half of our land will be allocated for live, work and play uses. To achieve this, we will continue to plan ahead and invest in essential infrastructure such as housing, supporting amenities and transport in a coordinated and timely manner. This will help to overcome our current crunch. Moving forward, such infrastructure will be developed in tandem with our growth. Where possible, buffers will be built in to give us flexibility to respond to unexpected needs and retain options for future generations.

The Land Use Plan outlines key strategies to address challenges from now to 2030 and beyond. Here are the key highlights.

01. Land is optimised to sustain growth

- Recycle land with existing low intensity uses
- 58% of land for live, work, play uses
- 2010: 71,000 ha, 2030: 76,600 ha
- By 2016: +90,000 private homes
- 2030: +110,000 public homes
- 2017: +20,000 childcare places
- 2020: +4,100 hospital beds
- 2030: +20,000 childcare places
- 2030: +4,100 hospital beds

02. More amenities, greater convenience

- 2020: Additional 160 km of park connectors
- 2030: 85% of households within 10-15 mins walk of a park
- 2030: Additional 100 ha of reservoirs opened up for recreational activities
- 2020: 360 km rail lines, up from 180 km today
- 2030: Increased rail density to 54 km/mil population
- 2030: 8 in 10 homes will be within 10 mins walk of a train station

03. Your playground will be expanded

- 2030: 81% of households within 10-15 mins walk of a park
- 2030: More journeys on public transport during morning peak hours
- 2030: 8 in 10 homes will be within 10 mins walk of a train station
- 2030: Your playground will be expanded

04. Travel will be more convenient and pleasant

- 2030: 360 km rail lines, up from 180 km today
- 2030: Increased rail density to 54 km/mil population
- 2030: 8 in 10 homes will be within 10 mins walk of a train station
- 2030: Your playground will be expanded

05. More jobs will be closer to homes

- 2030: 360 km rail lines, up from 180 km today
- 2030: Increased rail density to 54 km/mil population
- 2030: 8 in 10 homes will be within 10 mins walk of a train station
- 2030: Your playground will be expanded
WHAT WILL OUR TOWNS AND HOMES BE LIKE

Housing towns of the future are likely to see living spaces extended and expanded, through the clever linking up of public spaces, parks and pathways within estates and beyond. New public and green spaces can be created and existing ones better utilised. The idea is to create a living environment where people can walk and cycle to nearby amenities and where waterways, green spaces, amenities and shops are all within easy reach. Perhaps, future private housing developments could also have fenceless settings, for more to enjoy the open and green spaces through and around private estates.
Punggol Town shows how high density housing can have a good quality living environment. Even though Punggol will be one of the biggest housing estates with 96,000 dwelling units in future, living spaces will continue to be enhanced.

**7 waterfront**

Housing districts will be developed progressively over time, each with its own identity.

**GREEN FINGERS**

Will be developed throughout Punggol, connecting it to the coastal promenade and Coney Island.

Rooftop gardens on top of multi-storey carparks will offer new community spaces, help reduce heat and add more greenery to the landscape.

Privacy will be maximised with the arrangement of blocks and spacing between them. This creates better wind flow as well.

Cycling and walking will be encouraged with an extensive network of pathways.

Punggol Downtown will offer an alternative hang out place with more public spaces available, together with community facilities and shops.

All common amenities like lifts, corridor lights and water pumps are envisioned to be powered by solar energy by 2016.

Beyond creative designs at the town-level, future private housing developments could also be innovatively designed to provide residents easy access to bigger living and play spaces. For example, at Kampong Bugis, private housing developments could possibly be fenceless, to enable everyone to enjoy the public and green spaces, and facilitate greater porosity throughout the precinct.

Smaller estates will have parks within that are well-linked to other parks and connectors beyond. This means more & extended open green spaces to run around in.
Major efforts are being made to ramp up the transport infrastructure, and transport companies are beefing up their service standards. But it is not just about building train lines. It is also about how well we make use of what we have and if there are smarter ways of getting from one place to another. Perhaps it is a mindset change? What can we do at an individual level to make travelling work for ourselves? How can we tap on one another? Are there alternatives we can consider in reaching our destinations faster and easier? We propose three ways.

1. **Car pool**
   - This idea is environmentally-friendly, low-cost and makes more efficient use of our cars. NTUC Income set up the first car sharing scheme in 1997 and since then, such schemes have grown in popularity. Perhaps there is a car sharing scheme near you that you can check out?

2. **Flexi hours**
   - More companies are increasingly looking at offering flexible working hours or telecommuting options. Not only can this help alleviate the crowded peak hour travels to work, it can also change one’s own lifestyle and bring about health and work-life balance benefits for employees.

3. **Mode switch**
   - Sometimes, we may need to go beyond our comfort zone – seriously consider switching from car to public transport or take up cycling. While the change may be tough to adjust to in the short-term, you are likely to reap benefits such as better time management for your journey, cost savings and even better fitness overall.

Dr Leong Chee Chiew, Deputy Chief Executive Officer and Commissioner of Parks & Recreation at the National Parks Board, shares with us why he switched to public transport.

1. **When and why did you decide to stop driving to work?**
   - It was a practical decision for me. I was attending a course at the Civil Service College in September 2012 and found that my course mates were using the MRT. I decided to try it and found it much more convenient than trying to find a parking lot each day. Sometimes, we would end up in various places after site visits or dinner but I had no problems finding my way home by train. Encouraged, I started to use the MRT to and from work.

2. **How have you benefitted from switching to public transport?**
   - Driving to work in the past was quicker because I left early in the morning when there was little traffic. But driving home in the evening meant getting stuck in traffic and that was not pleasant. I am now more relaxed taking the train and I enjoy the walk between the MRT stations, my home and my office. Brisk walking is good for me, and the route through the Singapore Botanic Gardens (where my office is located) is especially beautiful.

3. **What else do you have to say about switching to public transport?**
   - I had not given public transport much thought before September 2012. I still drive to work occasionally depending on my schedule and the places I have to go to. But by and large, I am quite used to public transport for work and increasingly for leisure, and enjoy it. Some of my friends and colleagues say that they will try public transport too, and I hope that they will.
who says we are an urban jungle?

Things are about to get even greener.

We will retain nine per cent of our land for greenery. As we build more homes and open up new areas, we will continue to provide accessible green spaces near residents. By 2030, 85 per cent of people will live within 10-15 mins walk of a park. These will be well-linked via 360 km of park connectors by 2020. Play will get even more exciting too, with parks and waterways continuing to offer differentiated experiences. Coming up are ‘island hopping’ at Jurong Lake Park, vehicle-free rustic retreat at Coney Island and experiential ‘river classrooms’ at Sungei Ulu Pandan. Greenery does not just stop at the ground level. If you look up, you will notice more mid-level, skyrise and rooftop greenery in flats, offices and other buildings. Hop, skip to these new parks, waterways and play options in future.

Round Island Route
150 km of continuous trails and pathways around the island

RochoR canal
Beautiful Waterway with lookout decks

Sungei Ulu Pandan
Experiential ‘River Classrooms’

Jurong Lake Park
‘Island hopping’, Family fun

Coney Island
Rustic retreat, back to nature

Rail Corridor
New play options set in lush greenery and rich heritage
Singapore might be tightly-packed, but there is always room for play. Beyond the shiny attractions and usual destinations we flock to over the weekends, creative nooks and corners have now become playgrounds too. All it takes is a group of like-minded people with passion. Parkour and football enthusiasts tell us how.

Playing under the flyover
There are many things you might expect to find under a busy car flyover. Litter, rats and power generators spring to mind. Four turfed mini-football pitches do not. Yet, that is exactly what you will find at Offside, a futsal (a more compact form of indoor football) facility nestled under Thomson flyover.

Derek Cheong, the Director of Business Development at Offside explains: “We're slightly different from other facilities. We make this place a destination where people can hang around, play soccer. There's no urgency for people to leave afterwards. We encourage people to stay, chit-chat, have some snacks, play table soccer.” Pitch and equipment quality, and simple concierge services like calling cabs for customers helps, he says. But the clincher is the atmosphere. Instead of stifling heat and the endless roar of traffic, the space is cooled by the shade of the bridge overhead. Derek estimates that 15,000 cars pass overhead every day. Yet it sounds more like waves slithering over the sands of a beach.

This comfortable street-feel friendly atmosphere has led to Offside hosting, or at least being asked to host, more events than you can throw a shin pad at. Apart from regular football tournaments, “we get events like Cohesion Day, product launches, Halloween parties, all sorts of ideas. We had people who came in to do their bridal shoots,” says Derek.

A lot of other similar facilities do not host those kinds of events, he says, but he wants Offside to embrace a multi-purpose use. “Spaces like this should be well-utilised. People are always looking for something different; a special open space.” In a land that does not have much, well, land, Derek feels a recreational facility with only one function is not much use at all.

“Spaces like this should be well-utilised. People are always looking for something different; a special open space.”

Seeking out steps and under expressways

“Parkour is for everyone... It’s a real fit for our urban jungle...”

Leaping through streets and car parks
What do you do when you are faced with tight urban spaces and have a craving to do some climbing, running and a bit of gymnastics? Tan Chi Ying thinks you should try parkour (a sport that combines spiderman crawls and Jackie Chan moves). The founder of A2 movements, a Singapore parkour agency, Chi Ying says, “In parkour there is a philosophy; it’s not just about physical movement, but the mental aspect. The way we see the world is transformed. We see everyday things as opportunities. We see beyond challenges.” Within limited land, there are many ways to make full use of what we have. Spaces can have many uses. So when Chi Ying and his class vault over rails and roll over stairs, they are practising creative land use, in a way.

“Parkour is for everyone,” Chi Ying believes. “It’s a real fit for our urban jungle, with one structure linking the other seamlessly. Parkour will allow Singaporeans to train wherever and whenever they are free, making it a good fit for the fast-paced lifestyle of our society.”

For the full stories on futsal under the flyover and parkour movement, please go to www.goingplacesingspore.sg

Feature stories by Daniel Seifert
connecting the dots

WHAT CAN YOU DO WITH DRAINS, RIDGES AND CLUB BUILDINGS?

Our size need not constrain us. With some imagination, we can creatively expand our play areas and even create new ones, just by simply leveraging on what we already have. See what has been done with ordinary drainage reserves, community club buildings and rolling hills.

Park connector

Most of us would have heard of or used a park connector by now. But many may not realise that these used to be drainage reserves along roads and canals. The idea is simple – these strips are too narrow for other uses, so why not turn them into landscaped footpaths and bicycle lanes that link up with nearby parks and nature reserve. Today, we have 200 km of such park connectors. 360 km will be completed by 2020. From just a simple drainage reserve, we now get to stroll, cycle and jog in this giant network of parks and nature areas across and around the island.

Southern Ridges

What used to be separate hills, from Telok Blangah Hill Park to Mount Faber Park, are now joined together through a nine km trail, known as the Southern Ridges. Two bridges, Henderson Waves and Alexandra Arch, were built to link these hilltops. In 2002, planners came up with this novel idea of connecting the hills so that everyone can enjoy a more continuous stretch of green, thus expanding our recreational space. The Southern Ridges has now become a popular local and tourist destination, enabling people to explore deeper and further in the south. The bridges, the result of a design competition, also marvel with their stunning designs.

Community Clubs

Community Club buildings in the past tend to have just one use – offering community activities or courses. But as demand for more facilities and amenities increased within limited spaces, planners have started to introduce more uses in Community Club buildings. By placing more uses in one building, it frees up land to be used for other purposes. These uses share common facilities and residents enjoy a one-stop convenience. One of the first examples of co-location of uses was the Marine Parade Community Club which has a library, a gymnasium and an office for a performing arts group. Today, there are many such multi-purpose club buildings, which now even offer hockey pitches, medical centres and food outlets.
spreading out

HUBBING OUTSIDE THE CITY CENTRE

The idea of creating decentralised hubs outside of our city centre may seem strange given our size, but these commercial hubs developed over the years have become centres of attraction for work, shopping and other activities. Tampines Regional Centre and Novena Fringe Centre are prime examples. The planners first mooted this idea of decentralised hubs in 1991 to reduce peak-hour traffic going into and out of the city. It was also to bring jobs closer to homes. Coming up are more hubs and corridors to support further growth in the commercial, retail and entertainment sectors.

Jurong Lake District
- Largest hub outside the city centre; 360 ha
- Mini metropolis of offices, shops, hotels, homes, with edutainment attractions
- Sustainable solutions tested-bedded for waste, energy and water
- Extensive green, pedestrian, cycling networks
- To date, four sites have been sold for a range of uses – offices, homes, hotel; JCube shopping centre was opened in 2012

North Coast Innovation Corridor
- Spans Woodlands Regional Centre, Sembawang, Seletar to Punggol
- Envisioned to be buzzing with new ideas and technologies
- Punggol North will have a new creative business cluster
- In the longer term, the Seletar Regional Centre will be developed

Southern Waterfront City
- Spans Marina Bay to Keppel, Telok Blangah and Pasir Panjang Terminal
- Waterfront land can potentially be developed after the future relocation of the existing terminals for a variety of new uses – offices, homes, recreation

Paya Lebar Central
- Alternative location for offices not far from the city centre
- Pedestrian-friendly hub of shops, offices, hotels, with traditional Malay character
Those residing in the north will be able to work, shop and indulge in recreational activities in their own backyard before hopping onto a train or car for a quick jaunt in the city in future. With the planned rail link to neighbouring Johor in the works, crossing the border will be a cinch. Locals can pop by Malaysia for a quick cross-border outing via the Woodlands North station which will serve as an interchange to the future rail link.

Plans for this Regional Centre will take 10 to 15 years to realise, but some physical developments can be expected in the next few years.

The public can give their views on Woodlands Regional Centre and suggest names for the two precincts at www.ura.gov.sg/woodlands

Article by Nur Farhana
The sight of 20,000 wishing spheres afloat on Marina Bay is quite a view to behold. And when you throw in our beautiful city skyline and some stunning fireworks, the result is what the people have come to know as the annual Marina Bay Singapore Countdown.

For the eighth consecutive year, the Urban Redevelopment Authority and the Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay joined hands to bring the nation its biggest Countdown event of the year. The festivities for the Countdown included musical performances and heartwarming film screenings, culminating in a stunning eight-minute fireworks display. Also ushering the New Year in style was the “Wishing Spheres” project which encouraged members of the public to pen their hopes for the coming 12 months onto wishing spheres. These spheres were deployed at Wishing Stations across the island, before being installed into the Bay as part of a stellar finale to the year.

The Countdown is truly one of the most anticipated events for Singaporeans and visitors from all over the world. What better way to capture the beauty of the celebration than to do it through a photo competition. Clarity, composition and technical proficiency are all hallmarks of a winning image but so is a flair for snapping a spontaneous moment. Working on the theme “Loving you, Loving Marina Bay”, participants of the Marina Bay Singapore Countdown Photography Competition 2013 went about capturing the vibrancy and joy of the Bay through their lenses. Skyline profiles one winning photograph in this issue but do visit http://marinabaycountdown.sg/index.php/photo_competition#winning_entries_archives to see the other beautiful winning entries.

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