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REPORT

Cities' Livability

In the Age of Global Citizenship



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WORLD GOVERNMENTS SUMMIT

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Introduction

The Concept of Urban Livability Has Gained Renewed Importance Among Policymakers and Urban Planners

By 2050, roughly 70% of the world's population is expected to live in cities (UN-Habitat, 2022b), moving toward a predominantly urban future for humanity. Millions worldwide continue to leave rural areas heading towards large cities, seeking better opportunities for themselves and their families (UN-Habitat, 2022b). Despite challenges like congestion and pollution, cities offer economic prospects, education, culture, and innovation. As a result, urban areas are growing rapidly in size and population, often outpacing infrastructure and service capacity (UN-Habitat, 2022b). Public agencies face the enormous task of protecting residents' health, safety, and well-being while ensuring that cities remain vibrant and capable of supporting growing populations.

In this context, Urban Livability (UL) has gained renewed importance among policymakers and urban planners (Kashef, 2016; Ruth & Franklin, 2014; Schindler & Dionisio, 2024; UN-Habitat, 2022). The term "urban livability" itself often refers to various indicators measuring the performance of the cities relative to the overall perceived

quality of life (Kashef, 2016; Pacione, 2003). While not new, livability has re-emerged as a top priority for cities worldwide, driven by global economic shifts and heightened competition, particularly post-COVID-19 (Giles-Corti et al., 2023; Mouratidis, 2018, 2021a). Investments in public infrastructure, economic policies, and media campaigns increasingly focus on urban livability, placing it at the center of public debates and strategic goals (Ruth & Franklin, 2014). For instance, Dubai's 2040 urban master plan highlights the city's aspiration to become one of the most livable globally (RTA, 2021).

However, defining livability remains essential. Traditionally, city planning agencies have equated it with infrastructure improvements in transportation, sanitation, housing, and public spaces like parks and green areas (Lee, 2021; Mittal et al., 2020; Mouratidis, 2021b). Moreover, these goals are measurable and align with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (UNDESA, 2023). Yet, in today's interconnected global economy, infrastructure alone no longer captures the full scope of livability. Softer factors such as cultural appeal, lifestyle amenities, and a city's ability

to attract corporations, global talent, and high-net-worth individuals play an equally critical role. City branding campaigns also influence rankings by organizations like the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU, 2022).

Policymakers and urban planners must balance the various dimensions of livability, such as public infrastructure improvements, economic prosperity, and global appeal. Cities must ensure the well-being, happiness, and prosperity of current and future residents—a multifaceted challenge. At the same time, they need to enhance their global appeal to attract talent, businesses, and investment, ensuring economic growth and a competitive edge. Achieving these objectives demands well-defined strategies and effective tools.



Section 1

Livability Re-Defined?



What does livability mean for residents of informal settlements in cities of the Global South, such as Mumbai or Rio de Janeiro? How does it differ for those living in luxury penthouses in the developed cities of Manhattan or Dubai? Younger professionals may prioritize different aspects of a livable city than retirees. Can a city be livable for one group while excluding others? When does a city lose its livability altogether? These questions underscore the subjective nature of livability and present a significant challenge for policymakers striving to improve their cities and make them more attractive (Ruth & Franklin, 2014).

If residents of any city were asked, “What makes your city livable?” responses would naturally vary widely. Yet, it could be fair to assume that most respondents would agree on one key point— that cities must create opportunities, particularly economic ones (Glaeser, 2011). Cities have historically existed to generate opportunities, and today, they continue to attract millions, especially the urban explorer migrating from rural areas in search of better prospects (UN-Habitat, 2022). Many also move internationally, seeking improved living conditions, especially towards global cities such as Dubai and London, or New York (Marcuse & Van Kempen, 2011; Sassen, 2016; Verginer & Riccaboni, 2021). Creating opportunities is a central and universal factor in any discussion about urban livability, while it remains personal and shaped by individual experiences (Kashef, 2016).

Livability and Infrastructure

Across urban growth and management disciplines, the formal definitions of livability vary widely. However, most international bodies involved in urban conditions agree that a livable city enhances residents' quality of life, fosters economic prosperity, and ensures health, safety, and dignity (UN-Habitat, 2022). The challenge lies in turning livability into a practical, operational concept. Urban planning has traditionally been linked to delivering services, infrastructure, and institutions to meet population needs (Kashef, 2016; Ruth & Franklin, 2014). The adoption of the SDGs, particularly SDG 11 (UNDESA, 2023), has further shaped this focus by providing city planners with clear, measurable objectives. Today, most urban infrastructure projects, such as enhancing walkability, expanding transport networks, or improving water and sanitation systems, fall under efforts to boost livability.

While infrastructure alone does not define success, it is critical in delivering livability. Overcrowded and chaotic cities, particularly in heavily populated developing countries, illustrate how inadequate infrastructure and services hinder the quality of life (UN-Habitat, 2022a, 2022b). Such cities may thrive economically but risk losing talent to places offering better living conditions. Policymakers and urban planners must address these issues to improve livability while remaining flexible and adapting their approaches to changing needs (Badland et al., 2014).



Livability and Socioeconomic Factors

Throughout contemporary city planning's short history, many grand visions for "ideal" and livable cities have emerged. From Ebenezer Howard's Garden Cities of Tomorrow to Le Corbusier's Radiant City and Jane Jacobs' influential writings, each presented a vision of how cities should be planned to achieve livability. More recently, post-pandemic ideas such as the 15-minute neighborhood (Moreno et al., 2021), focused on delivering services within walking distance, have been repackaged as strategies to enhance livability. While these concepts hold value, they often focus narrowly on spatial characteristics (Mouratidis, 2024), overlooking critical social and economic issues such as low-income neighborhoods and marginalized citizen groups.

A one-size-fits-all approach rarely succeeds because people's needs and aspirations

differ. Some are drawn to cities with quality education or abundant cultural and recreational amenities (Ewers & Dicce, 2018; Mouratidis, 2021b). Others prioritize diversity, safety, low crime rates, or political stability (Ewers et al., 2022; Malecki & Ewers, 2007; Salama et al., 2018). Inclusion, respect for citizens' rights, and community engagement in decision-making further enhance a city's appeal.

A truly livable city aims to enduringly address these complexities. The city itself evolves with changing needs and priorities, unlike cities that resist change. The ability to adapt and respond to diverse expectations ultimately defines a city's livability (Higgs et al., 2019; Ruth & Franklin, 2014).

Livability with a Focus on Nature

The natural environment plays a vital role in enhancing urban livability, especially in areas with harsh climates. While cities cannot change their geographic locations or natural contexts, preserving and celebrating their existing natural spaces is crucial, as people value access to nature (Sharifi, 2021). In response to the climate emergency, “greening” cities has become an integral element in livability discussions (Mouratidis, 2021b, 2021a). Access to green spaces and public parks provides a necessary reprieve from urban stressors and significantly boosts livability. These areas also improve public health by addressing sedentary lifestyles, long commutes, and high-stress levels. Consequently, planners and public health officials increasingly prioritize green spaces and active-lifestyle infrastructure, such as bike paths and running tracks, in livability initiatives (Ruth & Franklin, 2014).

As extreme weather events like flooding become more frequent, livability efforts now emphasize the resilience-nature protection relationship (Kutty et al., 2022; Sharifi, 2021). This includes implementing natural or man-made solutions to enhance urban resilience. Issues like flooding, bushfires, and landslides pose direct risks to life and create perceived risks that impact economic sectors like real estate. Recent global challenges, including the pandemic and military conflicts, have further highlighted food security as a critical factor in livability and public health (Acuto, 2020; Alabi & Ngwenyama, 2023; Mell & Whitten, 2021; Michael et al., 2020). Cities are responding by investing in urban farming, vertical farming, and community-driven agricultural initiatives. These projects strengthen urban resilience, contribute to city greening, and support sustainability goals.

At the individual level, awareness of the link between health and environmental factors has grown in the past decade (Badland et al., 2014; Giles-Corti et al., 2023; Jevtic et al., 2022). This has spurred interest in healthy living, particularly among affluent, creative demographics – defined as highly mobile, younger, talented professionals (Mellander & Florida, 2014). Initiatives like locally produced food, farmers’ markets, organic and vegan lifestyles, and farm-to-table movements have gained significant traction, fostering community engagement. Conversely, cities with high pollution levels from heavy industries or relaxed environmental regulations are increasingly seen as less desirable, particularly for families with relocation options (Martínez-Bravo et al., 2019).

Preserving and Celebrating Green Spaces Is Crucial as People Value Access to Nature





City Rankings and Quality of Life

It is increasingly common to hear claims that a particular city is “the best place to live, work, or visit” (Mercer, 2024). Cities like Zurich and Vienna are often cited as prime examples (EIU, 2022). But where do these descriptions come from, and why do cities invest so heavily in earning such recognition? City rankings have been around for years (EIU, 2022; OECD, 2013), with various entities evaluating global cities based on livability and desirability. These rankings use measurable metrics like cost of living and GDP but also include subjective components, reflecting the inherently personal nature of livability. They primarily target global expatriates and often guide corporations in deciding where to locate offices and employees (EIU, 2022; OECD, 2023).

Several city ranking indices exist, such as the Economist Global Livability Index, IESE’s Cities in Motion Index, the Mori Memorial Foundation’s Global Power Cities Index, Monocle’s Quality of Life Survey, and the OECD’s Better Life Index. While their methodologies differ, these indices typically focus on factors like infrastructure, sociocultural indicators, natural elements, and survey-based perceptions of quality of life. It is worth noting that most of these rankings acknowledge that improvements in various aspects of the city could increase livability and quality of life, though individual experiences may vary widely. Notably, cities that rank highly on these lists tend to be in Western or industrialized nations (Mercer, 2024), with occasional entries from emerging

cities in Asia and Africa, depending on the index. Despite the subjectivity of these rankings, they rely on a minimum standard of living and quality of life. Policymakers worldwide strive to secure a spot on these lists, seeing them as a way to enhance their city’s global competitiveness and attract economic opportunities (Bonakdar & Audirac, 2020).

In a globalized world, city rankings, while biased towards wealthier as explained above, carry significant weight. Closely related are city branding efforts, where officials launch campaigns to promote their cities. These initiatives often involve substantial investments in infrastructure, real estate, and iconic architectural projects, frequently commissioned from renowned architects (Boland, 2013; Bonakdar & Audirac, 2020). Inspired by the “Bilbao Effect”, or the concept of “build it, and they will come,” such branding strategies aim to attract global capital and tourism. These efforts typically include rapid urban upgrades in specific zones and economic liberalization policies to boost local economies, such as investing in iconic monuments or buildings, promoting museums and sports venues, and hosting mega-events. While these approaches are not without criticism, they often succeed in drawing attention to cities and improving their rankings (Paganoni, 2012; Vanolo, 2017).

‘Voting with Their Feet’ and Global Citizenry

Livability and quality of life depend heavily on the people living in a city and their ever-changing perceptions, among other factors (Ruth & Franklin, 2014). What makes a city livable for one group might make it less desirable for another. For instance, a city with advanced public transport may not appeal to those who prefer driving or have large families (Mouratidis, 2020). Similarly, a city known for vibrant nightlife and tourist attractions might feel overwhelming or unsuitable for those starting families. A young couple enjoying a small downtown flat within walking distance of work and shops may find suburban living more appealing as their family grows, even if it means enduring longer commutes.

Expectations, desires, and aspirations also shift as people’s socioeconomic conditions change, influenced by factors like wealth, education, and life stages. Florida (2010, 2017) linked this to Maslow’s hierarchy of needs, proposing a city livability “Place Pyramid” (Florida, 2010, p. 294) that ranks opportunity, basic services, leadership, values, and aesthetics in order of importance (Figure 1). As opportunities create wealth and options, residents naturally expect more from their cities. If cities fail to meet these growing demands, individuals may “vote with their feet” and relocate to places offering better opportunities and quality of life.

In an increasingly globalized economy, talented professionals are more mobile than ever, often relocating internationally as global citizens (Marcuse & Van Kempen, 2011; Purcell, 2003; Verginer & Riccaboni, 2021). These “creative classes” (Florida, 2005) seek better opportunities, driven by the interconnected nature of businesses



and emerging markets. Destination cities highly value these professionals for their skills, which boosts knowledge, innovation, and local economies. However, this globally mobile group would have higher expectations for livability and urban amenities. For cities, attracting and retaining these individuals is crucial yet challenging due to intense local and international competition.

For policymakers and urban planners, these varied population pressures complicate decision-making. Balancing investments in local basic services such as affordable housing options and updated energy or sanitation systems with spending on city branding to attract global talent is no small task. Ideally, both should be prioritized, but financial constraints and long-term infrastructure commitments make this difficult. Keeping the public informed through various communications and public awareness campaigns, as well as soliciting stakeholder feedback, is vital. Innovations like big data and artificial intelligence can facilitate these efforts, helping cities understand, adapt, and anticipate the evolving needs of their residents (Mellander & Florida, 2014).

Talented Professionals Are More Mobile Than Ever, Often Relocating Internationally as ‘Global Citizens’.

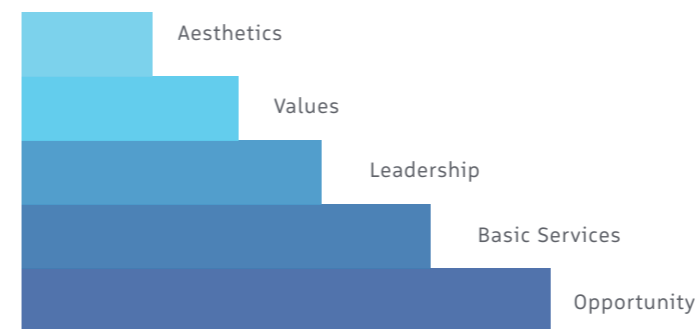


Figure 1: Place Pyramid, Florida (2010, p294)

Section 2

Arriving at Livability: The C3P3 Urban Livability Framework



The Framework Is Both Comprehensive and Adaptable, Allowing for Customization to Address the Unique Needs of Different Locales.

At this stage, the complexity and subjectivity of defining urban livability have been emphasized. A clear distinction has also been made between existing local citizens and potential global citizens (i.e., professional expatriates with valuable experiences). While prioritizing the needs of residents should remain policymakers' primary goal, addressing the demands of global expatriates can bring significant and far-reaching benefits, especially in today's era of competitive cities.

So, how can a livability agenda be developed and delivered? The proposed C3P3 Urban Livability Framework tackles this challenge by offering a practical blueprint for public agencies. It outlines "how to" enhance livability, desirability, and the opportunities cities provide. The framework is comprehensive and adaptable, allowing customization to address the unique needs of different locales across both the Global North and Global South. The C3P3 Livability Framework defines a livable city as:

Connected

A Livable City is a Well-Connected City

Connectivity is essential to urban living. For a city to thrive economically and socially and remain competitive, it must be well-connected. This begins with basic infrastructure systems, including health and sanitation facilities, reliable road networks, robust public transport, walkability, and micro-mobility options. A well-connected city integrates these systems to offer residents a range of efficient services and transportation choices. Additionally, it provides physical spaces and plazas where residents can gather, fostering social connections and vibrant community life.

A livable city should also be a smart city — or even a “cognitive city” — which leverages artificial intelligence in its day-to-day operations (IEEE, 2018). Investments in technological infrastructure, such as IoT and AI-driven systems, urban data analytics, and city-wide sensors, are increasingly vital. These technologies monitor performance and well-being indicators, ensuring seamless city operations while enhancing residents’ quality of life, safety, and overall experience.

Lastly, cities must maintain connectivity on a broader scale — nationally, regionally, and globally. Investments in regional and international transportation systems, including railways and aviation infrastructure, strengthen links between cities, boost economic opportunities, and enhance global appeal.



Collaborative

A Livable City Fosters Collaboration and Partnerships

A livable city adopts a multi-dimensional approach to collaboration, creating partnerships and connection channels with different stakeholders, namely, involved government agencies, the private sector, communities, academia, associations, and renowned international players. In this context, challenges emerge from various directions. Cities must address their ambitions by fostering positive coordination with key stakeholders, ensuring access to and proper allocation of resources, and establishing clear governance and accountability frameworks.

In brief, a livable city is one where residents feel they belong—where they both “believe in” and “buy into” their community. This sense of connection is fostered when public agencies adopt a people-centric approach to city management, making residents active partners in decision-making. Awareness initiatives and campaigns like “My Life, My City” (Sia, 2021) can instill a sense of ownership and civic pride, positively impacting livability. It aims to engage citizens in designing the city they like to live in, the services and activities the city offers and contributes to achieving their purpose and presence in the city itself. Technologies such as smart government



systems, geospatial tools (GIS), and innovative city management platforms make community engagement more efficient and build public trust in government agencies. A livable city always listens to and addresses its residents’ needs. This can also be achieved through continuous engagement on online platforms such as social media and algorithms that can allow analyzing open data and creating insights into cities for faster and targeted decision-making. In addition, traditional public engagement techniques such as surveys, public meetings, and focus groups remain useful — especially considering the digital divide across various segments of any society.

Effective collaboration among public entities and service providers is also critical, given the complexity of urban issues. Investments in urban big-data systems can enable real-time performance monitoring and facilitate inter-agency cooperation through online city dashboards. These platforms could help entities work together seamlessly to address challenges and improve service delivery. Additionally, a collaborative city empowers private sector partners, research centers, and academic institutions by including

them in city management. Encouraging public-private partnerships enhances service efficiency, promotes innovation, and strengthens the local economy while easing the burden on public agencies.

Finally, a livable city recognizes its role as a good neighbor and regional partner. Collaborative efforts across municipalities help mitigate the negative spillover effects of urban development. Regional planning, particularly in polycentric urban areas, becomes more effective when cities work together, ultimately strengthening livability on a broader scale. In this case, cities think beyond their own boundaries and pave collaboration paths with other cities that are around them to provide shared livability practices that complement their strengths, offering citizens an overall positive experience while traveling in or out of their jurisdictions. Through multi-centers of activity, mixed-use developments and regional integration, a collaboration between neighboring cities allows reduced congestion, economic diversification, and environmental benefits, among others, eventually resulting in enhanced livability.

Circular

A Livable City Takes its Sustainability Seriously!

Urban growth is a significant driver of climate crises due to its impacts on land use, resource consumption, energy demands and waste generation, making therefore sustainability a core consideration in city management and planning. The era of ignoring sustainable urban practices is over; traditional, resource-intensive growth must give way to sustainable, smart, and circular approaches. A livable city strikes a balance between development and protecting its natural environment, effectively managing its ecological footprint, resources, waste, energy use, and pollution. The United Nations SDG-11 provides planning agencies with actionable, measurable steps toward achieving urban sustainability (UNDESA, 2023).

For residents, prioritizing green and blue spaces, active living, and urban greenery is essential — provided sustainability remains a guiding principle. Equitable access to preserved green spaces offers substantial health and social benefits, enhancing livability and desirability. Livable cities also promote sustainability innovation through collaboration between the public and private sectors. Livable cities invest in advancements like electric and autonomous vehicles, public transport, and micro-mobility, fostering a culture of sustainability and reducing

environmental impacts. Such initiatives reflect cities' commitment to offering new public services for their citizens in innovative ways, meeting expectations and technological advancements, while keeping environmental aspects active in their agendas.

Moreover, as hubs of opportunity, livable cities support innovation and Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), pushing boundaries in sustainability, circular economies, and modern city management. These efforts ensure that cities remain competitive, desirable, and prepared for future challenges.



Protected

A Livable City is Safe and Resilient

In an era of global instability and extreme natural disasters, safety, stability, and predictability are key measures of city livability. A livable city ensures its residents' safety through advanced policing mechanisms that address both violent and petty crimes. Such a livable city also gives special attention to its vulnerable populations such as women, children, disabled, senior citizens, and disadvantaged groups. It fosters community trust with accessible, inclusive safety and security programs. Additionally, it maintains rapid-response operations with well-trained teams ready to handle risks, crises, and disasters at any moment.

Urban resilience is another cornerstone of livability (Kashef, 2016; Ruth & Franklin, 2014). Investments in flood protection, alternative energy sources, and reduced fossil fuel use are essential for safeguarding both residents and the environment. Strict building codes ensure structural integrity and resilience against natural and human-made disasters. In emergencies, food security becomes critical, and livable cities have the infrastructure to store, produce, and distribute food and services without disruption.



Finally, a livable city features a transparent, well-developed legal system that protects individual and business rights. It enforces mature regulations to respond to sudden economic shifts, maintaining stability in markets through real estate safeguards, fraud protection, and anti-money laundering measures. By fostering trust, stability, and predictability, a protected city creates an environment where businesses and residents can thrive.

Urban Resilience Is Another Cornerstone of Livability.

Proactive

A Livable City is Agile and Responds Well to Change

In today's rapidly evolving world, cities must be proactive, adaptable, and open to change. Smart city systems are essential for enabling robust decision-making, allowing cities to respond quickly to community needs. For example, the establishment of urban data platforms, intelligent traffic management systems and city-wide environmental monitoring systems could provide actionable insights, streamline decision-making, and improve the efficiency and sustainability of city operations. Paperless and proactive government systems improve service efficiency, reduce bureaucracy, and enhance integration, transparency, and communication among stakeholders. A citizen-focused approach modernizes and humanizes governance, bridging the gap between projects and community needs often overlooked by traditional top-down planning methods. Being well-connected and embracing proper collaborative tools, cities shall reduce this gap and be able to plan in ways that are aligned with citizens' needs and future expectations.

Smart services also streamline business operations, encouraging economic activity and innovation. A proactive city embraces change, celebrates entrepreneurship, and fosters an ecosystem that supports innovation. By prioritizing SMEs and startups, cities become more flexible and appealing, attracting entrepreneurs and talent, especially in a technology-driven global economy. Enhancing smart city initiatives with tax incentives and simplified residency requirements further boosts a city's attractiveness, improves its competitive livability, and strengthens its ability to adapt to change.



Present

A Livable City is a Well-Recognized Brand and Destination

For a city to be present on the global stage, it must invest in its international reputation and image. Climbing global livability rankings is essential in today's highly competitive environment. To enhance livability and attract global citizens and tourists, cities should prioritize city branding and offer compelling economic and lifestyle incentives. Architecture and urban design play a key role in this effort, as iconic developments can transform a city into a globally recognized destination. These signature projects not only boost visibility but also create revenue streams and attract international attention.

While such initiatives can be financially demanding, proper budgeting and management ensure they benefit the local economy, drive growth, and improve the city's global standing. By enhancing visibility and positioning, cities strengthen their presence on international rankings and secure the recognition needed to thrive in a globalized world.



In addition to global branding efforts, a livable and present city celebrates its own uniqueness and builds upon it. Whether heritage sites, cultural resources, population diversity, or natural areas, each city is unique. And while all cities should look towards other cities for best practices and lessons learned, there is no substitution for local and indigenous knowledge.

In Addition to Global Branding Efforts, a Livable and Present City Celebrates Its Own Uniqueness and Builds Upon It.

6

PRESENT

“A livable city is a well-recognized brand and destination”

- Place Branding
- City Rankings
- Global Citizenship
- Tourism Infrastructure
- Signature Urban Developments
- Competitive Lifestyles
- X-Factor (Uniqueness of Context)

1

CONNECTED

“A livable city is a well-connected city”

- Urban Infrastructure
- Road and Public Transport
- Micro Mobility
- Urban Analytics
- Cognitive Cities
- Regional Rail
- Aviation Sector

5

PROACTIVE

“A livable city is flexible and responds well to change”

- Smart City
- Paperless Government
- Human Centric Services
- Bottom-up Planning
- Entrepreneurship Support
- Innovation Incubator
- Flexible Residency and Immigration

2

COLLABORATIVE

“A livable city fosters collaboration and partnerships”

- Community
- Engagement
- My Life My City
- Smart City
- Collaborative GIS
- Public-Private Partnerships
- Regional Planning
- Collaboration with Academia



4

PROTECTED

“A livable city is always safe and resilient”

- Disaster Readiness
- Emergency Services
- Community Policing
- Urban Resilience
- Food Security
- Transparent Legal Systems
- Business Protections

3

CIRCULAR

“A livable city takes its sustainability seriously”

- SDG Principles
- Environmental Protection
- Green Space Access
- Urban Health
- Sustainable Urban Infrastructure
- SME and Entrepreneurship

Figure 2 – The C3P3 Framework | Urban Livability and Opportunity (Source: Sia)

Conclusion



Enhancing livability is the ultimate objective for city planners and policymakers, particularly in today's competitive world. While each city faces unique opportunities and challenges, all efforts to improve urban livability should be viewed through the lens of creating opportunities. This approach ensures cities remain economically, socially, and environmentally resilient while enhancing quality of life and overall desirability. A comprehensive approach, such as the C3P3 framework, addresses these issues and could be a meaningful and achievable blueprint for cities, impacting government agencies' agendas and public policies as they address their livability ambitions.

Section 3

CASE STUDY

DUBAI'S APPLICATION OF C3P3 FRAMEWORK IS CONSIDERED AS A GLOBAL BEST PRACTICE FOR LIVABILITY

(Source: Dubai Municipality)

The Dubai 2040 Plan (Dubai Municipality, 2021) is a 20-year roadmap that aims to integrate the city's diverse spatial initiatives to achieve the vision of His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, to make Dubai the 'best city to live in'.

This plan, the city's sixth since 1960, celebrates the Emirates' rich history while setting ambitious goals focused on the future by coordinating public and private sector activities across multiple sectors that impact the quality of life, including urban planning, environment, economy, safety, mobility, and infrastructure.

The plan identifies over 80 principles for achieving sustainable growth and over 40 indicators used to guide the Emirates' sectoral policy directions.

The Dubai 2040 approach aligns with the best practices identified in the C3P3 framework, as illustrated below:

"A city's true strength lies not in its size or population, but in its vision, ambition, and ability to inspire the world."

Hamdan bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum
Crown Prince of Dubai, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defence.
Chairman of the Executive Council of Dubai

Connected

The Plan focuses on improving infrastructure efficiency within the city. By focusing growth within the City Centers and controlling urban sprawl, the city authorities can enhance public and civil infrastructure systems to service the residents.



80%
People Living Within A 20-minute Access Of Essential Services

Collaborative

The Plan provides an update integrated data-driven urban planning system to promote consistency and foster coordination between the public and private sectors.



168Km²
Increase the land dedicated for industrial activities



Diversify land use mix within Centers

Circular

The Plan balances the development needs with those of the natural environment. The urban planning system sets out its goals using sustainability and resilience as its basis to ensure that the carrying capacity of the city is managed efficiently across land and resource utilization.



100%
Residential Waste Diverted
From Landfills



60%
of Emirate's area will be
preserved for natural
conservation

Proactive

The Plan adopts an integrated system incorporating smart city systems such as IOT, AI, Simplified custome journeys, to support robust and faster decision-making between entities.



100%
Comprehensive and up-to-
date urban planning in the
Dubai Spatial database

Protected

The Plan has identified policies and initiatives that address the issues of self-sufficiency and resilience to ensure residents' safety across a number of critical areas such as affordable housing, food and water, and climate change.



Ensure
Dubai's High Yield
Sustainable Food Production
From Domestic Priority
Agriculture

Present

The Plan contributes towards the city brand by establishing centers and heritage or nature-themed districts that offer residents and visitors a wide range of activities.



11m²
per capita share of public
spaces



**Continuous
improvement**
of areas assigned For
Heritage And Archeological
Conservation

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